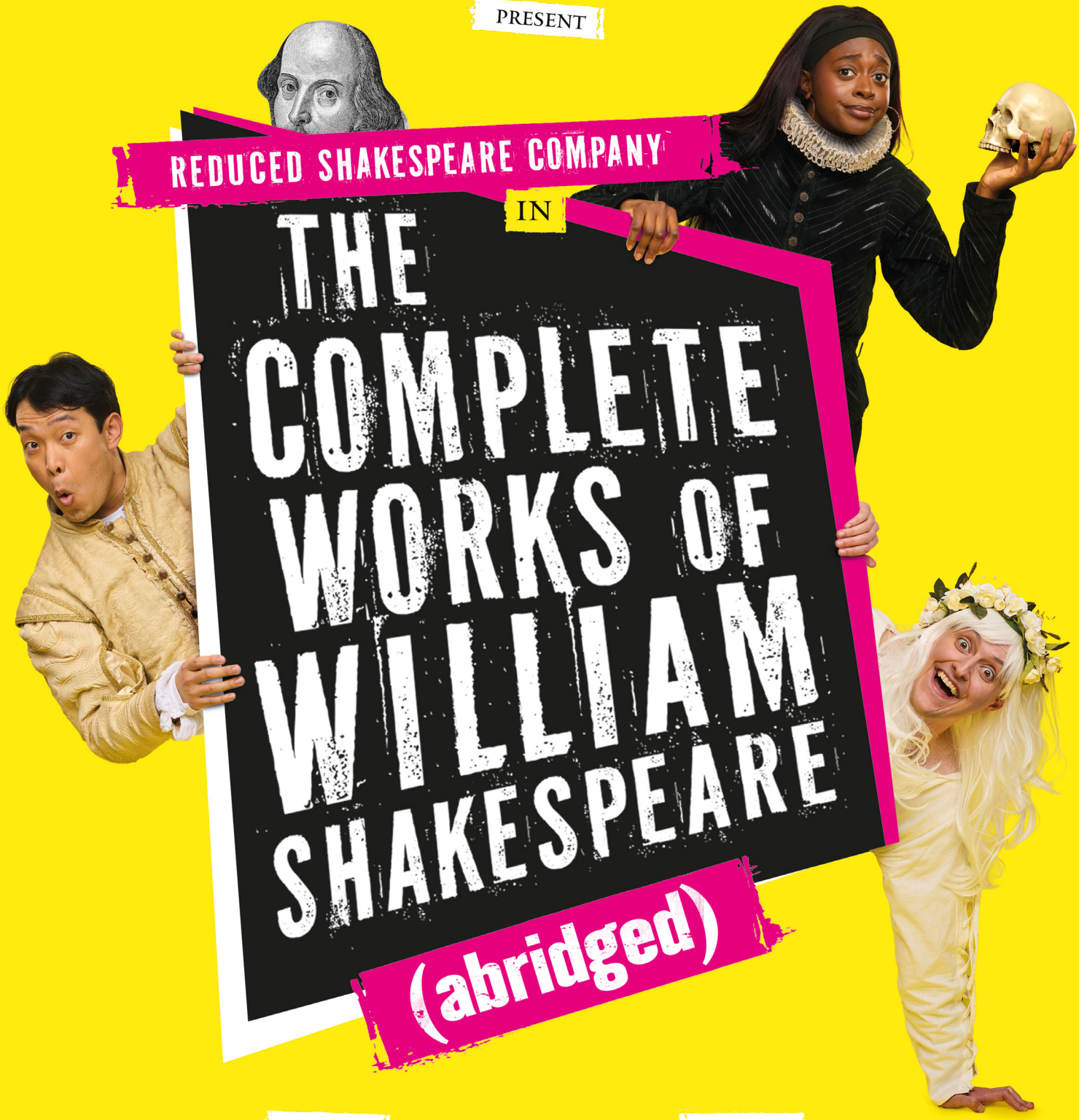
THE THEATRE CHIPPING NORTON AND SELLADOOR WORLDWIDE

PRESENT



REDUCED SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

IN

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (abridged)

WRITTEN BY

ADAM LONG, DANIEL SINGER & JESS WINFIELD

DIRECTED BY

ADAM LONG

EDUCATION PACK

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TO THE EDUCATOR

Dear Educators,

Thank you for choosing to bring your learners to *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*. This production is a passion project of a group of creators who have been working on this concept in some form for over 20 years, touring the world, introducing people to Shakespeare and doing their best to make a first encounter with his works engaging and accessible.

It is a joyous thing to be a part of someone's first experience of Shakespeare, and we don't take that responsibility lightly. Our show is designed to inform and entertain even the most novice of Shakespeare fans! But everyone, from first timers right through to seasoned experts will have something to take away from this show. The more you know, the more you know!

We want to bring Shakespeare to life and help students see that his work can be inspiring in a range of different contexts owing to the timeless themes and honest relationships portrayed in his work. We hope this pack will help enhance your experience at *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)* and can't wait to share this show with you!

DRAMA CURRICULUM LINKS

1. **Performance and Acting Techniques**

- Versatility and Multi-roling
- Physical Theatre and Comedy
- Dialect Work
- Specialised Performance Styles including Rap, Physical Theatre/Movement and Ensemble Performance

2. **Theatre History and Production Analysis**

- Meta-theatre and Conventions:
- Analysis of Literary Context
- Adaptation and Modern Relevance
- Genre Study

3. **Audience Interaction and Breaking The Fourth Wall**

- Audience Participation
- Managing Audience Response

To book tickets - head to our website:
completeworkstour.co.uk

INTRODUCTION FROM ADAM LONG

WRITER/DIRECTOR

The Reduced Shakespeare Company originated at the Renaissance Faire in Northern California in 1981. The Renaissance Faire was an outdoor festival where hippies, bikers, punks and computer programmers would gather to recreate what they thought an Elizabethan country village looked like in the late 1400s. As part of this festival, my friends and I were street performers doing fifteen minute versions of Romeo and Juliet and Hamlet. I was playing Ophelia and Juliet and various other characters. We called this the Reduced Shakespeare Company and claimed the initials 'RSC' for ourselves.

We performed The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) for the first time at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1987. The show was well received and we were offered opportunities to perform at festivals in New York, Tokyo, Los Angeles and Montreal. We began touring and in 1996 we opened The Complete Works at the Criterion Theatre in London's West End where it ran for nine years. I moved to London at that point and became Reduced Shakespeare's London director while still performing in the show every evening except Mondays.

I've always loved Shakespeare and strongly feel that it should be staged in ways that engage and delight an audience. And I also love classic comedy having grown up watching Looney Tunes Cartoons and Marx Brothers movies. So in a way, Reduced Shakespeare has been an ideal career for me. My partners and I have always enjoyed kicking Shakespeare off of his pedestal and making his work accessible for modern audiences.

FUN FACTS

***The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)* team hold two Guinness World Records:**

- The highest altitude Shakespearean performance - on 23 April 2014 (Shakespeare's birthday) the RSC performed The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) at **37,000 feet** aboard an EasyJet flight from London Gatwick to Verona, Italy.
- The longest-running Shakespeare play (West End) – notching up **3,744 performances** from its opening night on 7 March 1996 until it closed on 3 April 2005.

Adam Long (writer) is the voice of Mr. Small on Cartoon Network's *The Amazing World of Gumball.*

FUN FACTS ABOUT OUR CAST

Tom Pavey is studying for a DPhil in Biology at the University of Oxford, investigating the impact of anthropogenic climate change on lions across time.

Efé Agwale created an adaptation of *The Tempest* set in a Nigerian Village

Woogie Jung has an amazing operatic singing voice and is obsessed with the works of Stephen Sondheim.

MOODBOARDS

Liz Cooke worked on the production design for this show and she shares below her inspirations and ideas as she developed the aesthetic for this production:

How did you decide on the aesthetic for this production?

This show is a new production of a much-loved original show, and I am working with one of the original directors and writers. The director Adam and I spent a lot of time talking about how we would revisit and reinvent it, and we looked at a lot of images to work towards an aesthetic we both liked.

We chose a clean and modern look, which can be transformed under lighting. The actors in this show are also the 'makers' of this show and it's important that the aesthetic comes from their point of view. They set out to make an aspirational show and have a deep belief that they are glorifying Shakespeare's works. However badly wrong the show may go for them (occasionally), the design doesn't need to belittle them for laughs; they are inspired by modern opera and European theatre and they set out their scholarship and their passion for Shakespeare bravely on stage.

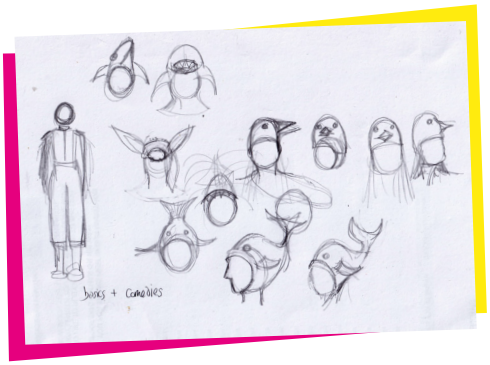
What is your general approach to designing for the stage?

I first approach a design by getting to know the text really well (if there is a text). As a designer, I want to understand the tone and the movement within the show; what locations it visits, how the actors need to move through the story, how much of the story needs to be told by the setting and the costumes.

Design is also collaborative and I like to meet the director to look at images and ideas (these can be quite random hunches about how something might look).

I'm interested in the human figure in space, so I will quite quickly move into a model box where I'll be working in 3D and investigating how the space might work for the story. We work first in a 'whitecard' model, which is the equivalent of doing rough 3D sketches. Some designers use computers for this, but I really enjoy working in real life in a model.

What were you hoping to capture in the designs for this production and why was it important to you to communicate this with the audience?



I am hoping to capture a passion for Shakespeare and to reflect the richness of Shakespeare in performance over the last hundreds of years! I hope that the audience will be able to get to know the three actors as well as the parts they play, and that we'll be able to reflect their humanity and egos in their costume and staging choices. I hope that we will be able to create something with a lot of richness of detail, but with a light touch allowing all the actors' energy and humour to shine through.

What colours, textures, shapes and use of scale have featured in your designs?

We have chosen a clean stage area which is clearly defined and can be front- and back-lit in multiple colours. This gives a simple flat luminous playing area which puts the actors and their props in focus. We are interested in silhouette and scale, especially in costume; thinking about the Elizabethan scale of ruffs, skirts and breeches, and also how that might translate to more modern clothing.

What have been some of the challenges of the design on this project?

The Complete Works is a huge brief! The design has to work out how much each part of the show needs costume and props, and how to dress the actors quickly enough that they are not late getting on stage. The design also has to be quite transformational, to change mood and setting in an instant. It needs to support some moments of beauty, and others of comic disintegration.The humour of the show depends on the close relationship of actors with the audience, so the design has to take into account where the front of the stage is, and how the actors break out of their playing area and come down into the auditorium.

What is the best thing about your job as a designer?

It's a very creative job which sometimes gives you the luxury of working alone as an artist, but also brings you together with other collaborators such as directors, lighting designers and choreographers to interpret a piece. And the journey lasts all the way until the show opens, where you are still learning how well the design has communicated the story to the audience.

What was your route into a career in design?

I studied literature as an undergraduate and text is still one of my passions. I realised I was most interested in text in performance, and I did some postgraduate training in theatre design. I worked early on as a scene painter and a scenery builder, made props and costumes and toured as a wardrobe manager. I think all these jobs give you an insight into the role of a designer, and how to communicate your ideas to your team.

What is your favourite Shakespeare play and why?

I love lots of the later plays for their poetry, but I'm going to choose Romeo and Juliet as a brilliant love story full of youthful energy, which seems capable of being continually reinvented in theatre, film and dance.

INTERVIEW WITH ADAM LONG

WRITER/DIRECTOR

How do you want an audience to feel after they have seen the show?

I want audiences to come away from the show feeling uplifted, entertained and inspired to see more live Shakespeare.

What is your favourite Shakespeare play and why?

My favourite Shakespeare play is *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. I love the interplay between the human world and the supernatural world, and I love the diverse levels of character and comedy.

What roles have you collaborated with on this production?

As a director, I collaborate with all aspects: cast, crew, creative team, production.

What was your route into this field of work?

I began as a street performer. We made a living by performing outdoors doing short comic versions of Shakespeare's plays and busking. The Edinburgh Fringe was a turning point. From there, we were able to make the transition into being theatre performers. Our touring work eventually led to sit-down runs in major cities. And my theatre work then led to television and film work.

ACTIVITIES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

AO1: Generate ideas and develop original work

AO2: Demonstrate vocal and physical performance skills

AO3: Develop understanding of how theatre and performance is made

Now it's your turn to have a go at some of the skills used by the actors in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*

1. Form a group of between 4-6 students

2. As a warm up exercise, you are going to perform a show called **"The NO show"**

Standing in a line, each group member is going to say the word 'No' but each performer in your group has to use a different intention in their performance of the word. You can choose one intention each from the list below:

- To insist
- To question
- To persuade
- To intimidate
- To beg
- To dismiss

3. In your group, imagine that you are a cast of actors, tasked with reimagining one of Shakespeare's plays into a new context to make it more accessible for a modern audience.

4. Choose one quote each from the list below and research the play it is from and the original storyline of that play.

QUOTE	PLAY	CHARACTER
"To be, or not to be: that is the question."	Hamlet	Hamlet
"O, beware, my lord, of jealousy! It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on."	Othello	Iago
"Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day, To the last syllable of recorded time; And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!"	Macbeth	Macbeth
"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings."	Julius Caesar	Cassius
"For never was a story of more woe than this of Juliet and her Romeo."	Romeo & Juliet	Prince Escalus
"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."	As You Like It	Jaques
"The course of true love never did run smooth."	A Midsummer Night's Dream	Lysander
"Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em."	Twelfth Night	Malvolio (reading a letter)
"If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?"	The Merchant of Venice	Shylock
"We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep."	The Tempest	Prospero

5. Once you understand your quote and the context in which it was written, have each group member choose a different intention from the list below and try to perform your line with this new intention. The more absurd and abstract your choice of intention is - the more comedic your final performance will be.

- **TO DEMAND:**
  To command another character to do something immediately.

- **TO ACCUSE:**
  To state that another character is guilty of a fault, crime, or wrongdoing.

- **TO CONCEAL:**
  To hide their true feelings or a specific piece of information from another character.

- **TO SEDUCE:**
  To use charm, flattery, or emotional manipulation to win another character's favour, love, or compliance.

- **TO MOCK:**
  To ridicule or express contempt for another character, often using sarcasm or irony.

- **TO REASSURE:**
  To comfort another character and alleviate their fears, anxieties, or doubts.

- **TO DISTRACT:**
  To deliberately shift the topic of conversation to avoid discussing something uncomfortable or dangerous.

- **TO CONFESS:**
  To reveal a secret, a crime, a hidden feeling, or a truth that has been kept private.

- **TO WARN:**
  To caution another character about a potential danger, negative consequence, or impending threat.

- **TO JUSTIFY:**
  To give a reason for a past action, decision, or behaviour, often seeking forgiveness or understanding.

6. Consider how you might utilise your vocal and physical performance skills to communicate your chosen intention. You can experiment with the list of techniques below:

VOCAL SKILLS	PHYSICAL SKILLS
Pitch	Gesture
Pace	Facial expression
Pause	Posture
Breath control	Body Language
Diction	Gait
Volume	Carriage
Tone	Proxemics
Emphasis	Eye contact

7. Combine your quotes by performing them one after the other as a sort of poem.

8. When each group member is performing their line, the rest of the group should work together to create reactions as an ensemble to add comedy.

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Tue 3 - Sat 7 Mar	**The Haymarket Theatre Basingstoke**
Tue 10 Mar	**Swan Theatre, Worcester**
Wed 11 Mar	**Epsom Playhouse**
Fri 13 & Sat 14 Mar	**The Belgrade Theatre Coventry**
Tue 17 Mar	**Lawrence Batley Theatre**
Thu 19 - Sat 21 Mar	**Salisbury Playhouse**
Tue 24 - Sat 28 Mar	**Bristol Old Vic**
Mon 30 Mar - Thu 2 Apr	**Yvonne Arnaud Guildford**
Wed 8 - Sat 11 Apr	**Lichfield Garrick**
Wed 15 - Sat 18 Apr	**Mayflower Studios**
Tue 21 - Sat 25 Apr	**Lighthouse Poole**
Mon 27 - Wed 29 Apr	**Beam Hertford**
Thu 30 Apr & Fri 1 May	**The Quarry Theatre Bedford**
Sat 2 May	**Trinity Theatre Tunbridge Wells**
Tue 5 & Wed 6 May	**Corn Exchange Newbury**
Sat 9 May	**Tacchi-Morris Arts Centre**
Tue 12 & Wed 13 May	**Exeter Northcott Theatre**
Thu 14 - Sat 16 May	**Royal & Derngate**
Tue 19 - Sat 23 May	**Octagon Theatre Bolton**
Mon 25 - Wed 27 May	**Watford Palace Theatre**
Thu 28 - Sat 30 May	**Oxford Playhouse**
Tue 2 - Sat 6 Jun	**New Wolsey Theatre Ipswich**
Tue 9 - Sat 13 Jun	**Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds**
Tue 16 - Thu 18 Jun	**Theatre by the Lake Keswick**
Fri 19 & Sat 20 Jun	**Northern Stage**
Mon 22 - Wed 24 Jun	**Cast Doncaster**
Thu 25- Sat 27 Jun	**Theatre Royal Wakefield**
Tue 7 - Sat 11 Jul	**York Theatre Royal**

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The Theatre Chipping Norton is a small, much-loved rural powerhouse, and a proven creator of work for the UK touring circuit.

Recent tours and transfers include Murder for Two (UK midscale tour) The Mountaintop (UK midscale tour), The Island (UK tour and Southwark Playhouse), Stones in his Pockets (UK small and midscale tour, Dublin transfer), The Kreutzer Sonata (Arcola), The Rise and Fall of Little Voice (Greenwich Theatre) and Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense (two UK small and midscale tours).

SELLADOOR WORLDWIDE

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We support the journey of a production from its initial conception to a national and international audience. We create opportunities for global licensing of IP to partners and stakeholders around the world. We offer a unique end to end general management service provision for theatrical and immersive productions and events.)

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