

Shakespeareperience

CHARACTER CONFIDENCE COMMUNICATION

Presents

The Merchant of Venice: Timeless or Troubling?



An Interactive Exploration
Of Whether The Play Should Still Be Staged In
Theatres And Taught In School

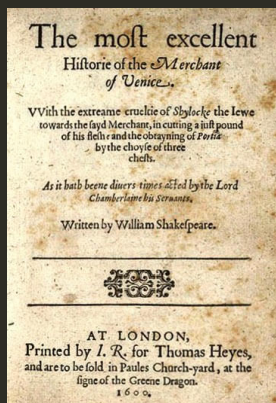


Shakespeare Performing Arts, a charitable, non-profit organization, is offering a ninety-minute interactive event designed to foster a conversation about the role of the arts in confronting anti-Semitism. Using William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* as a starting point, the workshop will explore insights the play offers on this persistent and urgent issue.

Facilitated by professional actors, the presentation will engage participants in a thoughtful, nuanced exploration of whether this play, given its portrayal of Jewish identity, should continue to be staged in theatres and studied in schools in light of the times. Through performance, audience participation and a facilitated discussion, the event aims to provide a catalyst for deeper reflection and dialogue on the intersection of ethics and the role the arts can play in understanding and representing societal values.

"On This Path Shall We Dare To Tread..."

- Overcoming the Language Problem in Shakespeare: Exploring A Professional Actor's Approach To Elizabethan Text
- Making A Case For Staging and Studying The Play through Shylock's soliloquies in Act I, Scene iii and Act III, Scene i
- Making A Case Against Staging And Studying The Play through an exploration of a few lines of Act IV, Scene i with volunteer members of the audience joining the professional actors to read parts of the trial scene
- Audience Input & Discussion
- Rabbi Wrap-Up: The Clergy's Take On The Debate



What Is Shakespearience?

- A twenty-seven -year-old literacy program designed to empower young people in Grades 3-12 with character, confidence as well as transferable communication, creative problem solving, social and other soft skills
- An in-class workshop which has expanded from twenty schools in the Toronto District School Board to over a hundred and fifty schools in more than thirty Boards of Education all over the GTA, the UK, the Middle East and the US that has visited more than two thousand schools and been seen by more than 100,000 students since 1998
- A popular summer program offering under-resourced adolescents an intensive, four-week rehearsal process culminating in a presentation of scenes from Shakespeare's plays, tied together by a theme for family and friends at a professional theatre
- An after-hours school program, modeled on the Shakespearience Summer Experience for at-risk youth in some of the GTA's priority neighbourhoods.
- A professional development program presenting workshops for teachers at the Globe Theatre in London, England; CODE (Council of Drama Educators) members; for in-service teachers pursuing Additional Qualification (AQ) courses at the Ontario Institute for Studies In Education (OISE), York University and Goldsmith's College, the faculty of Education at the University of London in England; and at Professional Development (PD) days for the Hamilton Catholic, Peel, York Region, Halton Catholic and Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Boards as well as for actors associated with the Stratford Festival
- An engaging, interactive workshop designed for adults that delves into contemporary themes such as anti-semitism, racism, colonialism, family dynamics and a host of other topics through the lens of Shakespeare's genius
- ...with a number of other initiatives in development



TESTIMONIALS FOLLOWING THE EVENT HOSTED BY BETH JACOB SYNAGOGUE IN HAMILTON, ONTARIO: NOVEMBER 24, 2024

The Shakespearience event at our synagogue was an overwhelming success. Through an interactive engagement with the audience, the actors brought invaluable, thought-provoking lessons to life for every congregant and guest who attended. ...This program offers deep insights into everything that brings us all together as opposed to what divides us and does so in a way leavened with humour, fostering connection and personal growth for everyone who participates. - Rabbi Beni Wajnberg, Beth Jacob Synagogue, Hamilton, Ontario

I enjoyed this event so very much. It was the highlight of my week. It was thought provoking, skillfully executed and just so very beautiful in its expression. It was such a great pleasure to be in attendance. - Maureen Wilson / Hamilton City Councillor, Ward 1

I had the privilege of attending your presentation at Beth Jacob today. Thank you for giving us such a gift - it was outstanding. I was sorry when it ended; I would have been happy if it had gone for several more hours. - Dermot P. Nolan C.S.

I can not tell you how impressed my wife Hope and I were with the presentation. We spoke about it all the way home. - Beny Maissner, Cantor Emeritus, Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto, Canada

The entire event was organized and performed with great skill - and entertainment value - with the obvious goal of making important change in the world. Izzy Ferguson



To book a Shakespearience event contact:

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www.shakespearience.ca

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