

The Nashville Shakespeare Festival  
20th Anniversary Season

# HAMLET

1 "This above all, to thine  
own self be true."

2

3 "Goodnight,  
sweet prince."

4

5

6

7

8

9  
10 "The Lady doth  
protest too much,  
methinks!"

11 "Something is  
rotten in the state  
of Denmark."

12

13  
14 "To be, or not  
to be...that is  
the question."

15 "Neither a borrower  
nor a lender be."

directed and adapted by Denice Hicks  
costume design by Tony Award winner, Franee Lee  
set design by Paul Gatrell  
lighting design by Anne Willingham



Making your world a stage, all year round!

## Educator's Guidebook

### HAMLET

The Nashville Shakespeare Festival  
January 17 - February 2, 2008  
[www.nashvilleshakes.org](http://www.nashvilleshakes.org)

## Greetings,

Thank you for partnering with the Nashville Shakespeare Festival on its upcoming production of Hamlet. Now in its 20th season, the Nashville Shakespeare Festival is thrilled to establish a winter home on the campus of Belmont University in the beautiful new Trout Theatre!

When you prepare students to attend Hamlet, we hope you will find this guidebook helpful. As an arts educator, I believe the process of preparing to view a play is as important as the actual event. This guidebook is designed to facilitate that preparation. Included is an in-depth look at the Nashville Shakespeare Festival's production of Hamlet, featuring information from the creative team: images from the designers, the textual consultant, the dramaturg, and – most importantly – you! Thank you for providing questions for the director of Hamlet, NSF Artistic Director Denice Hicks; your inquiries created an edifying dialogue, which I think you will enjoy. In addition, you will find information concerning the themes in Hamlet, Shakespeare's life and times, a synopsis of the play's cutting, and exploratory in-class activities.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your Hamlet matinee or workshop reservation, please don't hesitate to contact me: [claire@nashvilleshakes.org](mailto:claire@nashvilleshakes.org).

Enjoy the show!



Claire Syler  
Education Director  
The Nashville Shakespeare Festival



*More matter, with less art. . . .*

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Performance Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Seats Reserved: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Reservation Date & Time(s): \_\_\_\_\_

# A Note from the Director, Denice Hicks



Take a look inside my creative process and you will find that this production of *Hamlet* has been designed specifically for students. To begin with, I've cut the script in half – 2,000 lines instead of 4,000, which equals a two-hour production instead of four. Maintaining the structure and integrity of the poetry gives the play rhythm and pace so that it plays “trippingly on the tongue.” Our version focuses specifically on Hamlet’s character and story, making him the most important aspect of the production. And, finally, my approach to the play: it’s a ghost story.

Hamlet has been haunting us with his story for centuries because he cannot rest in peace. We are playing it as if each performance will be Hamlet’s last chance to gain enough sympathy and prayers from the audience so that he may finally be free of his torment. All of the actors are spirits conjured by Hamlet to help him tell his story. At times they appear to be demons tormenting him but, in the end, are revealed as the angels who “sing him to his rest.” To keep the focus on the play’s language and the actors, the scenery will be minimal. The costumes employ amorphous shapes and cloaks to veil reality, highlighting the spirit world where Hamlet is caught between being and not being.

Students will, hopefully, leave the play understanding the characters and plot and knowing why Shakespeare’s language is so respected. They will also have a point of reference for *Hamlet* that will serve a lifetime. It is, after all, one of the most quoted plays in history.

If you or your students have any further questions after seeing the show (and it would delight me if the production inspired some!), please send them to me via email. Conversing about Shakespeare is our favorite pastime! Enjoy.

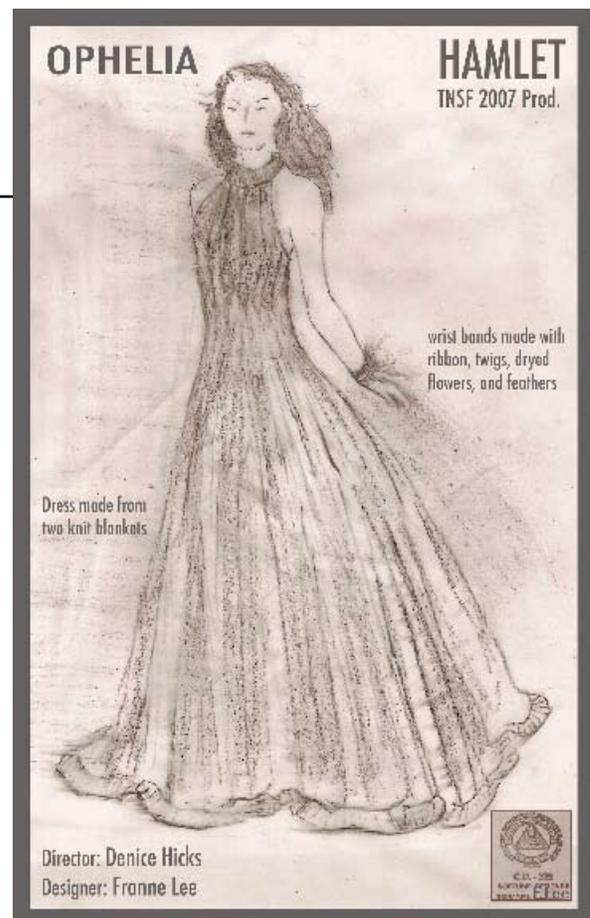
Denice Hicks  
Artistic Director  
The Nashville Shakespeare Festival  
denice@nashvilleshakes.org

## CAST

*Hamlet*- Pete Vann\*  
*Claudius/ Ghost*- Jessejames Locorierre  
*Polonius/Grave digger*- Brian Webb Russell\*  
*Horatio*- David Wilkerson\*  
*Laertes*- Eric D. Pasto-Crosby\*  
*Gertrude*-Helen Shute-Pettaway\*  
*Ophelia/ Grave digger*- Ayla Harrison  
*Marcellus/ Priest/ Prologue*- Stephen Boatright  
*Guildenstern/ Player King*- Benjamin Reed  
*Rosencrantz/ Lucianus*- Zack McCann  
*Osric/ Player Queen*- Shanti Smith



\* Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States



Hamlet Costume Design by Franee Lee. Used by permission.

# Dramaturg's Notes

Dr. Christine Mather

There are few things I love more than being a dramaturg. Unfortunately, very few people know what a dramaturg does, and that includes a lot of theatre professionals. *Turg* means "work" in German, so a dramaturg is someone who works on a play. The profession started with Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781), who, like Hamlet, studied at Wittenberg. Today dramaturgs work with both old and new plays. Dramaturgs work with the playwrights of new plays and the directors of old plays. For an old play such as *Hamlet*, a dramaturg offers context. That may include descriptions of previous productions, a summary of scholarly opinion about the play, and multiple meanings for lines. Often directors want information to help inspire designers or actors.

Director Denice Hicks's concept for this production of *Hamlet* locates the action between being and not-being. So she wanted more information on purgatory, the historical Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox belief first formulated by Pope Gregory (540-604). Dante's (1265-1321) *Divine Comedy* discusses purgatory in a book-length poem that Shakespeare would have known. Dante describes purgatory as a place where souls prepare for heaven. This accords with other spiritual traditions, including Buddhism, that describe a time of purification after death before the spirit moves on to the next stage. An important aspect of Renaissance belief for our production, is that the prayers of the living affect the fate of the dead. While Horatio acts as guide for Hamlet, ultimately Hamlet's fate depends on the audience's intercession.

## Influence and Inspiration



**St. Francis of Assisi in Ecstasy** by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio c. 1595

When theatre artists (directors, designers, and actors) come together to create a new production, they often draw upon great works of art for inspiration and as a means of visually communicating their ideas to one another. A painting can be worth a thousand words when trying to explain the feeling of a scene, a character, a relationship, or the world of the play. Often this source material directly influences the artists' choices in the physicality of the performance, the imagery of the production, and even the lighting and other design elements. This 16th Century painting by Caravaggio inspired a key image in our production of *Hamlet*.

# Hamlet Synopsis

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## Act 1

Hamlet is upset because his father, King Hamlet, has died and his uncle Claudius has hastily married his mother, Queen Gertrude. Polonius, the chief advisor to the King, and his son, Laertes, ask Claudius, now the king, to permit Laertes to return to school in France. Claudius grants Laertes permission. Claudius then reproaches Hamlet for mourning his father and refuses Hamlet's request to return to school at Wittenberg. Hamlet agrees to stay, at the behest of his mother, but privately relates his anguish to the audience.

Horatio, Hamlet's best friend from school, tells Hamlet that the ghost of his father has been seen. They plan to watch for the ghost together.

Laertes tells his sister Ophelia farewell and warns her not to take Hamlet's affection seriously. Polonius sends Laertes off with fatherly advice and then forbids Ophelia to spend time with Hamlet, fearing for her virtue.

Hamlet, Horatio, and the guard see the ghost. The ghost tells Hamlet that he was murdered by Claudius, who poured poison into his ear. Hamlet swears revenge, swears his friends to silence, and warns them that he may behave oddly in the future.

Ophelia sees Hamlet acting very strangely and tells her father. Polonius decides that Ophelia's rejection has driven Hamlet mad and presents this idea to the King and Queen with one of Hamlet's love letters to Ophelia as evidence.

Hamlet comes in, contemplating suicide. Polonius sends Ophelia to talk to him while he and Claudius spy on the conversation. Hamlet feels betrayed by Ophelia and she is convinced he is mad.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two more of Hamlet's school friends, arrive. Hamlet reveals them to be spies for Claudius.

A troupe of players arrive. Hamlet asks the players to perform *The Murder of Gonzago*, a story similar to the murder of his father, in the hope that Claudius will betray his guilt at the play.

## Act 2

Hamlet coaches the players, then asks Horatio to observe the King during the performance. Hamlet chooses to sit with Ophelia, but there is great tension between them. The play criticizes second marriages and shows a murder by poison in the ear. Gertrude is offended, and Claudius leaves with her. Hamlet takes this as confirmation of his guilt. Gertrude sends for Hamlet while Polonius hides to listen to their conversation.

Claudius prays to be forgiven but cannot fully repent because he wants to keep the crown and Gertrude. Hamlet nearly kills him at his prayers but stops because he fears Claudius will go to heaven.

Hamlet confronts Gertrude and, hearing Polonius stir behind the curtain, blindly stabs and kills him. The Ghost appears to remind Hamlet to be kind to his mother and continue on the path to revenge.

Claudius sends Hamlet by ship to England. Laertes returns from France seeking revenge for his father's death. Horatio receives a letter that Hamlet has returned to Denmark by pirate ship. Ophelia goes mad and drowns in a brook.

Horatio and Hamlet meet in a graveyard, where they encounter a gravedigger and muse about death. Hamlet relates how the King had ordered Hamlet's beheading in England, but Hamlet changed the order to be for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. A funeral procession appears and when Hamlet realizes the corpse is Ophelia, he comes forward to declare his grief. Laertes fights him.

Osric, a messenger for the King, presents a proposal that Laertes and Hamlet should fight a friendly bout. Hamlet accepts. Claudius has poisoned Laertes's foil and Hamlet's drink. But the Queen drinks from the glass, and the foil wounds both Hamlet and Laertes. Laertes reveals the treachery. Hamlet kills Claudius.

Horatio wants to drink the poison, but Hamlet asks him to stay alive and tell the story.

# Shakespeare's Life and Times

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Dr. Ann Jennalie Cook, Textual Consultant

- 1558** Queen Elizabeth begins her reign.
- April 1564** William Shakespeare is born, traditionally on the 23rd (St. George's Day), though only his baptismal date, the 26th, is on record.
- c. 1570 – c. 1582** Education at the King's New School in Stratford-upon-Avon provides a thorough training in classical literature and rhetoric, including performances of Latin plays.
- 27 November 1582** At only 18, Shakespeare hastily marries 26-year-old Anne Hathaway because she is pregnant.
- May 1583** Susanna Shakespeare is born.
- February 1585** Twins Hamnet and Judith are born.
- August 1596** Hamnet Shakespeare dies.
- October 1596** William Shakespeare receives a coat of arms, making him a true gentleman.
- 1597** Shakespeare buys New Place, the second largest house in Stratford-upon-Avon.
- 1603** Queen Elizabeth dies and King James comes to the throne.
- June 1607** Susanna Shakespeare marries Dr. John Hall, a prominent physician.
- February 1616** Judith Shakespeare marries Thomas Quiney.
- 23 April 1616** William Shakespeare dies.

## Shakespeare and the Theater

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Dr. Ann Jennalie Cook, Textual Consultant

No one knows exactly when Shakespeare left Stratford-upon-Avon to pursue a career in the theater, but men often conducted business in London, leaving their families behind. By 1592, when first mentioned in print, he was already a popular playwright, the subject of envy by lesser dramatists. Early on, probably in the late 1580s, he was associated with various companies, but when he joined the troupe organized in 1594 by the Burbage family as both an actor and a playwright, he became a major force in establishing their dominance in the theatrical world. Fellow members of his company, John Heminges and Henry Condell, ensured his lasting fame by publishing all his plays in the First Folio of 1623. Half those works, including *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, and *The Tempest*, had never before appeared in print and might well have been lost forever. However, *Hamlet* was popular from the beginning, first appearing in a shortened form in a 1603 Quarto, then in a much longer form in a 1604/05 Quarto, as well as a 1611 Quarto.

**Companies of Players.** Groups of actors, or players, as they were usually called, included sharers, hired men, and boys. The sharers owned a part of the company, paid all the expenses, took a slice of the profits, and usually acted in the major roles. Hired men performed the rest of the parts, while boys (typically 4 apprentices, ranging in age from 9 or 10 to 18 or so) took the female roles. Because Shakespeare was a sharer as well as an actor in his company, he knew just who would perform most of the parts when he wrote his plays. Thus, Richard Burbage, the most famous leading man of the period, would have portrayed Hamlet. Constantly in rehearsal, the actors presented a different work each day, dropping it from the repertoire as soon as it failed to draw audiences. To meet such a ravenous demand, companies paid both members and

non-members for new material, which they did not share with rival troupes. Hamlet recalls an obscure play that the actors who came to Elsinore performed only four times because their Trojan War story proved unpopular with the general public.

**Patronage.** Companies had long been part of noble and royal households, expected to provide entertainment for their masters and their guests. When on tour through England in towns that sometimes included Stratford-upon-Avon, they not only collected payments for their performances but also enhanced the reputations of their patrons. The big change in Elizabethan times came with the conversion of companies into commercial enterprises. Still nominally under the sponsorship of powerful aristocrats like Lord Strange or the Lord Admiral, they charged admission for public performances and relied on those admissions to stay in business. Shakespeare's own company was variously called Lord Hunsdon's Men, the Chamberlain's Men (Hunsdon's royal office), and finally the King's Men, when James I honored them with that title.

**Performance Sites.** As professionals, players acted whenever and wherever they could make money. Shakespeare's company eventually owned two playhouses – the famous Globe from 1599 onwards and a smaller indoor theater called Blackfriars, where they performed during the cold winter months after 1608. Earlier, however, the Theatre, perhaps the Swan, and the Curtain had accommodated the troupe. For handsome fees, they acted many times at court in various royal palaces, as well as in noble households, and when plague shut down the London playhouses, they sent company members on the road to perform at town halls or school halls or innyards – wherever they could attract customers. The players in *Hamlet* whom the Prince and his friends had seen often in Wittenberg, are traveling in search of paying audiences. While the handsome new Globe would have premiered *Hamlet* about 1600, the 1604/05 Quarto tells us that “it hath been diverse times acted . . . in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where.” Good plays and players were moveable entertainments, not tied to any one place or one theater.

**Audiences.** Although anyone with the price of admission could attend a play at a public theater in London or a provincial location, not everyone could or did attend. Some lacked even a penny to spare for a spot standing in the yard, and most ordinary folk were hard at work during the afternoons when performances took place. The law forbade Sunday shows, and on the occasional holiday rowdy apprentices, along with other inexperienced playgoers, were as likely to cause riots as to pay attention to the action onstage. The majority of the places in the theater were allocated to those who could pay from double to a hundred times the price of the cheapest admissions in order to shelter from bad weather under a roof, sit on a bench, command a cushion, or show off in a spot where the entire audience could see them – on the stage or above it in the Lord's Room. Food and drink cost extra too. Factoring in performances at court and in noble houses before the elite, as well as the pricier “private” (i.e., indoor) playhouses like the Blackfriars, makes it clear that the companies played to spectators with both money and leisure, rather than to a representative cross-section of Elizabethan/Jacobean society.

**Stages.** Because of the variety of places where plays were presented, performance spaces had to be flexible and simple, rather than fixed and complicated. Any bare area, sometimes but not always raised, would do. An entrance on either side of the stage, a small platform above, and the occasional throne or table or bed that could be thrust out would pretty much suffice for all the plays of the period. Audiences and actors shared the same light, whether candles and torches indoors or daylight outdoors. At open-air sites such as the Globe, a roof over the stage prevented snow and rain from damaging a company's valuable costumes, like those that identified characters as kings or great lords. Otherwise, performances focused on the words and the action, not sets or special effects. Any classroom can serve to stage Shakespeare effectively.

# An Interview with the Director of *Hamlet*, Artistic Director Denice Hicks

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**Like most tragic characters, Hamlet has both good and bad traits. On the positive side, he is trying to correct an act of injustice. On the negative side, his desire for revenge consumes him and brings about even more tragic events. How do you convey both sides of this complicated tragic character? Is there a temptation to lean in one direction or the other in the interpretation and performance of the character?**

**-Clifton Kaiser, Battleground Academy Upper School in Nashville**

We are hoping to create a Hamlet who garners sympathy from our audience. He is a young man with a brilliant mind, a moral conscience, and a great capacity for passion. His obsession with his father's death haunts him to the point of madness, his intense love for his mother is powerfully distracting to him, his infatuation with Ophelia is heartbreaking, and his distrust and hatred for Claudius, the man who murdered his father and stole his mother, is all consuming. Although he is secretive and deceitful to the other characters, through his soliloquies he shares his every thought with the audience. Audience members will be able to make up their own minds about whether or not Hamlet does things in the right way, but they should have no question about his process.



**With so many students studying *Hamlet* in school, the “To be or not to be...” soliloquy is so widely known, that I could picture many in the audience reciting it along with the actor during a performance. What steps does the NSF production take to help to make that soliloquy seem fresh and new, and not rehearsed and kitschy?**

**-Tim Sirles, Portland High School in Portland, TN**

One of the biggest challenges of directing *Hamlet* is getting to the “To be or not to be” moment. It’s like building up to Juliet saying, “O, Romeo, Romeo wherefore art thou Romeo?” Everybody knows it’s coming (especially the actors), and we never want it to sound corny or contrived. I’ve addressed that in this production by making it the first line you’ll hear. For this show, it IS the primary question, said in the dark at the very beginning. We’ve also moved the full speech to a place in the play that is earlier than in most productions. The first Quarto places it just after Polonius has presented the King and Queen with Hamlet’s love letters to Ophelia, and I prefer that placement for his most famous musing. To keep this speech and all of the language fresh, we will do a thorough exploration of the text, finding all possible meanings of words, phrases and ideas, poetic devices and contextual possibilities. We will physicalize the language whenever we can, telling the story through imagery as well as words.

**In the internet-driven, high tech society we live in, with all the video games, movies, ipods etc... do you fear that young people may not embrace the Bard like they once did?**

**-Tony Morton, Davidson Academy in Nashville TN**

Yes, I do fear that. Shakespeare’s poetry can be very intimidating, but I think that on some levels we know that it’s good for us. Understanding Shakespeare is empowering, and, like all power, it comes with responsibility. Once students are empowered with Shakespeare’s language, it’s challenging for them to go back to communicating with grunts, eye rolls, and punctuation marks. My dream is to start an epidemic of literacy, liberating all people from their inability to express themselves accurately. Shakespeare is my vehicle, or peaceable weapon, if you will, of choice.

**What are some of the drawbacks about putting on a production of *Hamlet*? Are there other Shakespeare plays that are easier to prepare for? Are there some that are more difficult?**

**-Adam Keeton, Jim Satterfield Middle School in Hartsville, TN**

*Hamlet* is daunting because of the length of the full script. It is Shakespeare's longest play, and I have labored with a great deal of care over the cutting of this text. In order to get it to the 2-hour playing length we've promised, I had to cut about 2,000 lines. Maintaining the poetry, rhythm, and meter of the language is important to me, as is preserving the plot and telling the story clearly. *Hamlet* is also an extremely complex character, and we hope to illustrate his conflicts and issues by creating visual images with the ensemble. For instance, we might see an actor representing *Hamlet*'s doubt fencing with another actor representing *Hamlet*'s conscience. Other plays of Shakespeare's may be easier because of their length or the simplicity of the characters, but his plays are always a delightful challenge.

**What have been some challenges in directing this play?**

**What are your favorite scenes in *Hamlet*? Why?**

**What advice or criticism do you think Shakespeare would give about the way you are directing his play?**

**-Meghen Sanders, Stratford High School in Nashville TN**

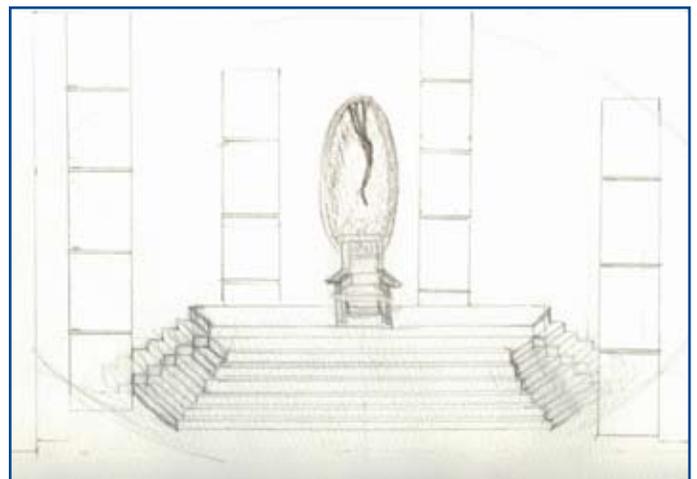
Shakespeare included very few stage directions, so a director's foremost challenge lies in figuring out what's happening. The clues are embedded in the text and we just have to delve and probe to find them. Casting is always a fun challenge, as chemistry, style, and size all factor into the choices.

I love *Hamlet*'s scene with the ghost of his father. Having supernatural characters on stage is always a great opportunity to engage the imagination, and for me that is the most important part of theater! If Shakespeare were co-directing, and sometimes I think he is, I am certain that he would approve of the way I allow all participants to have a voice in the creative process. There weren't really directors in Shakespeare's time, and they put their performances together as a company. I like the structure of having a director make final decisions, but it would be a crime not to allow the artist in each participant to express him or herself. Also, because Shakespeare found the contemporary relevance in every story he told, I know that he would appreciate that we always explore the reasons we're doing this play at this time and its relevance to our audience.

**After seeing the summer productions, the students and I are very interested in knowing what drives the decision for costumes and method of presentation of a Shakespeare production for the Nashville Shakespeare Festival.**

**-Janet Parker, Freedom Intermediate School in Franklin TN**

First, we choose plays that we feel are relevant. Then we examine the text closely to see what potential concepts lie within it. The concept is usually based on the themes of the play. For instance, the themes of honor, integrity, and mystery guided me toward the Asian-influenced setting of our 2006 *Macbeth*. Our cowboy *As You Like It* was inspired by the songs sung by the outlaws in the forest of Arden. This *Hamlet* is set in a world between being and not being - a spiritual world haunted by ancient characters who cannot rest in peace. We make artistic choices based on our own experience, preference, curiosity, and imagination.



*Hamlet* set design concept drawing by designer Paul Gatrell

*Inexplicable dumb shows and noise. . . .*

## Setting <sup>the</sup> Scene:

# Hamlet Activities for the Classroom

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Claire Syler, Education Director

### What's A Dumb Show?

Perhaps the most famous dumb show in English literature takes place in Act III, scene ii, of *Hamlet* – the play within a play. Although most students will have seen a dumb show, not as many of them will know the term. A dumb show is traditionally known as action(s) performed by actors without spoken dialogue. Because your students will be exposed to a dumb show in the Nashville Shakespeare Festival's production of *Hamlet*, utilize this performance and storytelling opportunity in the classroom.

#### ACTIVITY I:

Write down the following scenarios on separate cards: greeting old friends at a wedding; greeting old friends at a funeral; a proposal of marriage; a parent forbidding a child from seeing someone; a challenge to a duel; a mother and son argument; seeing a ghost. Divide students into pairs or small groups, giving each group a card with a scenario. Ask the students to discover how to convey the situation without using words. Perform these scenarios for the class, allowing the class to guess the card's scenario. Discuss the term 'dumb show' and how this technique is used in theatre, cinema, and television. Why is a dumb show an effective form of storytelling? What is the desired response for the audience? How is it used in *Hamlet* and for what purpose?

#### ACTIVITY II:

As a class, read and discuss the conversation Ophelia and Polonius have in Act II, scene i. Discuss this moment of intrusion with the class. What happens in the scene? Why does Hamlet come to Ophelia? Why is Ophelia frightened? Is there significance in his choice to attend her in a private place? What do Hamlet's silent actions (a sigh and nodding three times) communicate? Divide the students into pairs, letting each group of students create a dumb show to accompany Ophelia's description of the intrusion. Share the performances with the class, discussing each performance.

#### ACTIVITY III:

Discuss Hamlet's desire to stage *The Murder of Gonzago* in Act II, scene ii. Based on what we know of Hamlet, how might he have envisioned the play's performance? What does Hamlet feel while watching the play? Why does the play begin in a dumb show? Divide students into groups of three. Using the students' answers to the discussion questions as guidance, ask the groups to stage a version of the dumb show in *The Murder of Gonzago*. Ask each group to decide the dumb show's desired effect. Share the performances with the class, discussing each performance.

### Words, words, words.....

Through his soliloquies, Hamlet chooses to share his most private and personal thoughts with the audience. It is no wonder these intimate words have become highly quoted Shakespearean phrases: "Speak the speech," "The play's the thing," and of course "To be or not to be."

As a class, discuss Hamlet's soliloquies. To whom is he talking? What does Hamlet hope his speeches will accomplish? What is revealed about Hamlet's personality in these private conversations? As an assignment, ask the students to select one of Hamlet's soliloquies (or a shortened soliloquy) to paraphrase into modern language. Next, ask the students to write a short reflective paragraph based on any personal connection the students have to Hamlet's speech.

## Discussion Ideas & Questions

### DISCUSSION I:

Discuss the notions of friendship, loyalty, and betrayal with your students. How common is it for friends to remain loyal during times of distress, as Horatio does for Hamlet? Why do Rosencrantz and Guildenstern betray Hamlet? What causes friends to betray one another?

### DISCUSSION II:

Like many students, Hamlet is at odds with his parents; he wants to go back to school (like Laertes), while his mother and step-father desire him to stay at Elsinore. They think he's overly depressed about his father's death and urge him to cheer up. Is Hamlet depressed or grief-stricken? What is the difference? How do shifts in parents' marriages affect children?

### DISCUSSION III:

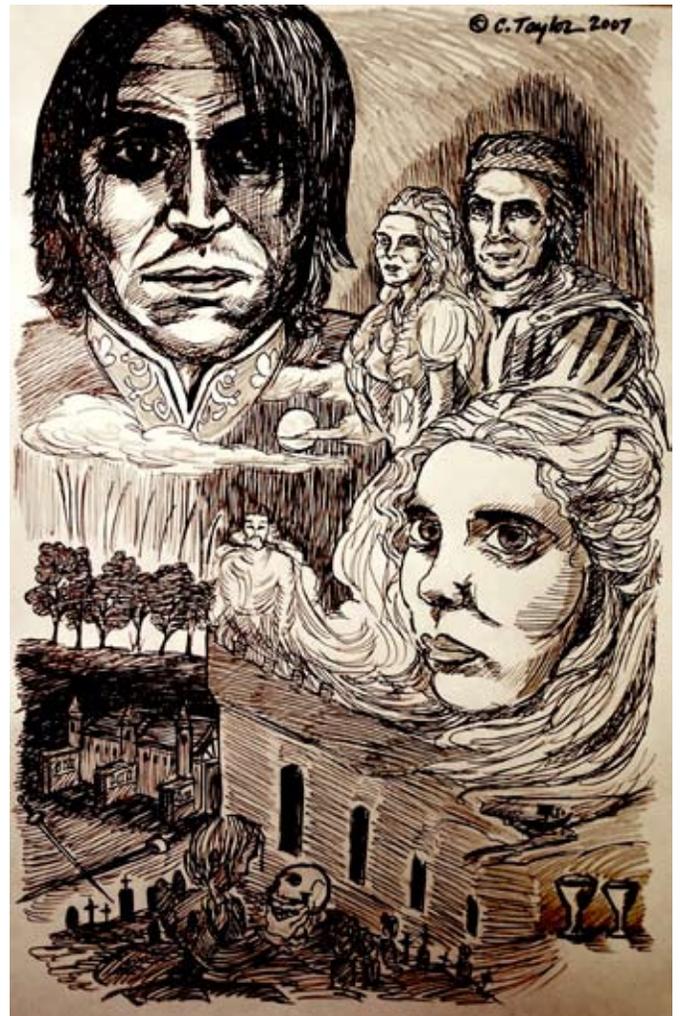
After seeing the ghost of his father, Hamlet says "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." Are ghosts real? Why do some people believe in them? Why do people tell ghost stories? Why might Shakespeare have used ghosts in some of his plays?

## Hamlet in Design

Take a look at the artwork created by student Cody Taylor. Cody masterfully took a quote from *Hamlet* and imagined what the dialogue might look like. Although not all of us have Cody's talents, we all have the capability to imagine the aesthetic world of *Hamlet*.

As a class, brainstorm *Hamlet* in production. What colors are important in the playing of *Hamlet* – are they light or dark? Saturate or non-saturate? What time period could the play be set within? What costume pieces are important for the characters? What props are necessary for the play? Finally, if the class could cast the play with any famous actors, who would play Hamlet? Claudius? Gertrude? Ophelia?

Divide students into groups of four, giving each group a few magazines, a large piece of paper, scissors and tape. Allow each group the opportunity to design a production of *Hamlet*, making choices regarding color, costumes, and the play's cast using the magazines provided. Once they finish compiling the design, ask each group to present the creation for the class.



This drawing by college student Cody Taylor was inspired by the line "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark." - *Hamlet Act I, Scene 4*. Used by Permission.

## Directions

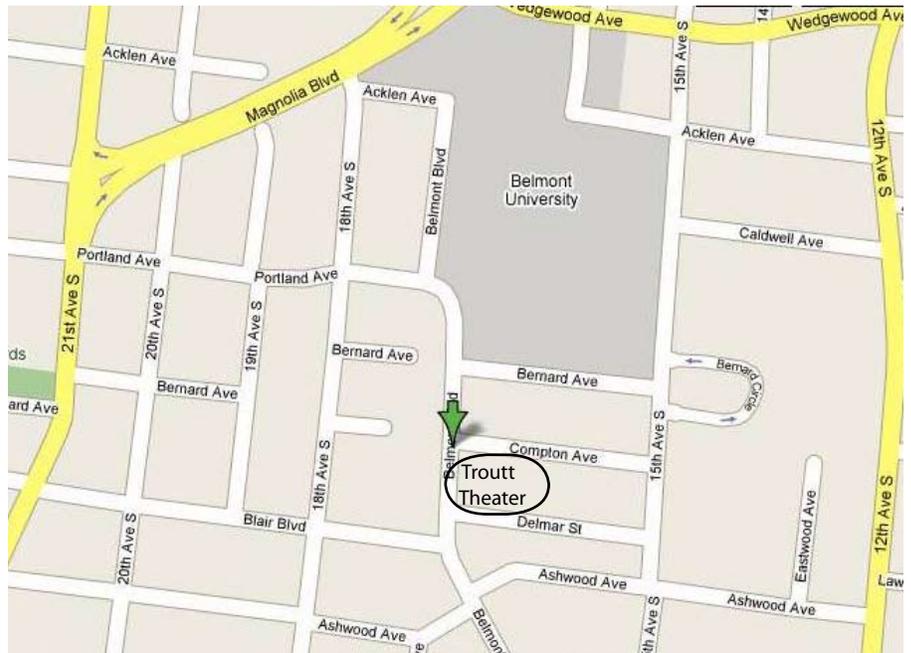
### Troutt Theater

2100 Belmont Blvd.

Nashville, TN 37212

**From I-440:** take Exit 3 for 21st Avenue. Merge onto 21st Avenue and continue 0.4 mile. Turn RIGHT onto Blair Blvd. and continue 0.4 mile. Turn LEFT onto Belmont Blvd. and continue 500ft.

**From I-65:** take Exit 81 for Wedgewood Ave. Go west on Wedgewood Ave. and continue 1 mile. Turn LEFT on 15th Ave. S and continue 0.4 mile. Turn RIGHT on Delmar Street and continue 0.2 mile. Turn RIGHT on Belmont Blvd. and continue 300ft.



## Auditions for the Byron & Beth Smith Apprentice Company 2008!

The Nashville Shakespeare Festival is looking for 14 playful, creative, and physical theatre artists to participate in the 2008 Shakespeare in the Park production of *Coriolanus*, directed by Mark Cabus. Twelve Performance Apprentices will be cast in supporting roles. One Stage Managing Apprentice and one Directing Apprentice will be included in all aspects of the professional productions.

Audition Date: **Saturday, April 19**

To schedule up an appointment email **Claire Syler** – [claire@nashvilleshakes.org](mailto:claire@nashvilleshakes.org)

### What is the Apprentice Company?

A training intensive for aspiring performers ages 13-up led by NSF Education Director Claire Syler and NSF Artistic Director Denice Hicks, along with guest artists hired from the professional talent in Nashville. Apprentices receive 50 hours of performance training – movement, voice and diction, acting, text analysis and character work.

For further information and video on this program, visit [www.nashvilleshakes.org/students.htm](http://www.nashvilleshakes.org/students.htm).

## Thanks



This guidebook is sponsored by the Nashville chapter of **The English Speaking Union** of the United States.

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