



WHITGIFT

A musical adaptation of William Shakespeare's

TWELFTH NIGHT

Conceived by Kwame Kwei-Armah & Shaina Taub | Music and Lyrics by Shaina Taub

6-8 December | 7pm | Big School



TWELFTH NIGHT

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Twelfth Night, or *What You Will* was likely commissioned by Elizabeth I to be performed as part of festive celebrations over 400 years ago, and it has been delighting audiences ever since. Often cited as one of the greatest comedies ever written, the London stage has witnessed countless interpretations, with recent noteworthy productions including Tim Carroll's 2012, Shakespearean dress, staging (featuring Stephen Fry as Malvolio and Mark Rylance as Olivia) at the Globe, and Simon Godwin's brilliant, and more contemporary, vision at the National Theatre in 2017 (with Tamsin Greig as Malvolio).

Whitgift has a proud and accomplished history of Shakespearean productions, but it has been five years since our most recent full-scale staging (*Macbeth*, 2018), and so it is past time to revisit this most celebrated of playwrights. However, it has also been four years since our last senior musical (*Hairspray*, 2019), and our recent plays for older pupils have been dark and dramatic explorations of contemporary concerns, and so it is also time for something lighter. These combined considerations meant that, when it came to decide upon this year's show, Shaina Taub's joyous adaptation of Shakespeare's classic seemed to fit the bill.

Much of the most exciting work in musical theatre is now coming from across the Atlantic, with *Hamilton* and *Dear Evan Hansen* proving once again that musicals can grapple with challenging subjects in a way that is both sophisticated and entertaining. Shaina Taub's two musical adaptations of Shakespeare plays (*Twelfth Night* & *As You Like It*) for the Public Theater in New York City are brilliant examples of this innovative new energy. Far from the plush velvet seats of the West End and Broadway, they were originally performed in the summer, in Central Park, for free, and featuring enormous community choruses.

At Whitgift we also aspire to include as many members of our community as possible, and it has been an honour once again to work with so many talented pupils, including those from WAVPA

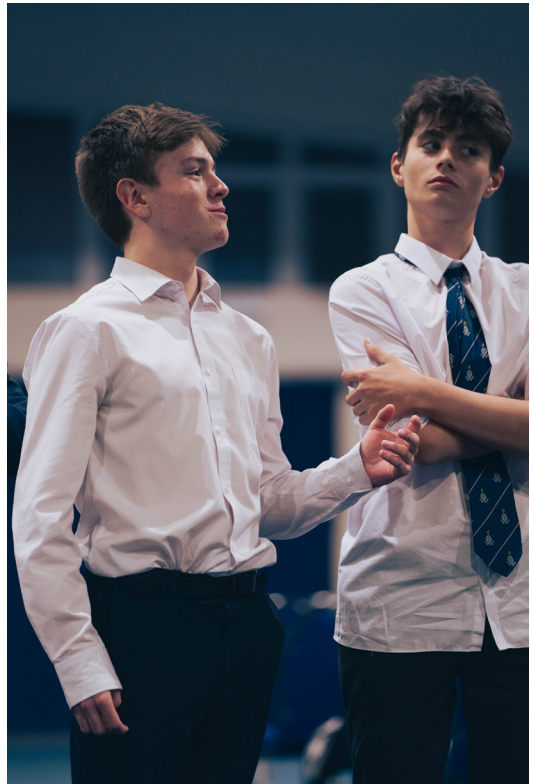
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and Old Palace School. I know that Old Palace pupils have been essential to the success of many Whitgift productions in the past, and tonight they will once again bring their talent, dedication, and spirit to our stage. We will have to embrace the real challenge of mounting successful productions without them in the future, but celebrate their long and storied contribution tonight.

In these dark and tumultuous times, when so much is uncertain, it can seem difficult to find things worth celebrating. We hope that, with our version of this greatest of comedies, we will have given our audiences plenty of reasons to be cheerful. However, Taub's adaptation also ends with a timely plea for empathy, an entreaty to see through the *Eyes of Another*. In this contentious age, what can be more important than that?

It has been a thrill to work once again with so many talented students and staff on this special production, my fifth at Whitgift, and I know that their celebratory energy will fill the 90 minute 'traffic of our stage' with joy.

JC Hammond
Director



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MUSIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

When presented with the idea of a musical adaptation of *Twelfth Night* I was originally sceptical, but upon hearing the soundtrack, I was sold. The jazz-funk score by Shaina Taub drives the story forward and includes several reprises throughout the show, which follow the characters' journeys – the classic romantic comedy about mistaken identity and self-discovery.

There are a number of different styles on display here from the upbeat funk of *Word On The Street* sung by The Illyrians, to the laid-back gospel stylings of *Is This Not Love*, sung by Feste.

There are several humorous directions for the musicians within the score such as:

'Solo!!! Arena rock, no holds barred'

'It's 12/8 reggae – and it's Texas shuffle and it's early 00's pop – it's all of these things'

'a moment of collective improv, make 'em dance!'

Please do listen out for these moments!

'The jazz-funk score by Shaina Taub drives the story forward'

Unlike most shows where the band are in a pit, or even in a separate room, we are very much on show. The first thing you will notice when entering the auditorium is the tremendous bandstand. The band itself is made up of a mixture of students (rhythm section) and professionals (horns). It has been a pleasure working on this show and I hope you enjoy the performance this evening.

SL Morrison
Musical Director

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Cast

<i>Viola</i>	Lucia Mayorga
<i>Olivia</i>	Elsa Clements
<i>Orsino</i>	Bakari Leon
<i>Feste</i>	Louis Boon
<i>Malvolio</i>	Otto Monge
<i>Toby</i>	Alex Braglewicz
<i>Maria</i>	Saphy Oboh
<i>Andrew</i>	Joel Gulliford
<i>Antonio</i>	Felix Warren
<i>Sebastian</i>	Luke Ward
<i>Fabian</i>	Marcos Byrne
<i>Dance Captain</i>	Grace Binacchi
<i>Dance Captain/Illyrian 3</i>	Seb Wade
<i>Illyrian 1</i>	William Billetskey
<i>Illyrian 2</i>	Nick Seal
<i>Illyrian 4</i>	Amber Nodder
<i>Illyrian 5</i>	Theresa Brown
<i>Illyrian 6</i>	Logan Brunni
<i>Illyrian 7</i>	Sam Warren
<i>Illyrian 8</i>	Arianna Mohammadi
<i>Illyrian Attendant</i>	Rahul Chakravarty
<i>First Officer</i>	Joe Hill
<i>Second Officer</i>	Luca Evans
<i>Chorus</i>	Arthur Brotherhood Konrad Merz Kevin Croos Kola Oyewole Addison Fan Ishaan Ramakrishnan

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Creative Team

Director	JC Hammond
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Musical Director	SL Morrison
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Choreographers	FE Carter
	GL Dixon
	EO Spedding

Producer and Stage Manager	EM Wells
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Assistant Stage Manager and Hair & Make-up	CO Aluko
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Lighting Designer	DP Jenkinson
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Sound	AJ Hill
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Stage Technician	DO Olufowora
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Lighting	Arjun Gill
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Hair & Make-up support	HI Macgregor
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Followspot	Magnus Tibbalds
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Sound No. 2	Max Edwards
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Scenic Artist	L Crestani
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Photography by AJ Hill

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AN INTRODUCTION TO TWELFTH NIGHT

Twelfth Night, produced in 1601, was one of Shakespeare's finest comedies that revolves around deceit, love and gender roles. Surviving a perilous shipwreck along the coast of Illyria, Viola – the story's protagonist – sees no other choice but to adopt the disguise of a man named Cesario so that she can better navigate this foreign land and find employment (*Play On*). Under this façade, she enters into the service of Duke Orsino and is sent to woo the wealthy countess Olivia (*Tell her*), but unaware of Viola's true identity, Olivia becomes infatuated with Viola instead (*I Am She*). At the same time, Viola falls deeply in love with the duke and a love triangle forms (*If You Were My Beloved*). It is only when Viola's brother Sebastian – whom she had assumed to be dead – arrives in Illyria that the confusion is unravelled. Olivia, mistaking Sebastian for her beloved Cesario, marries him (*Sebastian's Soliloquy*). When Viola reunites with Sebastian, she reveals her true gender to Duke Orsino who promptly realises his love for her (*Tell her (Reprise)*).

Love is a central theme of the narrative and guides the events that unfold. With Duke Orsino's unreciprocated advances for Olivia, Shakespeare first

depicts love as unfulfilling and out of reach. As the story progresses, love is conveyed through the infatuation and romantic entanglement of the confused love triangle, but ultimately it reaches a satisfying and romantic conclusion as the four find their rightful partners. Throughout the play, Shakespeare uses love comedically as well as romantically, making it a central theme that dictates the narrative of the play but also guides the response of the audience.

Another significant theme is that of deceit, which is portrayed through the character of Viola and the mistaken identities

'Throughout the play, Shakespeare uses love comedically as well as romantically'

between her and her brother. No doubt, Shakespeare used it as an instrument of comedy, as both the confusion of Viola's façade and Olivia's

mistaken belief that Sebastian was Cesario create an amusing and enticing plot for the audience to enjoy. However, with it comes a certain tension as the trickery and deception of Viola can be compromised at any point, such as when Orsino confronts her and accuses her of disguising her true identity. The main utility of deceit is as a comedic tool, but Shakespeare skilfully crafts a tense and invigorating atmosphere as the audience wanders if and when Viola's deception will be discovered.

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PARTICIPATORY THEATRE IN LONDON AND NEW YORK



Gender roles play a pivotal role in *Twelfth Night* and a modern feminist hermeneutic can be applied thoroughly to analyse the various aspects of gender and societal expectations in

the play. For instance, Viola deeming it a necessity to disguise herself as a man highlights the severe limitations imposed on women in the play. It is her disguise that offers her the necessary freedoms and opportunities that grant her employment under Duke Orsino, reflecting the gender constraints that existed at the time of writing. Moreover, the play portrays a patriarchal structure that defines the country, as male characters like Duke Orsino exert control over women, as seen by his relentless pursuit of Olivia, who whilst able to reject the advances, is powerless to end them. *Twelfth Night* reflects the challenges and sexist societal expectations placed upon women at the time of writing, demonstrating a need for women to carefully navigate the complex patriarchal society in order to succeed.

Charlie Kennedy
Lower Sixth Form

Public Works is a major artistic program launched by Public Theatre – a nonprofit organization based in New York City that produces and performs music, theatre and art. The idea of community and togetherness is at the heart of this program. Their aim is to connect people and build communities through the creation of works of art. They hold the belief that through the production of theatre and the collaboration and connections that come with it, the boundaries that separate people in their daily lives can fall away. People from local communities are invited to attend classes, participate in programs and join into the creative process of producing theatre. By blurring the lines between performer and community member, Public Works creates theatre that is both made by and for people.

Although its main base is in New York City, its influence has spread domestically and internationally. One of Public Works' founding partners is the National Theatre's Public Acts Program in the UK. Following a similar initiative to Public Works, it aims to bridge the gap between community building and theatre making. Its core values are openness, generosity and bravery and Public Acts hopes to instill these ideals into local communities through the creation of theatre. Centering around the idea that everyone deserves the right to artistic

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expression, Public Acts aims to give everyone the opportunity to participate in the production of art. It has partnered

with local communities in Greater London, Hornchurch and Doncaster. Recent productions by Public Acts include *Pericles*, *As You Like It* and a new play, *The Magic of Wild Heather*. Other partners of Public Works include Dallas Theatre Center, Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Pittsburgh Public Theatre.

The script of *Twelfth Night* we will be performing comes from the 2018 Public Works adaptation. It's debut performance featured various Broadway

veteran actors, over 100 community performers and a stellar Jazz and RnB inspired score.

Personally, in rehearsal, I can feel the gradual integration of all of Public Works' core beliefs into our performance, as well as into the play's atmosphere in general. The entire cast embodies a community, each individual contributing their energy and time into a shared artistic goal. You can see it in the acting, singing and dancing. There is a sense of togetherness that drives it. This feeling is special, infectious and I hope it carries on into future Whitgift productions.

I have no doubt that tonight's performance will exude those same themes of togetherness, joy and possibility that Public Works originally intended.

Luke Ward
Upper Sixth Form

THANK YOU...

Mounting a theatrical production in such a busy school requires the help and goodwill of a great number of people. We would like to thank: the Headmaster and the Governors for their support; Mr Osbourne for his support of Drama; subject teachers for their patience and good faith in helping the performers to balance their studies with rehearsals; Mrs Hickey-Birkett for organising the calendar; the Marketing team for compiling the programme and advertising the show; the Catering team for providing dinners during show week and for organising interval refreshments; Ms Pennicott for managing the box office; cleaning staff for cleaning up after long rehearsals and finally the parents of the cast and crew for supporting their sons and daughters through line learning and rehearsal attendance.





WHITGIFT

FORTHCOMING
DRAMA EVENTS

Animal Farm

7-9 February

7pm

PAC

The Bacchae

20-22 March

7pm

PAC

A Tale of Two Cities

19-21 June

7pm

Big School

www.whitgift.co.uk/events

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