



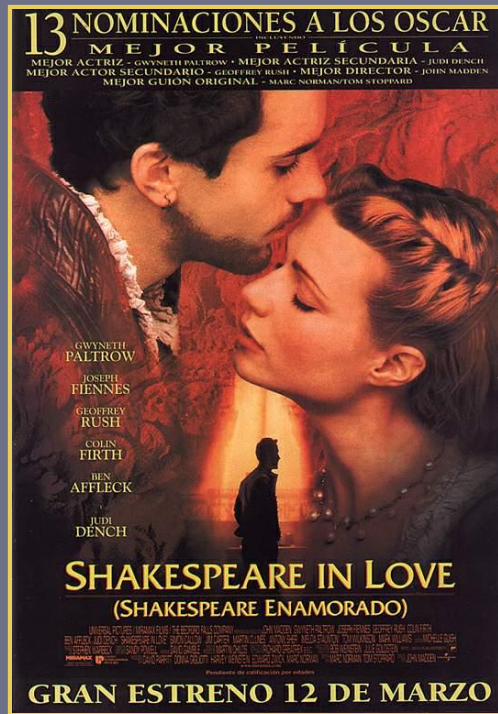
*Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.*

Excerpt form Macbeth

Shakespeare

the greatest of all dramatists

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)



- ◆ Literary Terms
- ◆ Shakespeare's Life
- ◆ Shakespeare's Plays

Shakespeare in Love, motion-picture comedy that reimagines the events around the first production of the play *Romeo and Juliet* (1595?) by English playwright William Shakespeare. Released in 1998, the film won seven Academy Awards.

Literary Terms

◆ Drama

- ◆ A prose or verse composition, especially one telling a serious story, that is intended for representation by actors impersonating the characters and performing the dialogue and action.
- ◆ Characterization; plot; general points; context.

Literary Terms

◆ Elizabethan Drama

- ◆ In this period, dramatists modified the two traditional forms of comedy and tragedy. Shakespeare divided his plays into comedies, tragedies, and histories, the latter presenting national history in dramatic form. He also departed from classic practice by putting important comic scenes into his tragedies.



Marlowe, Christopher
(1564-1593)



Jonson, Ben (1572-1637)

◆ Tragedy

- ◆ Tragedie is to seyn a certeyn storie,
As olde bokes maken us memorie,
Of him that stood in greet prosperitie
And is y-fallen out of heigh degree
Into miserie, and endeth wrecchedly.

--Chaucer, The Monk's Tale

- ◆ 'High and excellent Tragedy' opens the greatest wounds and displays the ulcers covered with tissue; tragedy which makes kings fear to be tyrants and tyrants to 'manifest their tyrannical humours'. It stirs 'the affects of admiration and commiseration, teacheth the uncertainty of this world, and upon how weak foundations gilden roofs are builded.'

--Sir Philip Sidney

Literary Terms

◆ Soliloquy

- ◆ a monologue in which a character reveals inner thoughts, motivations, and feelings.

Shakespeare used the technique often, and his soliloquies are poetic and rich in imagery. In Hamlet, the form reaches its highest level.



Shakespeare's Life

- ◆ Born in Stratford-on-Avon (1564)
- ◆ Educated in the grammar school
- ◆ Married with Anna Hathaway (1582)
- ◆ Away from Hometown (1584)

Shakespeare's Birthplace, in
Henley Street, Stratford-upon-Avon



Shakespeare's Life

- ◆ As an actor and playwright (1592)
- ◆ Back home (1611)
- ◆ He Died in Stratford (1616)



Shakespeare's gravestone reads:
"Good friend, for Jesus' sake
forbear to dig the dust enclosed
here. Blessed be the man that
spares these stones, and cursed be
he that moves my bones."

Shakespeare, the Playwright

Four stages of his writing career

- ◆ 1592-1594, early years of apprenticeship
- ◆ 1595-1600, a period of rapid growth
- ◆ 1601-1608, a period of depression
- ◆ 1608-1612, a period of restored serenity

Shakespeare's Major Plays

◆ Early Plays

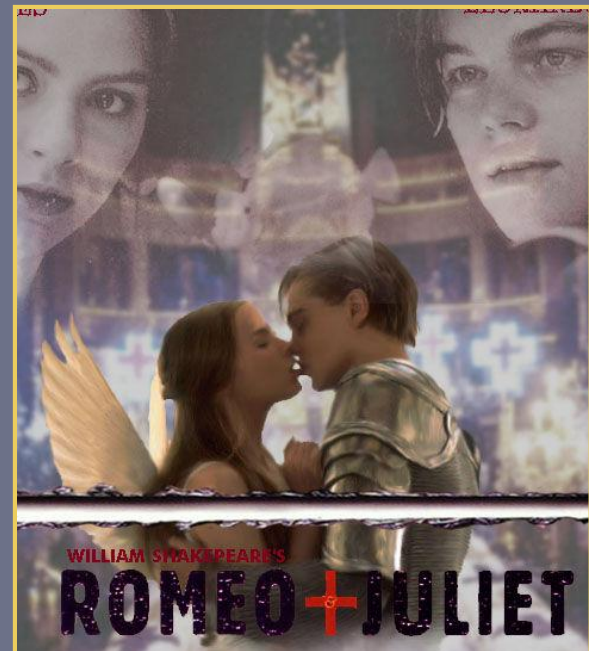
- ◆ Henry VI Part I, Part II, Part III, The Comedy of Errors, Love's Labour's Lost, Romeo and Juliet, etc.

◆ Histories

- ◆ Richard III, Richard II, King John, Henry IV Part I, Part II, Henry V.

◆ Roman Plays

- ◆ Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus.



Shakespeare's Major Plays



- ◆ The "Great" or "Middle" Comedies
 - ◆ A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Twelfth Night,
- ◆ The Great Tragedies
 - ◆ Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Timon of Athens.
- ◆ The "Dark" Comedies
 - ◆ All's Well That Ends Well, Measure for Measure, etc.
- ◆ Late Plays
 - ◆ The Winter's Tale, The Tempest, Henry VIII, etc.

General Themes and Issues

- ◆ Appearance and reality
- ◆ Kingship and politics
- ◆ Good and evil
- ◆ Energy and time
- ◆ Destiny, fate, stoicism, and courage

Stagecraft and Technique

- ◆ Blank verse
- ◆ Contrast
- ◆ Disguise, music, imagery, the technique used to portray battlefields, the use of boys to act female parts, etc.

Shakespeare's Achievement

- ◆ He represented the trend of history in giving voice to the desires and aspirations of the people;
- ◆ He reflected in his play humanism, the spirit of his age;
- ◆ He was most successful in his characterization; The characters have many aspects or personality;
- ◆ He drew most of his materials from sources that were known to his audience;
- ◆ He had made his dramas poetry.
- ◆ He was the master of the English language.



Hamlet(?1601)

- ◆ Source: originated in Norse legend. Shakespeare's source for Hamlet was either an adaptation of Saxo's tale, which appeared in *Histoires Tragiques* (1576), or a play, now lost, which was probably written by English dramatist Thomas Kyd.
- ◆ Plot
- ◆ Shakespeare's adaptation exceeds by far most other tragedies of revenge in picturing the mingled sordidness and glory of the human condition.

Hamlet's Tragedy

- ◆ Hamlet's volatile character and ambivalent behavior ;
- ◆ His delay in seeking revenge;
- ◆ He is portrayed as an extraordinarily complex young man—brilliant, sensitive, intuitive, noble, philosophic, and reckless, with a great repository of emotion and intellect.;

Hamlet's Tragedy

- ◆ Hamlet's impetuosity and emotionalism is also the source of his major weakness, impatience. In the “To be or not to be” soliloquy he asks if it is better to suffer and wait, or to put an end to doubts and scruples by acting at once:

*Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?*



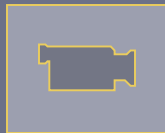
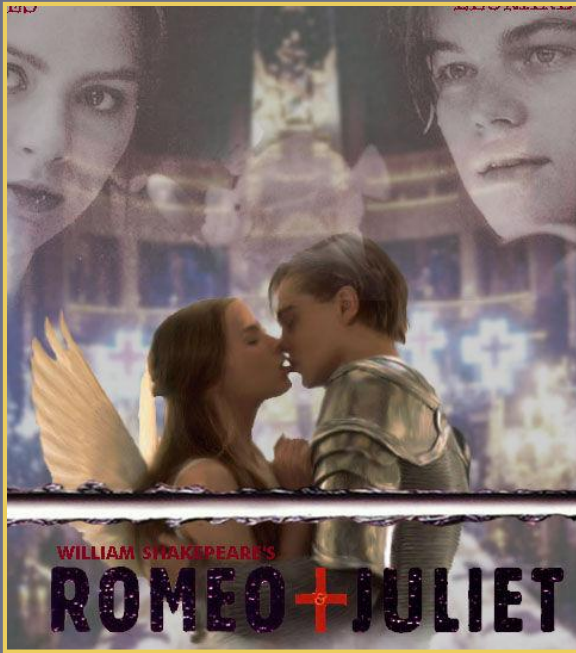
To be, or not to be

At the opening of the drama, Hamlet, the prince of Denmark, has returned home after the death of his father, the king. Shortly after the funeral, Hamlet's mother remarried Hamlet's uncle Claudius, who succeeded his father on the throne. Hamlet was visited by his father's ghost, which tells Hamlet that he was murdered by Claudius. Hamlet then vows to avenge his father's death, but became reluctant before the revenge. Nowhere is this complexity more apparent than in his soliloquy here in Act III, Scene 1.



Hamlet (played by
Laurence Olivier)

Romeo and Juliet



- ◆ Each production of a play has its own individual interpretations and feel. Here is a modern motion-picture adaptation of Romeo and Juliet in 1996. This oft-filmed stage play was notably produced in 1936, 1954, and 1968.

The Merchant of Venice(?1596)

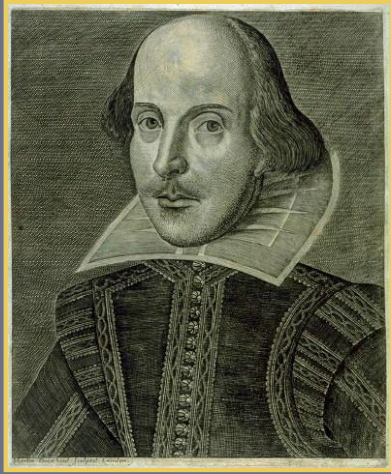
- ◆ Regarded by some scholars as the strongest and most successful of Shakespeare's early comedies.
- ◆ A combination of two stories: one about the marriage of Portia, and the other about the Jewish usurer Shylock.
- ◆ Major characters:
 - ◆ Portia
 - ◆ Bassanio
 - ◆ Antonio
 - ◆ Bassanio
 - ◆ Shylock



Topic for Discussion

- ◆ Do you think Shylock deserves his penalty?
Why, or why not?





End of the Lecture

Next topic: Shakespeare's Sonnets