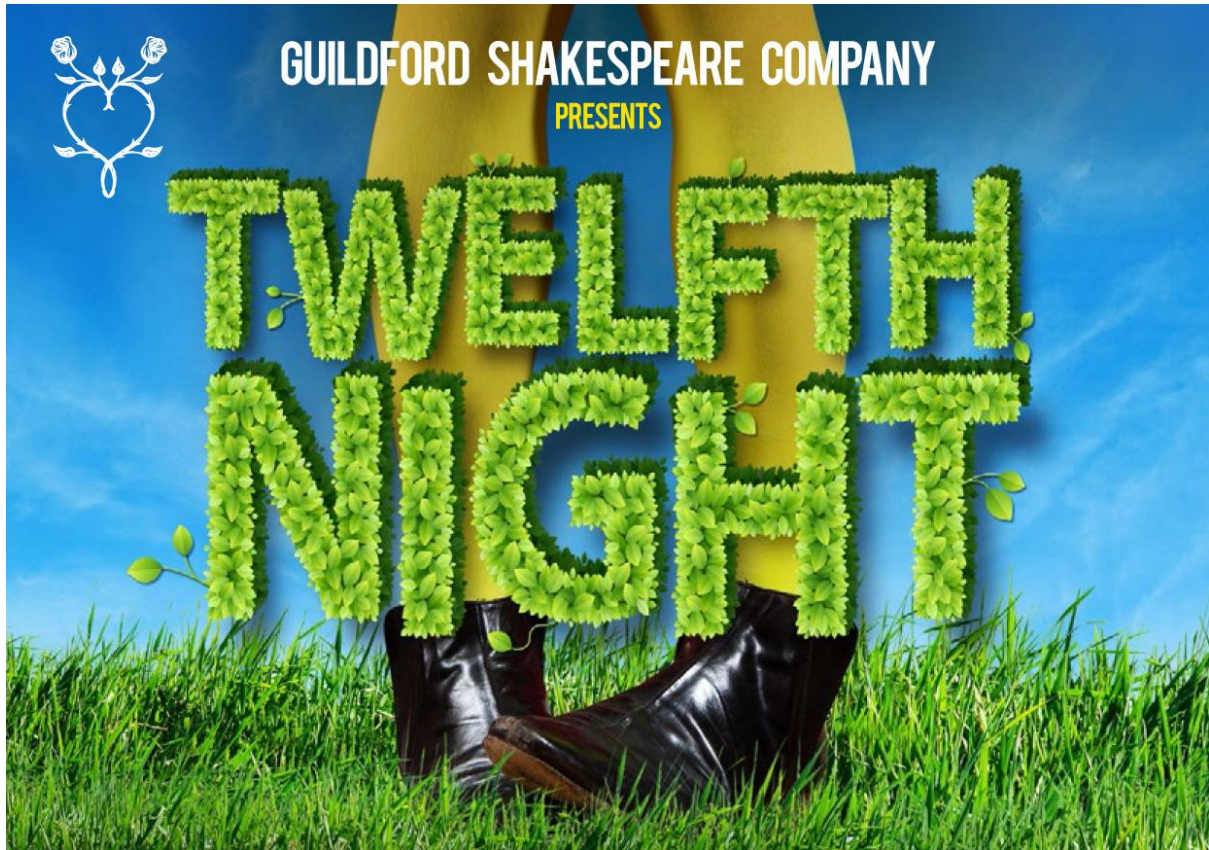


# TWELFTH NIGHT

Education Pack



**GUILDFORD  
SHAKESPEARE  
COMPANY**



## EDUCATION PACK

## INTRODUCTION

This education pack has been written by GSC to complement the stage production in June 2014, staged at the Guildford Castle Gardens.

The information contained in here can be used as preparation material before seeing the performance or as follow-up work afterwards in the class room. This pack is suitable for Year 9 and above.

This pack contains:

1. GSC – our approach to Shakespeare
2. Cast/Character and Creative Team List
3. Synopsis
4. Shakespeare's Language
5. The Origins of Twelfth Night
6. Interview with Director Tom Littler
7. Twelfth Night Mood Boards and Costume Designs
8. Practical classroom exercise taken from the rehearsal room.

Practical in-school workshops on *Twelfth Night* can be booked, with actors coming into your school to work on the play.

Please see [www.guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk](http://www.guildford-shakespeare-company.co.uk) or call 01483 304384 for more details.

## GUILDFORD SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

### OUR APPROACH TO SHAKESPEARE

***“One of the strongest and most consistent companies operating in and around London”***  
PlayShakespeare.com, 2011

Guildford Shakespeare Company is a professional site-specific theatre company, specialising in Shakespeare. Our approach places the audience right at the heart of the action, immersing them in the world of the play, thereby demystifying the legend that Shakespeare is for an elite, educated few but rather is immediate and accessible to everyone.

***“...to be spellbound, amused and to follow every moment of text and to want the production never to end...one of the best evenings of theatre I have ever been privileged to attend.”*** Audience member 2011

We want our 21<sup>st</sup> Century audiences to experience the same thrill and excitement that Shakespeare’s original audiences must have felt when they first saw the Ghost appear in *Hamlet*, the rousing battle cry of Henry V, and edge-of-your-seat anticipation in *The Comedy of Errors*.

At GSC we use diverse and unusual non-theatre venues to create dynamic and challenging productions. From castles to lakes, churches to pubs, our approach merges the audience and acting space so that you’re given a visceral, stimulating and, above all, unique theatre experience.

***“I am so thrilled to be able to bring my grandchildren to such quality theatre right here on our doorstep. I also think that the proximity to the stage makes the action all the more real and compelling for youngsters”*** Audience member, 2011

GSC productions are fresh, fast and modern in their interpretation of Shakespeare, but always in the original text and NEVER dumbed down.

**We hope you enjoy these fabulous stories as much as we enjoy re-telling them.**

All best wishes

Matt & Sarah

**Joint Artistic & Executive Producers**

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## THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

**ORSINO**, Duke of Illyria  
**VALENTINE**, his attendant  
**CURIO**, his attendant

Richard Keightley  
James Camp  
Alex Hooper

**VIOLA**, a shipwrecked girl  
**SEBASTIAN**, her twin brother  
**CAPTAIN**, of the wrecked ship  
**ANTONIO**, another sea captain

Emily Tucker  
James Camp  
Chris Porter  
Alex Hooper

**OLIVIA**, a countess  
**MARIA**, her waiting-gentlewoman  
**SIR TOBY BELCH**, her uncle  
**SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK**  
**MALVOLIO**, *Olivia's* steward  
**FESTE**, the Fool

Rhiannon Sommers  
Sarah Gobran  
Chris Porter  
Richard Galazka  
Matt Pinches  
Morgan Philpott

### ***Creative Team***

Director	Tom Littler
Designer	Neil Irish
Composer/Arranger/MD	Mary McAdam
Assistant Designer	Anett Black
Fight Director	Philip d'Orleans
Sound Designer	Matt Eaton

### ***Stage Management***

Production Manager	Colin Newton
Deputy Stage Manager	Christine Hollinshead
Assistant Stage Manager	Kate Thompson

## SYNOPSIS

Following a violent shipwreck, Viola is washed up on the unfamiliar shores of Illyria, and believes that her twin brother, Sebastian, has died in the storm. Mourning her loss, she disguises herself as a boy and finds employment at the court of the island's lovelorn duke, Orsino.

Orsino is desperately in love with the local Countess Olivia, who still in mourning for her father and recently deceased brother, and will not entertain any form of affection.

Viola's brother, Sebastian, also arrives in Illyria, rescued from the sea by the pirate Antonio, who is no stranger to the island having fought Orsino's navy in a recent war.

Despite his rejection Orsino sends his new page Cesario (Viola in disguise) to woo Olivia on his behalf. Viola goes unwillingly as she has already fallen in love with the Duke.

Elsewhere, Olivia's raucous uncle, Sir Toby Belch, is trying to line up the hopeless Sir Andrew Aguecheek as a possible suitor to his niece, whilst making a hefty profit at the same time. Amongst Sir Toby's rowdy gang is Maria, Olivia's gentlewoman. Feste, the family's melancholic yet perceptive Fool, is also in attendance.

They are continually harassed by the preening, self-loving steward Malvolio. To teach him a lesson, and knowing his love for Olivia, a plan is concocted to leave in his path a letter supposedly written by her, cryptically informing Malvolio that she is in love with him.

Meanwhile, Olivia has fallen in love with this messenger Cesario (Viola).

Dressed in yellow stockings and smiling maniacally, Malvolio publicly announces his love for Olivia. She, supposing he is mad, orders that he is locked up.

The jealous Sir Andrew challenges Cesario to a duel. Antonio intervenes to defend Cesario whom he thinks is Sebastian, and is arrested. Olivia has in the meantime met and married Sebastian, believing him to be Cesario.

Eventually Sebastian and Viola appear in the same place at the same time and the twins re-united and the confusion is lifted. Finally Malvolio is released from prison and in front of everyone discovers he has been horribly tricked.

The play ends with Viola shedding her disguise and agreeing to marry Orsino.

## SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

### Elizabethan Language

In Elizabethan English people were much more used to telling stories and listening to them, than they are today. Books and printing were expensive and not everyone could read, so the world Shakespeare was working in could be said to be an Oral Culture.

People went to **hear** a play, not **see** a play. An important point. Shakespeare's society relied on listening. From accounts of voyages in taverns to folk stories, people were naturally trained to listen and to speak; something we don't give as much weight to today because we rely on seeing.

The way people spoke was also a lot rougher and tougher than English is today - there is the opinion that Shakespeare himself might have had Birmingham accent! When you add to this the fact that on stage theatres had no scenery, lighting or modern special effects to create atmosphere, you begin to see the mechanics behind why Shakespeare's language is descriptive.

### Shakespeare's Stage

Shakespeare was a 'commercial playwright', writing to make money: if his plays didn't sell, not only did he not get paid but the rest of the company didn't either! He was also an actor and perhaps most importantly, a share-holder in the theatre in which he worked.

Plays were performed during the day, usually between 2pm and 5pm – it is very likely that the original performances of Shakespeare's plays were only about 2 ½ hours long – and the actors could see the audience, unlike in today's theatre – a very exciting but dangerous thing!

1500 people would gather to see a play, with 400-600 people paying a penny to stand. In the theatre there would have been representatives from every part of society, talking, doing business, eating, drinking, chatting each other up! It was the playwright's and the actors' job to keep their attention.

### Practical ideas

Don't try to analyse the meanings of words and phrasing but rather let them inform you by how they make you feel. It is a bit of a leap of faith to begin with, but if we give ourselves over to the words, rhythms, and sounds, they will tell us how the character/situation is to be played.

**Tip.** This is a play – so do that! **Play** with the words, their sounds, their rhythms; play with the characters and their situations.

## THE ORIGINS OF TWELFTH NIGHT

*Twelfth Night* is known to be one of Shakespeare's greatest comedies. Filled with adventure, mistaken identity, love and madness, the play centres on the theme of extremes. From love to hate to madness, the characters are thrown into a whirlwind of magnified human nature. Written in the middle of Shakespeare's career, around 1600-1602, it served as a holiday play surrounding the celebration of Twelfth Night, or Epiphany, which was a celebration of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

The celebration, though based on Christian religion, was often not a religious gathering but that of a Pagan nature. During Shakespeare's time, it was celebrated as an inversion of order, with servants dressing and acting as masters and vice versa. This device is seen multiple times in the play, most obviously Viola dressing as a man beneath her station and Malvolio dressing above his station in yellow stockings.

Shakespeare is known to have had multiple sources in writing his plays, and *Twelfth Night* is no exception. The play seems to be most largely drawn from an English story entitled "*Apollonius and Silla*" by Barnabe Riche. Shakespeare's plot mirrors Riche's to a point where they both involve a shipwreck, twins and woman who must dress as a man. Another source used is an Italian play from the 1580s entitled "*Gl'Ingannati*" or "*The Deceived Ones*". The story centered around the stock characters from *Commedia dell'Arte* which Shakespeare was also known to draw from for inspiration.

## IN CONVERSATION WITH... TOM LITTLER

The director of *Twelfth Night* discusses the play, the characters and the time period in which this production is set.

***Twelfth Night* is one of Shakespeare's best-loved comedies. What in your opinion makes it so popular for audiences?**

*I suppose it has a bit of everything. The love scenes are rightly famous, exquisitely romantic. There are two or three great comic set-pieces. The characters are vivid and memorable.*

*It's also a true ensemble play. You can walk away from a production of *Twelfth Night* and your favourite character could be Feste, could be Malvolio, could be Andrew, or Toby, or Olivia, or of course Viola. Even the sub-plot with Antonio is fully explored. It's really unusual to get a play which is so generous to its characters – they all get featured scenes.*

*In my view it's one of the best plays Shakespeare ever wrote; it's certainly his finest and richest comedy. He wrote it in 1600, the same year he wrote *Hamlet* and just before the very dark and savage *Troilus and Cressida*. It's just about the last proper comedy he ever wrote, and I think it's informed by the fact that he's a really mature writer by this point in his career – he's absolutely at the peak of his powers.*

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*Continues...*

**Yet a lot of it is actually quite dark, melancholic even. Does that mean you have to make a choice in how you direct it?**

*I suppose so, yes. I think the outdoor setting here in Guildford has to lead the mood a little bit. It doesn't get dark outside until quite late in the evening, so, though it's actually set in the middle of winter and lots of scenes are nocturnal, it's quite hard to communicate night-time scenes at 8pm. Maybe if it rains that will help in some ways...*

*So Neil Irish, the designer, and I have tried to re-work the play slightly, shifting scenes outdoors, which naturally makes it feel a bit more summery.*

*You can definitely play the melancholy if you want to – some productions can be very dark, not just autumnal but bleak and wintery.*

*But in directing this production I've been thinking a lot about the hope in it. So many of the characters begin the play in quite a desperate state, and then there's just an explosion of love and laughter – Viola and Sebastian, quite unwittingly, spark something wonderful in Illyria.*

**The play starts, like many of his comedies (*The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for example), with potential tragedy: a shipwreck, the death of a brother and unrequited love. What do you think it is that allows us to slip into the festive spirit?**

*Well, comedy often arises from despair and sadness, doesn't it? We have Christmas (and *Twelfth Night* refers to the twelfth night after Christmas, of course) in the middle of winter for a reason – because we all need cheering up.*

*We actually know from very early on in the play that Sebastian is alive, so we somehow intuit that it's going to end well. Viola and Sebastian are going to meet each other again, and in some ways that's the most important storyline. Obviously it's a brilliant dramatic device to have two identical twins wandering around all over the place, causing havoc. But I think we really need those twins to meet each other again.*

*There are also a lot of characters in the play who wallow in their own emotions, quite self-indulgently. Orsino and Olivia, in particular, have both dramatized their own (genuine) feelings – Orsino's of unrequited love, and Olivia's of grief. In our production we make those dramatizations quite explicit and visual in the poetry and the monument. Then the events of the play shatter that mood and take the characters to a new place.*

**How important do you think class and money are in the play?**

*Massively. There's a rigid class system in place, but money is important too. Just because Sir Toby is a baronet, that doesn't mean he's got any cash. Sir Andrew needs to 'secure' a marriage to Olivia because she's massively wealthy. Maria has an uncertain status in the play – in some productions she's a floor-sweeping servant. My take is that she's closer to a lady-in-waiting – she'd be a 'paid companion', in another age. Perhaps she's well-born but needs the money.*

*Malvolio has elaborate fantasies about himself, as a steward/butler, taking over the household, and upturning the social order – being able to order Toby around. Olivia is an object of desire for him partly because she represents, in class and wealth, everything that he doesn't have.*

*And Feste is a 'licensed fool' – i.e. he's allowed to do it – but his fooling is often pretty close to begging, however witty he may be.*



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**Finally, you've chosen to set this production in the 1870s. Can you tell us a little bit about your thoughts behind this?**

*I didn't want to do a big 'concept' production; I just wanted the story to be really clear for the audience, and for us to have a way of understanding the social status of the characters – and I think a lot of us feel fairly familiar with that mid-to-late Victorian era.*

*It also suits various things about the play.*

*Twelfth Night is very much about puritanism and the effects of repression. Malvolio is a puritan of the late Elizabethan age, and I think Shakespeare is saying that his kind of puritanism is dangerous – it's not healthy. The sexual and social repression of the 1870s seems a good analogue for that.*

*The 1860s and 1870s are also an age of national mourning following the death of Prince Albert. One piece of our set is (in miniature!) somewhat inspired by the Albert Memorial. Olivia's mourning seems to match that in some way. Meanwhile Alfred, Lord Tennyson also mourned extravagantly for his friend Hallam. We hint at a bit of the Tennyson thing in Orsino.*

*I wanted to set the play during a time when social conventions were very important and restrictive, and when there was a lot of tension about those restrictions. The tensions of money and class are central to that decade, and there was real poverty, too.*

*Plus there were people arriving from new lands – which begs the question of who Viola and Sebastian are – where have they come from?*

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## TWELFTH NIGHT STAGE DESIGN MOOD BOARDS AND COSTUME DESIGNS INSPIRATION FROM 1870S VICTORIAN ENGLAND



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## TWELFTH NIGHT STAGE DESIGN



## TWELFTH NIGHT EXERCISE

Try this exercise with the students on sound and texture. Give every student a copy of the Viola speech on the following page. She has just come from wooing Olivia for the Count Orsino, when she is given a ring that Olivia claims she has left behind. It is this moment that Viola realizes Olivia is in love with her, while she herself is in love with Orsino.

1. First, read the speech through together, quietly, and discuss any words or images that may need clarifying.
2. Let the group read through the speech again, in their own time while walking through the space. This will give them an opportunity to have a personal response.
3. When you feel they have had enough time to themselves, bring them together and read it through again as a group.
4. Now for the next step: this may be tricky at first, but it will allow the students to see the impact of different sounds for different words. Have the group speak through the whole speech, in their own time, with just the vowel sounds.

Example:       O time! Thou must untangle this, not I  
                  OH !! OW UH UHA I, AH I

It will take them a moment to get used to the feeling, but once they do they will see how important the vowel sounds are to portraying the meaning of the speech and emotion of the text.

5. Now switch it up! Try only consonant sounds. How does that inform the speech? Where are the heavy consonant sentences in relationship to the vowel sounds?
6. When they have finished that, have them speak it through again as a group. How has the meaning changed from the first time they went through the speech. Discuss how the vowels and consonants impact the flow of the speech.

It is worth reminding the group that, just like all of them, each of Shakespeare's characters express themselves differently and in exercises like these we can begin to consider the ways in which characters speak.

It might be fun to expand this exercise with one of Sir Andrew and Sir Toby's exchanges.

Allow the students to go through their own experience of how it changed the way they did the speech and enjoy those wonderful words given to us by Shakespeare!

## SAMPLE SPEECH FOR WORKSHOP

### Act II, Scene 2

#### Viola

I left no ring with her: what means this lady?  
Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her!  
She made good view of me; indeed, so much,  
That sure methought her eyes had lost her tongue,  
For she did speak in starts distractedly.  
She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion  
Invites me in this churlish messenger.  
None of my lord's ring! why, he sent her none.  
I am the man: if it be so, as 'tis,  
Poor lady, she were better love a dream.  
Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,  
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.  
How easy is it for the proper-false  
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!  
Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we!  
For such as we are made of, such we be.  
How will this fadge? my master loves her dearly;  
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him;  
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me.  
What will become of this? As I am man,  
My state is desperate for my master's love;  
As I am woman,--now alas the day!--  
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe!  
O time! thou must untangle this, not I;  
It is too hard a knot for me to untie!