

HAMLET

HAMLET

By **William Shakespeare**

Directed by **Peter Pasyk**

GRADE RECOMMENDATION 8+

CONTENT ADVISORY

This play explores mature themes including suicide. It depicts violence and murder. It also contains sexual innuendo.

SYNOPSIS

On the battlements of Denmark's Elsinore Castle, the sentries are on edge. Twice now, a spectral figure resembling the recently deceased former king has appeared to them on their nightly watch.

Meanwhile, that king's son, Prince Hamlet, in deep mourning for his father, is disgusted by the speed with which his mother, Gertrude, has remarried – to her late husband's brother, Claudius, who now wears the crown. Hamlet considers this union between his mother and his uncle incestuous, to say nothing of the fact that it has robbed him of his own succession to the throne. That disgust turns to fury when he too encounters the ghost, which reveals to him that his father did not die a natural death but was in fact poisoned by Claudius.

Hamlet vows revenge, deciding to feign madness till he can find both proof of Claudius's guilt and a suitable opportunity to act. Polonius, the Lord Chamberlain, attributes the strangeness of Hamlet's behaviour to frustrated love for his daughter, Ophelia; meanwhile, Claudius has summoned two of Hamlet's fellow students from the university at Wittenberg to spy on him. Matters come to a head when Hamlet commissions a troupe of travelling players to re-enact the murder of his father in front of the whole court, causing the conscience-stricken Claudius to bolt from the room.

After Hamlet kills the eavesdropping Polonius, mistaking him for the King, Claudius dispatches him to England, intending to have him executed there, but Hamlet escapes and returns to Denmark for a final – and fatal – confrontation.

This production takes place in present day, with modern dress.



Amaka Umeh. Photography by David Hou.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- Global Competencies
 - ◆ Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Learning to Learn/Self-Awareness
- Grade 8
 - ◆ The Arts
 - ◆ Health and Physical Education
 - ◆ Language
- Grades 9-12
 - ◆ The Arts
 - ◆ Canadian and World Studies
 - ◆ English
 - ◆ Health and Physical Education
- Grades 11-12
 - ◆ Social Sciences and Humanities

THEMES

- Action and Inaction
- Existence, Death and the Afterlife
- Disorder, Uncertainty and Chaos
- Good and Evil, Honour and Revenge, Sin and Virtue
- Justice and Vengeance
- Love, Lust and Desire
- Madness, Appearance and Reality
- The Meaning of Life
- Power and Politics in Family, Private and Public Lives
- Responsibility as Freedom, Responsibility as a Curse
- Suicide
- The Supernatural
- Surveillance
- Younger Generation vs. Older Generation

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What was your first impression of Hamlet? How did it change over the course of the play?
- How did the casting of the show impact your experience of it?
- Hamlet is a character famous for his use of soliloquy. What did Hamlet's soliloquies tell you about him?
- Is Hamlet the hero of this story? Why or why not? Who do you blame for the tragic ending of the play?

STUDY GUIDES

Study Guides for all 2022 productions are available free of charge online on our website:

>> [Link to Study Guides](#)

BOOKING INFORMATION: TICKETS, WORKSHOPS, CHATS AND TOURS

STUDENT MATINEES

You may book any available date, but selected student matinee performances for this show are at 2 p.m. on the following dates:

- Tuesday, May 17th
- Thursday, May 19th
- Wednesday, May 25th
- Thursday, May 26th
- Tuesday, June 7th
- Wednesday, June 22nd
- Thursday, September 1st
- Thursday, September 8th
- Wednesday, September 14th
- Tuesday, September 20th
- Wednesday, October 5th
- Thursday, October 13th
- Wednesday, October 19th
- Wednesday, October 26th

WORKSHOPS, CHATS AND TOURS

Pre or Post-Show Workshops, Chats and Tours (virtual, onsite or at your school/centre) can be booked by calling the Box Office at 1.800.567.1600.

SOCIAL MEDIA



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Production support for *Hamlet* is generously provided by Phyllis & Robert Couzin and by John & Therese Gardner

Tools for Teachers includes Prologues, Study Guides, and Stratford Shorts.