



The Questors
THEATRE

Bard in the Yard

In the Questors Theatre Courtyard
29-31 August 2020

Director's notes

Between 1606 and 1610, London's theatres were closed because of the plague, and it is estimated that during that time they were only able to put on shows for the public for nine months. William Shakespeare lived his whole life in the shadow of the plague. During Shakespeare's lifetime London had its fair share of syphilis, malaria, smallpox, and typhus, which may have been the cause of Shakespeare's death in 1616.

About a month ago, Alex Marker, the artistic director of The Questors Theatre, and I simultaneously thought it would be a good idea to put on an outdoor show at The Questors as a proverbial toe-in-the-water to what might hopefully be a gradual start to us opening up again. We both agreed that something to do with Shakespeare might be fun, so I went away and thought up some crazy idea of doing Shakespeare without words, which is probably a theatrical oxymoron.

I thought it might be fun to try to stage six of his plays to music in contemporary settings, adjusting the plots here and there to give a new twist to some familiar themes. We knew we wouldn't be able to rehearse as usual. So we rehearsed out in the space that you are sitting in now. And, at all times, we had to observe social distancing laws, which proved challenging but forced us to come up with some imaginative solutions. I've chosen Shakespeare plays that I thought audiences would be familiar with, and ones that could more easily be reduced in telling of the story in around six to seven minutes each. I hope you enjoy what we have devised.

It has been a great privilege to be involved in helping bring The Questors back to life, and it has been a privilege to work with seven extremely enthusiastic and hard-working actors. A final thank you must go to the team of volunteers who have spent weeks giving The Questors Theatre a much-needed spring clean, in preparation for the time when we can open the doors and make the theatre once again a unique part of Ealing's community.

David Hovatter, director of Bard in the Yard



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Cast & Creatives

Acting Company

Samantha Boffin
Daniel Cawtheray
Ting Ting Cui
Fionna Gough
Mike Hadjipateras
Jolyon Houghton
Arabella Jacobson

Director

David Hovatter

Stage Manager

Steven Cowan

Assisant Stage Manager

Hasti Rezvan

Puppetry

Shaan Latif-Shaikh

Sound Design

Fengfan Zhou

Outdoor Logistics and Astral Advisor

Nigel Worsley

Scene Running Order

Romeo and Juliet

King Lear

Hamlet

Antony & Cleopatra

The Winter's Tale

The Tempest