

# RICHARD III

## RICHARD III

By **William Shakespeare**

Directed by **Antoni Cimolino**

### GRADE RECOMMENDATION 7+

### CONTENT ADVISORY

The play deals with issues of oppression and misogyny. It depicts violence and murder.

### SYNOPSIS

Richard, Duke of Gloucester, contemplates his prospects now that a period of civil war in England (“the winter of our discontent”) has ended with the victory of his faction, the House of York; the murder of the former king, Henry VI, at Richard’s own hands; and the ascent to the throne of Richard’s eldest brother, Edward IV (“this son of York”). Richard, anticipating the sickly Edward’s early demise, is already plotting to eliminate all those who stand between himself and the crown.

He begins with his other brother, George, Duke of Clarence, whom he contrives to have imprisoned and then murdered. Meanwhile, he uses different means to neutralize a bitter enemy: Lady Anne, widowed daughter-in-law of the murdered King Henry. Interrupting Henry’s funeral procession, he uses his extraordinary powers of persuasion not only to win the lady over but subsequently to marry her.

When Edward dies, Richard removes the deceased monarch’s two young sons and heirs to the Tower of London, ostensibly for their protection. In his capacity as Lord Protector, he executes several other potential threats on trumped-up charges of treason. Meanwhile, his confederate the Duke of Buckingham has orchestrated a campaign of lies, alleging the illegitimacy of the princes in the Tower. When Richard is offered the crown instead, he accepts it with a great show of reluctance.

Richard’s next step will be to murder the young princes – but even as he works to consolidate his power, it begins to slip away from him, as his ruthlessness alienates all around him, including those he has relied on most.



Colin Feore (centre), Lucy Peacock, André Sillis. Photography by David Hou.

### CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- Global Competencies
  - ◆ Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Creativity, Learning to Learn/Self-Awareness
- Grades 7-8
  - ◆ 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

- Ambition, Alliances and Jealousy
- Compelling Power of Language
- Disability and Representation
- Fate and Free Will
- Leadership, Power and Responsibility
- Manipulation, Deceit and Betrayal
- Succession and the Path to Power
- Temptation and Evil
- Violence as a Means to an End

## DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Is ambition a positive or negative quality in a person? Explain your position.
- Who did you find yourself rooting for in the play? Why do you think this was the case?
- In what ways does the play conform to conventional and problematic notions of disabled people? In what ways does it resist this thinking?
- Do the ends ever justify the means? How does Richard justify his quest for power? What do you think explains his ability to commit the evil acts you see in the play?
- How does Shakespeare's version of events connect to real-world history? Why do you think Shakespeare created historical plays?
- How is Richard able to manipulate those around him and hold onto his power?

## 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 10th
- Tuesday, May 17th
- Tuesday, May 24th
- Friday, June 3rd
- Wednesday, June 8th
- Wednesday, June 15th
- Tuesday, June 21st
- Wednesday, October 12th
- Tuesday, October 18th
- Friday, October 28th

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