



BOB JONES UNIVERSITY
CONCERT, OPERA
& DRAMA SERIES

P R E S E N T S

THE UNIVERSITY CLASSIC PLAYERS
in
William Shakespeare's

HAMLET

Directed by *Paul Radford*

Set and Costume Design by *Jeffrey Stegall*
Lighting design by *Richard Streeter*

CAST OF CHARACTERS

COURT OF ELSINORE

Hamlet , <i>Prince of Denmark</i>	David Schwingle
Claudius , <i>King and uncle to Hamlet</i>	Philip Eoute
Gertrude , <i>Queen and mother to Hamlet</i>	Erin Naler
Polonius , <i>Counselor to the King</i>	Jeffrey Stegall
Laertes , <i>son to Polonius</i>	John Cox
Ophelia , <i>daughter to Polonius</i>	Christina Yasi
Horatio , <i>friend to Hamlet</i>	Luke Hollis
Voltemand , <i>a courtier</i>	Nathan Pittack
Cornelius , <i>a courtier</i>	Daniel Dupea
Reynaldo , <i>a courtier</i>	Wilbur Mauk
Francisco , <i>a soldier</i>	Nathan Pittack
Marcellus , <i>an officer of the watch</i>	Nathan Young
Barnardo , <i>an officer of the watch</i>	Seth Sanders
Ghost of Hamlet's Father	Ron Pyle
Gentleman in the Court	Seth Sanders
Messenger	Nathan Pittack
First Gravedigger	Ron Pyle
Second Gravedigger	Jessany Katka
Priest	Wilbur Mauk
Osric , <i>a fashionable courtier</i>	Christopher Zydowicz
Danish Guards	Stephen Bartholomew, A.J. Redlinger

VISITORS TO THE COURT

Rosencrantz , <i>a schoolfellow to Hamlet</i>	Micah Moeller
Guildenstern , <i>a schoolfellow to Hamlet</i>	Cameron Smith
Player King	Ron Pyle
Player Queen	Kristen Post
Player Villain	Nathan Pittack
Player Prologue	Jessany Katka
Player Troupe	Jonathan Daulton, Olivia Gray
Fortinbras , <i>Prince of Norway</i>	Nathan Young
Captain in Fortinbras's army	Wilbur Mauk
First English Ambassador	Seth Sanders
Second English Ambassador	Nathan Pittack
Norwegian Soldiers	Jonathan Clater, Daniel Dupea, Zach Guerrero, Mark Haxton, Bob Johansen, John Reece, Peter Woodard

PRODUCTION STAFF

Producer	Darren Lawson
Assistant Director	Rebekah Trahan
Production Manager	Rodney McCarty
Scenic Artist	Jason Waggoner
Assistant Production Manager	Dale Burden
Fight Choreographer	Teri Parker Lewis
Assistant to the Production Manager	Sandy Jaworski
Stage Manager	Josh Wright
Costume/Makeup/Hair Supervisor	Dan Sandy

Costume Construction	Ruth Bartholomew, Becky Sandy
Wig Master	Alicia Carr
Original Music	Colton Beach
Technical Engineer	Micha Moyer
Sound Designer	Bob Johansen
Audio Operators	Ashley Gwillim, Justin Walker

Hamlet has played an important role in the history of Shakespearean performance at BJU. It was first performed in 1932 at the original campus in College Point, Florida. The production was so well received that the Classic Players took it on tour to several cities in Florida and Alabama. In 1933 *Hamlet* was the inaugural Classic Players production in Cleveland, Tennessee, the institution’s second home, where both players and play received a warm welcome.

Happily, Shakespeare designed the play with enough intriguing interpretative issues to keep any director and cast from reducing it to a “definitive” version. Classic Players’ productions of *Hamlet* have been set in several different eras, including the early Renaissance and Cavalier periods. As the 1948 program suggests, “The spirit of the play knows no limit of time or place, but is universal.”

Our current costume and set designs pay homage to the first Greenville production of *Hamlet* in 1948. The style is predominantly Byzantine, with glimmering color and lurking shadows, suggesting a period of opulence masking political turmoil and intrigue. The features of the set lack symmetry as the Royal Palace at Elsinore is seemingly “out of joint.” There is something “rotten in the state of Denmark,” and a reign that appears legitimate and strong already shows sign of decay.

Our *Hamlet* is focused on the essential moral truth at the heart of the play: the violation of one’s conscience will bring the justice of divine retribution. We follow the journey of a young man of integrity who is transformed into a “scourge” of God when he violates his own conscience in rashly killing an “unseen good old man.” Additionally, we follow the reverse journey of a murderous king who unintentionally reveals a blackened, guilty conscience before the eyes of his court. But in the case of *Hamlet*, Shakespeare also suggests the positive truth that Providence can enable a person to repent and correct his course, turn away from evil, and even become the instrument of its defeat.

A modern audience may not easily identify with the plight of a Danish prince called on by a tortured ghost to kill a villainous king. However, we can all relate to the human drama of a moral person faced with the ultimate question of his personal responsibility to right the wrongs in the society around him. We all must face the question, “What is the right thing to do about evil?” Viewed in this way, we see in *Hamlet* a mirror image of our own temptations and frailties.

FATHERS AND SONS IN *HAMLET*

Hamlet includes the stories of three young men who have lost their fathers to violent deaths: Fortinbras, Hamlet and Laertes. At some point in the plot, each purposes to avenge that death. But by the end of the play, the fates of Fortinbras, Hamlet and Laertes are vastly different. Shakespeare attributes the difference to the individual courses of their revenge.

As described by Horatio in the play’s first scene, old Fortinbras died honorably in chivalric

combat against old Hamlet. Both men were valiant kings who settled their differences by putting themselves at risk to spare their kingdoms from war. They represent a noble, irretrievable past. Some 30 years later, however, young Fortinbras chafes under his father's preparing for war with Norway. This Fortinbras is a ruthless soldier. All of Denmark is preparing for war with Norway as the first scene ends. Claudius addresses the growing threat by dispatching a letter to Fortinbras's uncle. The King of Norway is enjoined "to suppress" his nephew's threatened revenge. Later Polonius reports, "Th' ambassadors from Norway ... are joyfully return'd." Thus Fortinbras's rebellion has been quelled by diplomacy, and his revenge plot never develops. In a sense he becomes a type of forbearance. From this point Fortinbras takes on a new role, that of a successful and upright man of action. He occupies an ideal position, which contrasts him to the other two sons in the play, Hamlet and Laertes.

It should be noted that Elizabethans distinguished between private and public, or civic, revenge. It is public vengeance, achieved through military battle, which Fortinbras initially seeks. He is never associated with private revenge as Hamlet and Laertes are. Late in the play Fortinbras passes across the stage with his army, his energies now directed toward Poland. He scorns death and danger, not to achieve vengeance, but to gain a small patch of ground for his country's honor. Hamlet professes admiration for such a man.

Like Fortinbras, Laertes is entreated by an older man concerning his desire for revenge, but with opposite intent. The villain Claudius so manipulates the grieving son and brother that he vows allegiance to hell. Daring damnation in the manner of a typical Elizabethan revenger, Laertes, under the tutelage of Claudius, lays a perfidious trap for Hamlet. In his attitude toward avenging his father's death, Laertes stands in stark contrast to both Fortinbras and Hamlet. His treachery misses the mark, however, and he dies from the poison on his own sword. Yet the universe of Hamlet offers grace to the penitent, and the duped Laertes begs forgiveness of Hamlet before they both die.

After the entire Danish royal family lies dead on the stage, Fortinbras arrives in triumph from Poland. As the only bereaved son who has completely eschewed private revenge, he presides over the carnage at the end. Fortinbras learns that he has Hamlet's "dying voice" and will become king of a reunited Denmark and Norway. That which he at first sought and later held back from seeking to obtain by vengeance has become his through the workings of Divine Providence.

The tragic outcome is less triumphant for Hamlet, who failed for a time to check his rash desire for revenge. Not only is it impossible for him to ascend the throne of Denmark; he must, in fact, pay for blood with blood. Nevertheless, Hamlet comes to a realization of the error of his ways. By the final act of the play, he is a changed man. He expresses to Horatio his faith in an overruling Providence in lines that allude to Matthew 10:29–31. According to Horatio, Hamlet escapes damnation. He has repented his wrongdoing and embraced a new worldview. Hamlet's death then is a victory of sorts, and he is borne away honorably, "like a soldier to the stage."

RODEHEAVER AUDITORIUM
April 21–23, 2016
8 p.m.

*Chimes will sound and lobby lights will flash three minutes before the end of intermission. After the houselights are dimmed following intermission, guests will not be readmitted to their seats.

Cameras and recording equipment are not permitted in the auditorium during any performance. We request that personal communication devices be turned off during the program.