

John Singer Sargent's

Madame X



This painting, titled *Madame X*, is a thoughtful example of how visual art meets theatre. *Twelfth Night* director, Erin Woods, was inspired by this work by 19th century painter John Singer Sargent and its relationship to the character Olivia. As unapproachable and mysterious as this woman is to the viewer, Olivia is to Duke Orsino, who has placed her on a pedestal as the ideal woman. The play is filled with characters who, like the Duke, have the capacity for passionate love, but are trapped in their idolized obsession with someone – or something – else.

What is the Festival of Twelfth Night?

Celebrated in England and parts of Europe, usually marking the end of the 12 Days of Christmas, it was celebrated as a festival of role reversal and misrule. Born out of the Roman festival of Saturnalia, peasants and noblemen switched roles and pranksters ruled the day for one more ounce of fun before returning to the workaday world. These concepts are brought to life in Shakespeare's play. In fact, it is widely believed that Shakespeare wrote this play to be performed during a Twelfth Night celebration.

Director's comments –

William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (or *What You Will*) is a favorite amongst scholars and audiences alike. This jovial comedy of love told during the celebration which ends the Christmas season, highlights the traditions of the festival for which it is named. The European festival, Twelfth Night, is marked by entertainment, food, drink, dance, song and licensed disorder; also hilarity in role reversal (especially gender and rank) and the playing of practical jokes.

In Reduxion Theatre Company's production of *Twelfth Night*, we aim to warm the cold winter months with the festivities & romance of Shakespeare's most colorful characters - all trapped, in some way, by love. Some are saddened by love, some are made desperate, others deny it, some are sucker-punched by it and still others are hopelessly in search of it: a lengthy study for any theatre company.

In addition to the Bard's language, we take inspiration from the portraiture of the 19th century painter, John Singer Sargent. Sargent's subjects appear idealized, but with a hint of secret life. Public image intrigues, but we desire to know the furtive reality at which we glimpse. Like each character in *Twelfth Night*, appearance is only the beginning.

Thank you for joining our celebration!

Erin Woods, Director



It is not in the stars
to hold our
destiny,
but in ourselves
– William
Shakespeare

Reduxion Theatre Company presents...



Special student performance

February 19th | 10am

\$6/student | Teachers free

Call (405) 651-3191 or

education@reduxiontheatre.com

for more information

Reduxion Theatre Company is an Oklahoma 501(c)3 nonprofit theatre company with a mission to professionally produce both classical and contemporary theatre, enriching Oklahoma's cultural, educational and economic climate, attracting artists and audiences from around the world.

SHAKESPEARE'S HEARTBEAT IN POETRY

Objective: Upon completion of this lesson students will be able to distinguish the meaning and main words in Shakespeare's poetry phrases.

Materials Needed: Various Shakespearean phrases found at: www.reduxiontheatre.com/Education.html

Begin the class by asking them to feel their heartbeat. Say, "Every heartbeat has a rhythm. One strong beat, and one soft beat – or de dum de dum de dum, etc." Then discuss how Shakespeare wrote with a heartbeat and his poetry, unlike his prose, has a rhythm that gives meaning to his words. Now ask some students to quote any Shakespeare line (To be or not to be...etc.) Ask: What are the main phrases or points in those lines? Is there a way to find it out? How can we know what Shakespeare was meaning if we can't ask him? The answer is that Shakespeare wrote many of his works of poetry by phrasing his lines with stressed and unstressed words. Say, "We are going to do an exercise that shows you how to distinguish the important words in Shakespeare's poetry." Handout the words from Shakespeare's phrases to 10 students. Have them stand in order in front of the class and read their directions. Have them perform the first phrasing according to the directions. Ask the students, "What is the main word in that sentence?" and "Who is that main word describing?" Then repeat the exercise according to the directions. Ask the students to discuss the changes in the meaning, "What was the difference?"

Evaluation: After the exercise have groups read the other phrase. By using the exercise of giving the phrase a heartbeat have them distinguish the main word in the phrase. Ask the students to create their own phrase and perform it for the class and distinguish the main word and meaning behind their original phrases.

To the esteemed Educators:

RTC is passionate about engaging students of all ages in the theatre experience. Because of this passion it is our privilege and honor to offer you and your students this exciting opportunity to attend our upcoming performance of Shakespeare's, *Twelfth Night*.

Our goal is that by attending our special student performance and utilizing this aide you can give your students a taste of Shakespeare and they will be hungry for more. The wonderful aspect of educational Theatre is that it crosses over so many different disciplines. You can study History, English, Art, Music, Science and yes, even Math when studying Shakespeare and Theatre.



As the Director of Education at RTC my mission is to offer you practical tools that you can use in your classroom to inspire students to engage in learning. As a former junior high and high school Theatre teacher I understand the challenges that you face in helping students grasp Shakespeare. I believe that together we can make Shakespeare and Theatre as a whole a profitable and enjoyable experience to all students. I look forward to building a bridge between RTC and our schools.

With warm regards,
Jaime Hodson – Education Director
Jaime.Hodson@reduxiontheatre.com

"If music be the food
of love, play on,
Give me excess of it,
that surfeiting,
The appetite may
sicken, and so die."

SPEAK THE SPEECH: LOVE SPEECHES

Objective: Upon completion of this lesson students will be able to compare the various love speeches from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. They will also create a drama from these speeches.

Materials Needed: Love Speeches in *Twelfth Night* found at: www.reduxiontheatre.com/Education.html

Begin the class by asking them to identify famous couples in love. (Romeo & Juliet, Edward & Bella, etc.) Ask: What words would you use to describe love? Are there different forms of love? Tell them that they will be reading various love speeches from the play, "Twelfth Night". Each speech was delivered by a different character and defines love in a different way. Read the first speech together. Have students separate lines that convey a single idea. Have groups do the same with Olivia & Viola's speeches. Last have the groups put all 3 speeches together based on the related themes or ideas. Use all 3 speeches. Lastly have students create a way to present the interwoven speech. Ideas include: group members read specific lines while others silently act them out, or creating new characters and a new plot the go with the lines. You must use all lines and all members must participate. Present these new speeches to the class.

Evaluation: Describe each of the characters, Orsino, Viola & Olivia, and their ideas of love in 2-3 sentences. Which presentations were effective & why?

