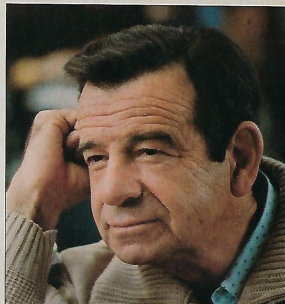


"I like Shakespeare's plays and sonnets, and I read them all the time. But, since 1952, when I did Iago on the 'Philo Playhouse,' no one had offered me a job connected with Shakespeare. And when this came up, I jumped at it like a hungry tiger seeing fresh meat again. On 'The Shakespeare Hour,' the entire meal will not have to be eaten at one sitting. The plays will be broken into hours, giving us time to digest this rich, juicy, delicious, incomparable repast.

"It's a pleasure to be asked to share my enthusiasm for Shakespeare with an audience that will include people who already know him well, people who have a nodding acquaintance, and people who are just being introduced to him."

Walter Matthau, Host of *The Shakespeare Hour*



FOR FURTHER LEARNING

A companion book has been created especially for this series: *The Shakespeare Hour*, Edward Quinn, ed., New American Library, 1986. It is available at your local bookstore or through New American Library. The price is \$2.95 in the United States and \$3.95 in Canada.

Films and prerecorded cassettes are available for classroom use from Time-Life Video. Call 1-800-TLV-TAPE for details.

If you'd like to take a college course, educational institutions nationwide are offering telecourses based on *The Shakespeare Hour*. For further information, please contact your local PBS station. If you'd like to offer a telecourse based on *The Shakespeare Hour*, please call or write PBS Adult Learning Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20024 (202-488-5360).

Educational materials covering each of the plays are being provided free by The Morgan Bank to high school English and drama departments throughout America.

The Shakespeare Hour, a production of WNET New York, is made possible by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and Morgan Guaranty Trust Company (The Morgan Bank). *The Shakespeare Hour* is based on the BBC-TV and Time-Life Television coproductions of *The Shakespeare Plays*.



The Shakespeare Hour

Hosted by Walter Matthau



A Viewer's Guide to

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Twelfth Night

All's Well That Ends Well

Measure for Measure

King Lear

The first season, LOVE, presents five of the finest of *The Shakespeare Plays* in a new fifteen-week series of hour-length episodes. See local listings for day and time.

This special series is made possible by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and Morgan Guaranty Trust Company (The Morgan Bank).



The Shakespeare Hour

A Midsummer Night's Dream

"Soul of the age! The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage!"

Ben Jonson's tribute to his friend and rival, William Shakespeare, still rings true: The world's greatest playwright "was not of an age but for all time," and for our time, *The Shakespeare Hour* turns some of his great plays into an exciting dramatic miniseries. At its core are five outstanding BBC/Time-Life productions of *The Shakespeare Plays*, presented in their entirety in fifteen weekly one-hour episodes.

Distinguished actor Walter Matthau serves as host. He prefaces the play episodes with brief comments on character and plot. He returns at the end to discuss the episode, the love theme, and to preview the next week's program. Certain episodes include "minidocumentaries," narrated by Matthau and designed to bring additional insight and understanding to new and experienced theatergoers alike.

This season's theme is love as it interacts with justice, illusion, festivity, procreation, sacrifice—the whole rich range of the playwright's incomparable imagination.



A confusion of lovers. Left to right: Demetrius (Nicky Henson), Helena (Cherith Mellor), Hermia (Pippa Guard), Lysander (Robert Lindsay).

This magical, much-loved comedy is an early work, but there is nothing immature about it. The play shines with youthful exuberance and confidence; its multiple plot lines, its shifts from magic to reality, from illusion to truth are handled with dazzling virtuosity.

Episode 1: Theseus, duke of Athens, and Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, dis-

cuss their forthcoming wedding. Hermia, forbidden by her father, Egeus, to marry Lysander, elopes with her beloved to the wood, followed by Demetrius (who also loves Hermia) and Helena (who loves Demetrius). Also in the wood are the craftsman friends practicing their play for the wedding festivities. Unbeknownst to the mortals, the wood is the realm of the fairy king and queen, Oberon and Titania. When Oberon enlists his assistant, Puck, to deceive his wife and aid the mortal lov-

"... reason and love keep little company together now-a-days."

Act III, scene ii



Phil Daniels as Puck, Oberon's prankish servant, also called Robin Goodfellow.

ers, chaos ensues. (Act I, scene i, through Act III, scene i)

Episode 2: Demetrius and Lysander are now both in love with Helena due to Puck's mistakes. He has also given poor Bottom the head of an ass, and Titania is made to fall in love with the transformed Bottom. Oberon intervenes to pair the lovers correctly and to release Titania from her spell. She awakes and is reconciled with her husband. The four lovers return to Athens to be married along with Theseus and Hippolyta. At the festivities, Bottom, himself again, joins his friends to perform "Pyramus and Thisbe." The play ends with the fairies visit to bless the house of Theseus and an epilogue by Puck. (III, ii-end)

Viewing tip: Notice that Titania's bower is based on Rembrandt's famous painting of Danae. This adds a rich sensuality to the portrayal of the forest in contrast to the confined and restricted world of Athens we see in the opening scene.



Nigel Davenport as Theseus, duke of Athens.



Titania (Helen Mirren), queen of the fairies, in love with the weaver Bottom as an ass (Brian Glover) and with Oberon, king of the fairies (Peter McEnery).



Estelle Kohler as Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons and bride of Theseus.

When Hermia wishes that her father look at Lysander "but with my eyes," Shakespeare alerts us to one of the several themes that he has woven into this play: Love, whether real or illusory, is rooted in visual perception. Such wisdom is integrated into the many and varied love plots contained in this *Dream*: the mature, hard-earned love of Theseus and Hippolyta; the bickering married love of Oberon and Titania; the infatuations of the young lovers that must weather confusions before ripening to love; the folly of the Titania-Bottom affair; and the "tragical mirth" of Pyramus and Thisbe, those

two mythological symbols of tragic love, here parodied as a "most lamentable comedy." All these stories portray love as an act of imagination. We lovers transform the beloved in our own eyes. Love eludes rationality. Like a dream it floats beyond rational comprehension, with an insight all its own. It is an imaginative vision that Puck dares us to dismiss in his ironic epilogue: *If we shadows have offended, / Think but this, and all is mended, / That you have but slumber'd here. While these visions did appear. / And this weak and idle theme, / No more yielding but a dream.*

Twelfth Night

"Journeys end in lovers meeting./Every wise man's son doth know."

Act II, scene iii



In "Twelfth Night" we find an encyclopedia of love—adolescent love, love at first sight, unrequited love, ripening love, mature love, even self-love—and such enforcements as girls masquerading as boys, lost identical twins, and an intricate plot against an officious killjoy.

Episode 1: Orsino, duke of Illyria, pines for Olivia, a rich countess. Meanwhile, off the coast, Viola is shipwrecked and separated from her twin brother, Sebastian. Each thinks the other is dead. Disguising herself as a boy and calling herself "Cesario," she becomes a page to Orsino—and falls in love with him.

At Olivia's home, her fool, Feste, her tutor, Sir Andrew, and her cousin, Sir Toby Belch, all run afoul of Malvolio, Olivia's pompous steward. Maria, Olivia's lady-in-waiting, decides to forge a love letter from Olivia to give Malvolio his comeuppance. (I, i–II, iii)

Felicity Kendal as Viola, far left, and disguised as a male page, with Olivia (Sinead Cusack).



Alec McCowen as Malvolio, Olivia's killjoy steward.

Minidocumentary: *In Praise of Folly* considers the role of the traditional fool in drama and in society.

Episode 2: Viola, as "Cesario," woos Olivia for the Duke. Olivia, however, confesses her love for "Cesario." Now Sebastian, Viola's twin brother, arrives. Sir Andrew, mistaking him for "Cesario," challenges him to a fight. Malvolio, behaving as the forged letter prescribes, is declared a madman. Olivia proclaims her love to Sebastian, thinking he is "Cesario." (II, iv–IV, i)

Episode 3: Malvolio is imprisoned. Sebastian and Olivia are married. Yielding Olivia to Sebastian, the Duke decides to marry Viola. The plot against Malvolio is exposed. He leaves, vowing revenge. (IV, ii–end)

Minidocumentary: *All the World's a Stage* examines the play-within-a-play as a commentary on the relation between the life of drama and the drama of life.

Viewing tip: The romantic, autumnal quality of this production hints at the melancholy underlying this comedy.



Clive Arrindell as Orsino, duke of Illyria, in love with Olivia.



Trevor Peacock as Feste, Olivia's wise fool and commentator.

LOVE'S DISGUISES

"Twelfth Night" shows us how romantic love ripens in stages. First there is the adolescent idea of love—all egotism and self-absorption; next the passionate phase in which the sense of self is disordered and confused. Finally the mature commitment that integrates the impulses and corrects the mistakes of the first two yields a true self, truly in love.

"Twelfth Night" demonstrates that this vital process transforms not just the particular lover, but society itself.

At first Orsino and Olivia's self-involvement is mirrored in the presence of that sportsman Malvolio. Later, melancholy gives way to farce and to that wonderful scene, the gulling of Malvolio. His over-the-top signals the triumph of festive misrule.

Finally, love emerges as mature self-knowledge. We can rejoice that, for all their self-delusion and folly, these lovers have been guided by their natural impulses. With the exception of Malvolio, everyone finds his rightful partner, and harmony, love, and new vitality reign.



Twins Viola (Felicity Kendal) and Sebastian (Michael Thomas) are separated in a shipwreck. Each believes the other is dead.



The plot against Malvolio involves (left to right) Fabian (Robert Lindsay), Sir Andrew (Ronnie Stevens), Maria (Annette Crosbie), and Sir Toby Belch (Robert Hardy).

THE SHAKESPEARE HOUR 5

All's Well That Ends Well

"The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together..."

Act IV, scene iii

A

dark comedy from Shakespeare's middle years, this play is as much about resignation as it is about contentment. The admirable Helena loves Bertram—who seems to be unworthy of her love. The older people surrounding this strange couple are caring and wise, but are powerless to help. Does everything end well for Helena and Bertram? The play concludes on a note of ambiguity.

Episode 1: After his father's death, Bertram, count of Roussillon, leaves home for the French court with the King's counselor, Lafew. He is followed by a doctor's daughter, Helena, who loves him deeply. At court, Helena cures the King of France. She then requests and receives permission to marry Bertram. He is shocked at the prospect. (I, i–II, iii)

Episode 2: Bertram marries Helena and flees immediately to the Florentine war with his braggart friend, Parolles. Bertram writes Helena a brutal letter stating that until she obtains the ring from his finger and bears his child, he will not return—not can she call him husband. Helena goes to Florence and stays with a widow and her daughter, Diana. Discovering that her husband intends to seduce the girl, Helena persuades Diana to "yield" to Bertram in exchange for his ring. But



Ian Charleson and Angela Down as Bertram and his wife, Helena.

Helena takes Diana's place in bed—and so obtains the ring and conceives a child. Meanwhile, Parolles is unmasked. (II, iii–IV, ii)

Episode 3: Hearing false reports that Helena has died, Bertram returns to France, where his past behavior is, at first, forgiven. Helena, now pregnant, returns in secret. Before the King, Diana accuses Bertram of seducing her. Helena is revealed and Bertram vows to love her. (IV, iii–end)

Minidocumentary: *The Woman's Part* discusses some of Shakespeare's great comic heroines.

Viewing tip: Note the visual richness of this production. Many scenes are shot to echo the paintings of Vermeer. In the play's climax the television camera shoots from Helena's point of view, throwing the focus not on her entrance but on her audience's reaction.

Peter Jeffrey as Parolles, Bertram's braggart friend.



Michael Hordern as Lafew, confidant to the King and Countess.

LOVE'S POWER

"What power is it which mounts my love so high?" asks Helena in the first scene. "That makes me see, and cannot feed my eye?"

In this play, love's power is vested in the character of Helena. George Bernard Shaw saw in her the prototype of the modern liberated woman, and it is true she exhibits initiative, intelligence, and courage. But she also draws upon a force outside her character and will. She cures both the King and Bertram through a power as mysterious to her as it is to us. It is a power allied to the

principle of life itself. And love is its agent.

Love has a tremendous power all its own. But it requires the cooperation of human agents: people who know what it means, and how to use it. In "All's Well That Ends Well," the Countess and Lafew know what it's about. Helena does, too. Bertram is the one who needs to be brought around to recognizing it, even if he does so kicking and screaming. Happily, his very resistance shows a spirit that makes the effort all the more worthwhile.



Celia Johnson as Bertram's mother, the countess of Roussillon.



Donald Sinden as the ailing King of France.



Rosemary Leach as the Widow and Pippa Guard as her daughter, Diana.

THE SHAKESPEARE HOUR 7

Measure for Measure

"... most dangerous/Is that temptation that doth goad us on/To sin in loving virtue..."
Act II, scene ii

Consider a world in which the penalty for sexual misconduct is death. That world is the setting for a comedy—a dark comedy, of course. In "Measure for Measure," Shakespeare dramatizes the discrepancies between public and private morality. Brilliantly entertaining, this "problem play" combines both high drama and black humor.

Episode 1: Alarmed at the corruption in Vienna, Duke Vincentio appoints the puritanical Angelo as his deputy to enforce the city's laws, claiming he must leave town. Actually he remains, disguised as a friar, to observe his experiment in human

conduct. Angelo revives an old law and sentences Claudio to death for impregnating his fiancée, Juliet. When Claudio's sister, Isabella, a religious novice, arrives to plead for her brother's life, her beauty stirs Angelo's passions. (I.i–II.v)

Episode 2: Angelo promises Isabella her brother's freedom—if she will yield herself to him. She angrily rejects him. The disguised Duke suggests to Isabella that she send Mariana to bed Angelo in her place. The trick works—but Angelo breaks his oath and orders Claudio's death. (II.iv–IV.v)

Episode 3: The Duke saves Claudio by another trick.



Angelo (Tim Pigott-Smith), the Duke's appointed deputy, listens to Isabella (Kate Nelligan) plead for her brother Claudio's life.



John McNery as Claudio's friend Lucio, a cynical aristocrat.



Christopher Strauli as Claudio, a gentleman in love with Juliet.

The next morning he returns to reclaim his position in Vienna. Isabella and Mariana plead their cases against Angelo who receives his due measure: He is castigated and is ordered to marry Mariana. Juliet, Claudio, and Isabella are reunited. The Duke asks for Is-

abella's hand. (IV, ii–end)

Minidocumentary: *The Darkening of Comedy* looks at the mixing of tragedy and comedy as a distinctive feature of Shakespeare's drama.

Viewing tip: Notice that the final "trial" scene is staged by the director of this production as a play-within-a-play.



Frank Middlemass, center, as the clownish bartender Pompey.



Kenneth Colley as the Duke, disguised as a friar.



Colley in noble robes as Vincentio, the Duke of Vienna.

LOVE'S POLITICS

"Measure for Measure" explores love's effects on the conduct of government and public morality. The Duke unites the two ideas in the opening scene when he says that, in handing power over to Angelo, he has "lent him our terror, dress'd it him with our love." Angelo's challenge is to eliminate anarchy, represented by sexual permissiveness. And the arrest of Claudio for fornication makes clear that the private act of love is a public concern. Angelo's literal interpretation of the law sets in motion "terror" designed to suppress "love."

But the interplay of the public and the private takes an ironic turn when suppressed sexuality erupts, not only within the city's brothels but within Angelo himself. The disguised Duke's task is to mediate between extremes of terror and love, transforming them into justice and mercy. His counterpart is Isabella, who also desires retreat from the world. This Isabella is a passionately concerned woman whose religious faith constitutes the bedrock of her personality.

In the timeless tradition of comedy, "Measure for Measure" concludes with multiple marriages. The play leaves us with a vision of love as an essential element in a just society.

King Lear

"... do thy worst, blind Cupid, I'll not love."

Act IV, scene vi



Frank Middlemass as Lear's Fool.



Michael Kitchen as Edmund, the bastard son of Gloucester.



Norman Rodway as the Earl of Gloucester, loyal to Lear.

Shakespeare creates, in this masterpiece, a powerful king and then strips from him every illusion until he discovers what it means to be human.

Episode 1: King Lear abdicates and divides his kingdom among his daughters, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia, in exchange for public professions of their love. The first two flatter their father, but Cordelia refuses. Lear

disowns her. He also banishes the Earl of Kent. The Earl of Gloucester is tricked by his bastard son, Edmund, into believing his legitimate son, Edgar, wants to kill him. Lear goes to live with Goneril and is treated with disrespect. Lear then leaves to stay with Regan. (I.i–I.v)

Episode 2: Lear finds Regan equally disrespectful. He flees into a storm with his

daughters. Goneril poisons Regan, then stabs herself. Edgar kills Edmund, but it is too late to save Cordelia. She has already been hanged in prison. Lear, brokenhearted, dies over his daughter's body. (IV, vii–end)

Minidocumentary: *Poetic Illusion* focuses on the Dover Cliff scene between Edgar and his father, Gloucester, and examines Shakespeare's use of Renaissance and tragic perspective in this great play.

Viewing tip: Note the production's high-contrast, almost black-and-white look which intensifies the stark moral contrasts among the play's characters.

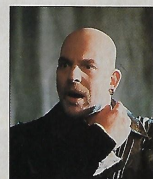
Concluding minidocumentary: *The Promised End* analyzes the endings of all five plays in the series and includes play excerpts and comments from scholars.



Left to right: Brenda Blethyn, Penelope Wilton, and Gillian Barge as Lear's daughters, Cordelia, Regan, and Goneril.



Anton Lesser as Edgar, Gloucester's legitimate son.

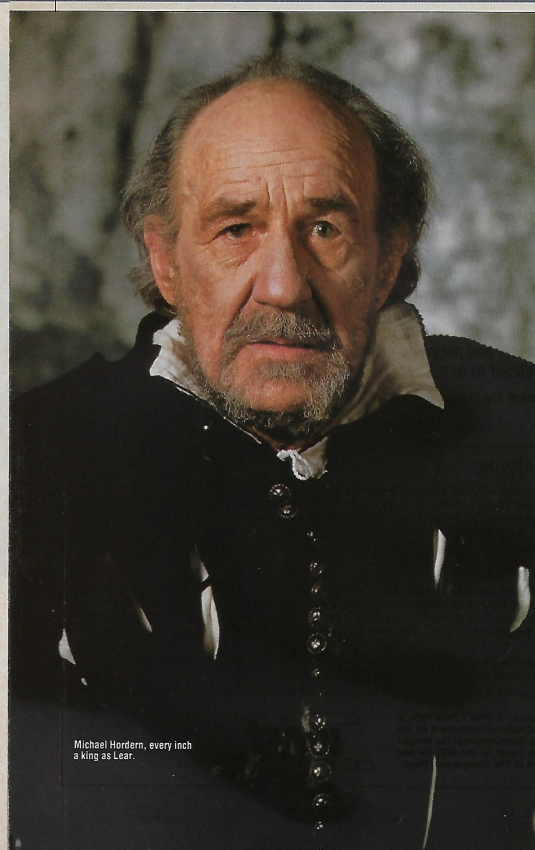


John Shrapnel as the Earl of Kent, a banished nobleman in disguise.

fool and the disguised but loyal Kent. On the heath, he meets Edgar disguised as a beggar. (II, v–III, v)

Episode 3: Gloucester comes to Lear's aid, but, betrayed by Edmund, Gloucester has his eyes gouged out by Regan and her husband, Cornwall. Edgar averts his father's attempted suicide at Dover Cliff. There they encounter Lear, now mad. (III, v–IV, vi)

Episode 4: Cordelia rescues Lear and they are reconciled, but they are then captured by Edmund's army and sentenced to death. Edgar ar-



Michael Hordern, every inch a king as Lear.

LOVE'S SACRIFICE

In Shakespeare's romantic comedies, self-knowledge is gained through love; in this tragedy, self-knowledge is achieved through suffering.

King Lear is a man nearing the end of his life who "hath ever but slenderly known himself." At the beginning Lear thinks love can be measured. Cast out into the storm, he begins a journey that will answer his question, "Who is it that can tell me who I am?"

In this play, Lear learns to love by discovering the value of his daughter Cordelia. But he learns too late. Thus "King Lear" concludes with one of the most powerful scenes in theater history: the king bent over the body of his youngest daughter, on the verge of his own death, questioning the meaning of life.

Does this tragedy celebrate the victory of love? Or does it suggest there is a dark void all around us that renders love meaningless? The greatness of "King Lear" lies in its capacity to contain both views, and to offer a revelation of the human condition that is unsurpassed in its depth and intensity. Within that revelation, love is reflected in the loyal service of Kent, in the stinging words of the Fool, in the creative disguise of Edgar, even in the sexual rivalry of Goneril and Regan for Edmund. But dominating all of these is the love of Lear and Cordelia, of parent and child. It is a love that is silent, selfless, and sacrificial.