



SHAKESPEARE
THEATRE COMPANY
EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Twelfth Night

by William Shakespeare
directed by Rebecca Bayla Taichman
in association with McCarter Theatre Center
December 2 – January 4, 2009

FIRST FOLIO:

TEACHER CURRICULUM GUIDE

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The First Folio Teacher Curriculum Guide for Twelfth Night was developed by the Shakespeare Theatre Company Education Department and edited and compiled by Caroline Alexander with articles and activities written by Audra Polk and Abby Jackson.

ON SHAKESPEARE
For articles and information about Shakespeare's life and world, please visit our website ShakespeareTheatre.org, to download the file "On Shakespeare."

Next Steps

If you would like more information on how you can participate in other Shakespeare Theatre Company programs, please call the Education Hotline at 202.547.5688 or visit our website ShakespeareTheatre.org.

Welcome to the
Shakespeare Theatre Company's
production of
Twelfth Night
by William Shakespeare

This season, the Shakespeare Theatre Company presents seven plays by William Shakespeare and other classic playwrights. Consistent with the STC's central mission to be the leading force in producing and preserving the highest quality classic theatre, the Education Department challenges learners of all ages to explore the ideas, emotions and principles contained in classic texts and to discover the connection between classic theatre and our modern perceptions. We hope that this First Folio Teacher Curriculum Guide will prove useful as you prepare to bring your students to the theatre!

For the 2008-09 season, the Education Department will publish First Folio Teacher Curriculum Guides for our productions of *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night* and *Ion*. First Folio Guides provide information and activities to help students form a personal connection to the play before attending the production. First Folio Guides contain material about the playwrights, their world and their works. Also included are approaches to explore the plays and productions in the classroom before and after the performance.

First Folio Guides are designed as a resource both for teachers and students. We encourage you to photocopy articles you find helpful and distribute them to your students as supplemental reading.

Enjoy the show!

Synopsis of TWELFTH NIGHT

Duke Orsino of Illyria persists in courting the beautiful Countess Olivia, even though she has sworn off love to mourn for her deceased brother. Meanwhile, a shipwreck separates a young woman named Viola from her twin brother Sebastian. Fearing for her safety, she disguises herself as a man and secures a position in Orsino's house. Orsino soon sends the young "man" as his emissary to Olivia.

Olivia's Uncle, Toby Belch, disturbs her mourning, despite the efforts of Maria, Olivia's attendant. In order to finance his drunken binges, Toby has brought in the dim-witted Andrew Aguecheek. Feste, Olivia's fool, also returns to the house to disrupt the mourning—much to the disapproval of Olivia's steward, the sanctimonious Malvolio.

When Viola (now going by the name Cesario) arrives to woo Olivia for Orsino, the charming messenger unintentionally wins Olivia's heart for himself. The love-struck Olivia sends Malvolio after Cesario with a ring as a ploy to make him return the following day. Viola immediately realizes that the countess has fallen in love with her male alter ego. Elsewhere in Illyria, Viola's brother Sebastian surfaces alive, believing his sister to be drowned.

Toby and Andrew wake up the house with their late-night carousing, and Malvolio threatens them with eviction—on Olivia's authority. Maria is outraged by Malvolio's arrogance, and vows to help Toby get his revenge.

Viola attempts to make Orsino accept Olivia's rejection, nearly revealing her own unrequited love for him, but he sends her back to woo Olivia again.

Maria forges a cryptic love letter in Olivia's handwriting, and Malvolio interprets it as an expression of Olivia's love for him. He determines to follow its instructions—to wear yellow stockings and crossed garters, and to act boldly. Cesario returns, and Olivia declares her romantic feelings.

When Sebastian and his friend Antonio arrive in town, Antonio reveals that he once fought against Orsino and must hide until night. He gives Sebastian his money for safekeeping.



Olivia (Melissa Bowen) wooed by Malvolio (Floyd King) in the Shakespeare Theatre Company's 1999 production of *Twelfth Night*, directed by Daniel Fish. Photo by Carol Rosegg.

Cross-gartered and in yellow stockings, Malvolio presents himself to a mystified Olivia. She entrusts him to Toby, who orders him bound and

imprisoned like a madman. Toby next encourages a duel between the timid Cesario and Andrew. Seeing what he thinks is Sebastian under attack, Antonio intervenes. But Orsino's officers arrest Antonio, and he feels betrayed when Cesario denies having his money. The real Sebastian appears and is mistaken for Cesario, both by Toby and Andrew and by the amorous Olivia. Attracted to Olivia, Sebastian impulsively agrees to marry her.

When Orsino arrives to court Olivia personally, Olivia not only rejects him, but calls Cesario her husband. Andrew comes seeking help for Toby—wounded, Andrew claims, by Cesario. Finally, Sebastian appears and apologizes to Olivia for injuring her uncle. Reunited in the presence of the stunned assembly, Sebastian and Viola reveal that they are twins, brother and sister. Olivia and Orsino accept the pair as their respective mates. Olivia discovers the practical joke played against Malvolio, but he refuses to be reconciled as the others celebrate.

Thoughts from the Director: Rebecca Bayla Taichmann Discusses *Twelfth Night*

*Shakespeare Theatre Company Literary Associate Akiva Fox discussed the upcoming production of **Twelfth Night** with director Rebecca Bayla Taichmann. Below is an excerpt from the interview.*

AF: Rebecca, what excites you about the play?

RBT: Whereas *The Taming of The Shrew* [which Taichmann directed in 2007 for the Shakespeare Theatre Company] is a problem play—I was at war with the text as much as I embraced it—*Twelfth Night* is perfect. It is ravishing, hilarious and romantic, romantic, romantic. Running through the play's obvious delights, however, are multiple rivers of sadness and anxiety. Many of our central characters are in mourning, desires are thwarted throughout, and nearly everyone is restless for love, but bewildered about how to grab hold of it.

Recently I dreamt that I was at a design meeting for *Twelfth Night*. I wanted the first half of the play frozen, encased in ice and saw the second half in a garden of a thousand roses. The dream encapsulates, in an extreme way, how I understand the movement of the play: from isolation and thwarted love into a flood of desire. The swing is extreme and capturing the play's shifting tone will likely be our greatest



Peter Webster as Orsino and Kelly McGillis as Viola in STC's 1989 production of *Twelfth Night*, directed by Michael Kahn. Photo by Joan Marcus.

challenge. I imagine that the way to the grief will be through laughter, and the way to the laughter will be through tears... In *Twelfth Night* there are mistaken identities, gender-bending tangles, various forms of disguise and self-disguise and an ever-multiplying chain of misconceptions. But from behind all the masks, the irrational and disorienting effects of desire pour out.

NEXT STEPS

1. In the interview, Taichmann discusses finding design inspiration through a dream. Based on her comments, what do you think the design will look like? What colors and styles does it suggest for you and how would you design it?
2. Taichmann mentions the close relationship between grief and laughter. How do you think the two are related? Have you ever experienced laughter and tears at the same time? Can you think of other examples of art (film, music, painting) that explore this delicate balance?

More about the play...

- *Twelfth Night* refers to the evening of January 6, the twelfth day after Christmas and the date of the adoration of the baby Jesus by the Magi. *Twelfth Night* also marked the end of a winter festival that began on Halloween. *Twelfth Night* was the one day of the year when the nobility and peasantry switched roles and King was replaced by the Lord of Misrule, turning the world upside down. The topsy-turvy fun did not last for long, however, as the social order was restored at midnight.
- Shakespeare was most likely commissioned by a lawyer's guild (a professional group) to write a play to be presented on *Twelfth Night*, which may be the reason for the title.
- *Twelfth Night* is thought to have been first produced in 1601 at the court of Queen Elizabeth.

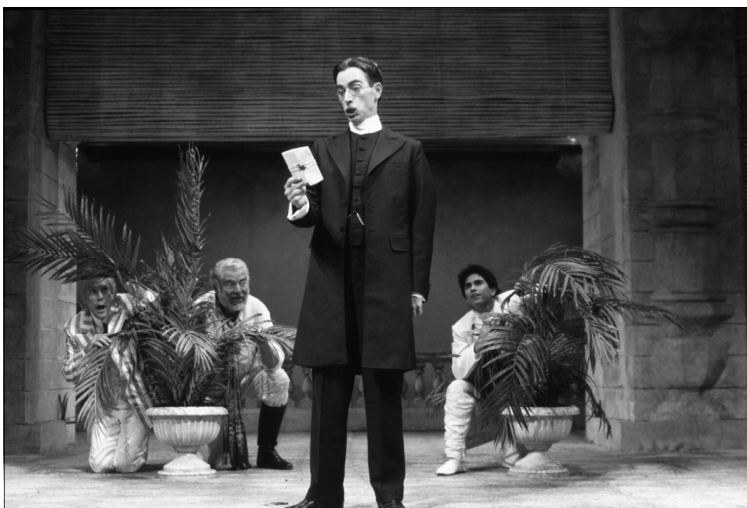
Mourning: Traditions of Sadness

Although *Twelfth Night* is often referred to as one of Shakespeare's greatest comedies, it also contains strong elements of sadness and tragedy, especially in the first half of the play. Mourning refers to the traditions and customs that accompany death. Mourners are those who survive the person who died (like family members and friends) and the mourning period refers to the time following the death. In some cultures, mourning involves wearing black clothing out of respect for the deceased person and staying away from social events. In the world of *Twelfth Night*, mourning and its accompanying emotions play a significant role in the development of the characters and plot.

Viola survives a shipwreck but fears that her brother has not; as a young woman alone in the world, she decides to disguise herself as a man while she figures out what to do next. Although she worries that her brother is dead, she does not mourn his loss fully because she clings to the hope that he may have survived the shipwreck as well: "Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope... the like of him" (act 1, scene 2, l. 18). Viola throws herself into her new disguise as Cesario and finds employment with Duke Orsino. Viola's disguise allows her more time to process her emotions and wait until she is ready to re-enter society: "O that I serv'd that Lady, / And might not be delivered to the world / Till I had made mine own occasion mellow / What my estate is" (act 1, scene 2, l. 37—39).

Meanwhile, Olivia mourns her brother's death in the extreme. Valentine, a gentleman who attends Duke Orsino (who loves Olivia), reports that Olivia's grief remains intense and makes her unwilling to interact with anyone: "But like a cloistress she will veiled walk, / And water once a day her chamber round / With eye-offending brine; all this to season / A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh / And lasting, in her sad remembrance" (act 1, scene 7, l. 26-31). A "cloistress" is a nun who lives apart from society and the "eye-offending brine" refers to her tears, which she sheds once a day. Needless to say, Olivia's grief extends beyond sadness and becomes excessive.

Nearly all of the characters in *Twelfth Night* experience some sadness during the play, although not all the result of death. Try making a chart showing the emotional journey of three of the main characters, tracing their evolution from the beginning of the play to the end. How do they change? What events in the play lead to changes?



Floyd King as Sir Andrew Aguecheek, David Sabin as Sir Toby Belch, Philip Goodwin as Malvolio and David Medina as Fabian in STC's 1989 production of *Twelfth Night*, directed by Michael Kahn. Photo by Joan Marcus.

NEXT STEPS

1. How do Viola and Olivia's responses to their grief differ? How are they similar?
2. Why do you think Viola chooses to disguise herself as a male servant? What factors do you think influenced her decision?
3. Think about mourning in contemporary society. What are some of the traditions that are observed today? How are they similar to or different from those seen in *Twelfth Night*?

LOVE IS ALL AROUND

Love is often portrayed through a lens held by someone else and so it is in *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare. Love, in all of its different forms, is really all around in *Twelfth Night*.

We begin with Orsino's wish for a way out of his unrequited love for Olivia: "If music be the food of love, play on, / Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting / The appetite may sicken, and so die" (act 1, scene 1, l. 1-3). Orsino loves Olivia but she will have none of it, choosing instead to mourn her brother's death for seven years. Meanwhile, Viola arrives on the shores of Illyria distressed about her brother's fate—she fears that he may have drowned in the shipwreck that left her alone.

In addition to his exploration of the power of love between siblings, Shakespeare explores other kinds of love, including the humor (not to mention heartache) of crushes. Olivia's servant Maria, her uncle Toby and her suitor Sir Andrew create an intricate plot to convince Malvolio, Olivia's stuck-up steward, that Olivia loves him. Early in the play, however, Olivia criticizes Malvolio's behavior: "O you are sick of Self-love, Malvolio" (act 1, scene 5, l. 99).

In the midst of their plotting against Malvolio, Maria and Toby fall in love with each other. Meanwhile, Orsino continues to unfold his desires to Cesario (who is really Viola disguised as a man). Olivia experiences a similar chemistry with Cesario (Viola), but often speaks about the connection in relation to his (Cesario's) pattern of speech and appearance: "Methink I feel this youth's perfections / With an invisible and subtle stealth / To creep in at mine eyes" (act 1, scene 5, l. 320-322).

Viola is in the middle of it all: falling in love with Orsino (which is problematic, because he thinks she is the servant Cesario), the pain of possibly losing her brother and the distress caused by the impossible love that Olivia feels for her.

But it is love—"a deep, tender, ineffable feeling of affection and solicitude; a feeling of intense desire and attraction; and an intense emotional attachment"¹—which makes us do the impossible. It is the love shared between parents and children, siblings, lovers and friends that allows us to experience the sadness, anger and ultimately joy that life can bring. Even though Feste jokes that "some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrown upon them" (Feste, act 5, scene 1, lines 375-377), there is truth to his words. In other words, some are born loved, some achieve love, and some have love thrown upon them.

NEXT STEPS

1. How do you think the play presents love?
2. Do you think Maria and Toby are in love and if so, why? What about Viola and Orsino? Olivia and Sebastian?
3. What do you think Feste's observation about greatness means?



Samantha Soule as Viola in the Shakespeare Theatre Company's production of *Twelfth Night*, directed by Rebecca Bayla Taichman. Photo by Scott Suchman.

WHO'S WHO in *Twelfth Night*

“O Time! Thou must untangle this, not I;
It is too hard a knot for me t’untie!”
Twelfth Night, act 2, scene 2, l. 41-42

VIOLA

Separated from her twin brother in a shipwreck and washed up on the shores of Illyria, Viola disguises herself as a man named Cesario and seeks employment with Duke Orsino.



Samantha Soule as Viola in the Shakespeare Theatre Company's production of *Twelfth Night*, directed by Rebecca Bayla Taichman. Photo by Scott Suchman.

KEY

- = family
- = love interest
- = friend
- = servant

SEBASTIAN

Viola's twin brother, who is washed ashore in Illyria separately from Viola and seeks the help of a ship captain, Antonio, to find her.

OLIVIA

A countess in Illyria who, out of mourning for her deceased brother, refuses to see or be seen by anyone outside of her court. When she does encounter the persistent Cesario (who is really Viola in disguise), however, Olivia immediately falls in love, pursuing this young messenger rather than Orsino.

ORSINO

The Duke of Illyria—a hopeless romantic who is entirely enveloped by his love for Olivia. He sends Cesario, who is really Viola in disguise, to “unfold the passion of his love” to Olivia in the hopes of winning her heart.

FESTE

A jester (a joke-teller) in Olivia's household who moves freely between Olivia and the Duke.

MALVOLIO

Olivia's stuffy steward (the head of her household staff), who is tricked into believing that Olivia desires to marry him and pursues her passionately.

MARIA

A servant to Olivia who, along with Sir Toby, crafts the plot to humiliate Malvolio.

SIR TOBY BELCH

Olivia's uncle who has taken up residence in her court, disturbing the order of the household with his drunken revelry.

SIR ANDREW

Olivia's suitor and friend of Sir Toby.

Classroom Connections

Before the performance

Activities and discussion questions to enhance your exploration of the play with your students.

Page to Stage: Designing *Twelfth Night*

This activity will provide your students with insight into theatrical design and practical experience in the creative process that stage designers use when establishing the world of a play. The following provides you with some general talking points, but you may also want to have your students conduct research into the design process before getting started.

Overview:

The job of theatrical designers is to support the director's vision and interpretation of the play by using costumes, scenic elements (sets and props), lights and sound to create the world of the production. Each designer's work should:

- Suggest the style and tone of the production
- Evoke the mood and atmosphere of the production
- Specify the time and place or the lack thereof
- Indicate relationships between characters
- Complement the work of the other designers

To accomplish this, designers read the play many times searching for clues contained in the text about the look and feel of the play. The design team meets with the director to learn his or her specific interpretation and approach to the play. The designers collaborate to ensure that all of the elements come together in a cohesive manner. If everyone does their job well, the overall production design provides the audience with greater insight into the world of the play and the lives of the characters.

Preparation:

- Have students read the play and the interview with director Rebecca Bayla Taichman (p. 3)

Divide students into teams of five with each member assuming the role of one of the designers of the production: sets, costumes, lights, props and sound. If you want students to develop their own concept, you may add an additional team member to serve as the director. Discuss Rebecca's interpretation of the play and determine how the group will execute her vision by developing a design concept for the opening and closing scenes of the production:

- Determine the mood of the production from beginning to end. How might it influence the design?
- Where would you set *Twelfth Night* to make it the most relevant for your audience? Remind students that the concept must work for the entire play—not just certain scenes. What images or motifs occur repeatedly throughout the play? How would you show these onstage? What are the different locations of the play?
- Once a setting is decided, have each group research the time period in order to be as authentic as possible in creating the world of the play.
- Each member of the team should produce a creative representation of their design (a poster, sound clips, a collage, fabric swatches and so on).
- Have each group member write a design statement in support of their concepts, including the historical research that supports their decisions.
- Have the design teams present their concept to their classmates.

After your students see the production, reflect on the design. Compare and contrast the Shakespeare Theatre Company's production design with the students' own vision for the play. What did they think of the designers' choices?

Classroom Connections, continued

Before the performance

Tackling the Text: Strategies for Close Reading

Below are a few key terms that are helpful to use when exploring Shakespeare's text with your students.

- **Paraphrasing** is a good way of making the text more accessible for students by having them put it in their own words.
- **Operative words** are the words that are essential to telling the story. They are the most important words in a line of Shakespeare's text. Operative words are generally in this order of importance: verbs, nouns (including title and names the first time they are mentioned), adjectives and adverbs.
- **Iambic pentameter** is the main rhythmic structure of Shakespeare's **verse**. One line of iambic pentameter has ten syllables which are broken up into five units of meter called "feet." Each iambic foot contains two syllables: the first syllable is unstressed and the second syllable is stressed. Therefore, five feet of iambs equal one line of iambic pentameter.
- Unlike iambic pentameter, **prose** is not in any verse structure. Shakespeare used prose to indicate familiarity between characters of all social classes as well as to express conversation between the lower classes.

Have students do a close reading of a four or five-line passage from the text. Ask them to first read the lines aloud and paraphrase them, identifying any unknown words. Next, identify the operative words in the passage. Using the operative words as a starting point (hint: operatives are always stressed) ask students to scan the lines, using the symbol **U** for unstressed and **/** for stressed, and determine the meter.

After the performance

He said, She said....

Why do you think that Viola chooses to disguise herself as a man while she searches for her brother? Find some of Viola's lines in the play to support your decision. How does her disguise make life more possible? More challenging?

What was life like for women in Shakespeare's time? What roles did they play in Elizabethan society? Have students do research into the customs of Elizabethan England in relation to women. Ask students to find a way to creatively express what a day in the life of an Elizabethan woman would have been like. How did a woman's class status (peasant, nobility, etc.) influence her daily life? Were there any similarities shared by all Elizabethan women? Research the status of women in the world today. What countries continue to have policies and/or laws that are restrictive to women in the modern era?

Share your opinion: theatre criticism

Now that your students have seen the STC production of *Twelfth Night*, have your students write reviews of the performance. Encourage students to highlight the production elements (actor performances, costumes, set, fight choreography, etc.) and themes that made an impression on them, either positively or negatively. Focus on being as specific as possible; instead of saying "I didn't like the lights" or "I loved the costumes" add details to explain why.

Once students have written their reviews, find others from outside sources (i.e. *the Washington Post*, *City Paper*, etc.) and analyze them. How do their reviews compare? Do they agree or disagree with the outside critics?

After reading the reviews, ask students to evaluate their own reviews for style and content. What changes, if any, would they make to their writing and why?

Resource List and Standards of Learning

Books on Shakespeare

- Asimov, Isaac. *Asimov's Guide to Shakespeare*. Doubleday, 1978.
- Cahn, Victor L. *The Plays of Shakespeare: A Thematic Guide*. Greenwood Press, 2001.
- Epstein, Norrie. *The Friendly Shakespeare*. Penguin Books, 1993.
- Fallon, Robert Thomas. *A Theatregoer's Guide to Shakespeare*. Ivan M. Dee, 2001.
- Gibson, Janet and Rex Gibson. *Discovering Shakespeare's Language*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in the World*. W.W. Norton, 2004.
- Holmes, Martin. *Shakespeare and His Players*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972.
- Kermode, Frank. *Shakespeare's Language*. Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 2000.
- Linklater, Kristin. *Freeing Shakespeare's Voice*. Theatre Communications Group, 1992.
- McDonald, Russ. *The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare: An Introduction with Documents*. Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996.
- Pritchard, R. E. *Shakespeare's England*. Sutton Publishing Limited, 1999.
- Papp, Joseph and Elizabeth Kirkland. *Shakespeare Alive*. Bantam Books, 1988.

Books on Teaching Shakespeare

- Gibson, Rex. *Teaching Shakespeare*. Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Reynolds, P. *Teaching Shakespeare*. Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Rosenblum, Joseph. *A Reader's Guide to Shakespeare*. Salem Press, Inc., 1998.
- Toropov, Brandon. *Shakespeare for Beginners*. Writers and Readers Publishing Inc., 1997.

Websites

- *In Search of Shakespeare: Shakespeare in the Classroom* — <http://www.pbs.org/shakespeare/educators/>
- The companion website to Michael Wood's four-part PBS series *In Search of Shakespeare*, this site includes extensive research about Shakespeare's life and works, as well as interactive features.
- Folger Shakespeare Library — <http://www.folger.edu>
- Includes excellent resources for further reading about Shakespeare, as well as fun games and information designed specifically for students and teachers.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING

The activities and question sequences found in the Folio supports grade 9-12 standards of learning in English and theatre for the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. Primary content areas addressed include but are not limited to:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| - Classical Literature | - Vocabulary and content development | - Stagecraft |
| - Argument and persuasive writing | - Research | - Performance |
| - Questioning and Listening | - Inference | - Analysis and Evaluation |

Specific examples include:

Activity: Page to Stage: Designing *Twelfth Night*

Identify the aesthetic effects of a media presentation, and evaluate the techniques used to create them.

VA—content strand: Traditional Narrative and Classical Literature 10.LT-TN.12.

DC—content strand: Media 10.M.3

MD—content strand: 2.1.4

Activity: Share Your Opinion

The student will describe personal responses to theatrical productions in terms of the qualities of the production as a whole.

VA—content strand: Aesthetics TII.15

DC—content strand: Drama 10.LT-D.9

MD—content strand: 3.1.3 ADP B6

Theatre Etiquette: A Guide for Students

Above all, it is important to remember that the actors on stage can see and hear you at the same time you can see and hear them. Be respectful of the actors and your fellow audience members by being attentive and observing the general guidelines below.

The phrase “theatre etiquette” refers to the special rules of behavior that are called for when attending a theatre performance. With that in mind, here are some important things to do *before* you go inside the theatre:

- ◆ Turn off your cell phone and any other electronic devices (iPods, games, etc.), or better yet, leave them in coat check. It is very distracting, not to mention embarrassing, when a cell phone goes off during a performance. The light from cell phones and other electronic devices is also a big distraction, so please no text messaging.
- ◆ Spit out your gum.
- ◆ Leave all food and drinks in the coat check. NO food or drinks are allowed inside the theatre.
- ◆ Visit the restroom before the performance begins. Unless it is an emergency, plan to stay seated during the performance.

React to what's happening on stage!

Please feel free to have honest reactions to what is happening onstage. You can laugh, applaud and enjoy the performance.

However, please don't talk during the performance; it is extremely distracting to other audience members and the actors. Save discussions for intermission and after the performance.

Thoughts about the importance of being an audience member from
Shakespeare Theatre Company Artistic Director Michael Kahn

“When you go to the theatre, you are engaging with other living, breathing human beings, having an immediate human response. In the theatre you sense that all of this may never happen again in this particular way.

As a member of the audience, you are actually part of how that's developing—you have a hand in it... You are part of a community where you are asked to be compassionate, perhaps to laugh with or grieve as well as to understand people, lives and cultures different from your own.”