

Shakespeare In-Depth with Philippa Kelly

Part II: October 13 – November 21

We are thrilled to be able to offer you a further, abbreviated Shakespeare In-Depth lecture series with Philippa Kelly, beginning October 13 and lasting six weeks.

Those who know Philippa's Grove Talks can expect her characteristically rich, immersive knowledge of Shakespeare's life and plays, together with an exploration of the vital question: what makes these plays so potent for the moment we are living in right now? In sounding the form and pressure of his own time and place to create his dramatic characters and situations, Shakespeare was also, with uncanny prescience, sounding the form pressure of our own.

Delve into *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and emerge from six weeks with Philippa knowing rich, surprising details of Shakespeare's life and times (medicine, dining, childbirth, sleep hygiene, travel), and with some freshly illuminating perspectives of our own times.

Classes will be held on Tuesday evenings from 5:30-6:30 PM*

An additional optional study group will be held the Saturday after each second lecture at 11:00 AM starting October 24.

All sessions will be held via Zoom.

*Please note our specific dates, given that we have a break for Election Tuesday on November 3. As usual, Study Group will occur on the second Saturday of each play, 11 a.m.

What to expect:

- Each of the three plays will be discussed over a two-week period with two classes on Tuesday evenings and a more informal study group the Saturday after the second class (a total of 3 hours of learning for each play).
- Each class will include a 45-minute lecture and 15 minutes of Q&A.
 - Send in your questions to Philippa before the lecture via info@calshakes.org
 - Ask your questions in the chat during the lecture and Philippa will address them in class
 - Unanswered questions will be answered on the Ask Philippa blog: calshakes.org/blog
- Philippa will be sending you a choice of movie versions that you may want to choose from in preparing for each class.
- Read below, for a detailed description of each class

We so hope that you will join us for one or all of these two-week classes.

The Plays

Othello: Iago, Othello and the staging of “outsiderness”

Lectures: October 13 & 20, 5:30-6:30 PM

Study Group: October 24, 11:00 AM

Othello continues Shakespeare’s fascination with outsiderness, social abandonment and the threat of it, with identity as both an intrinsic ideal and as a social reality that is constantly shifted by context. The play is also a study of jealousy, of course – what triggers jealousy and what inflames it? One little-known fact about *Othello* is that it was the first of Shakespeare’s plays performed after the interregnum, and the first play to star (in 1660) a female-acted Desdemona. And we’ll also be looking at outsiderness in gender in this play, which is conjoint with racial exclusion.

Romeo and Juliet: passion must die, even if we don’t

Lectures: Tuesday October 27 & **Thursday November 5***, 5:30-6:30 PM

Study Group: November 7, 11:00 AM

Shakespeare’s beautiful early play about family legacy, the genesis of love; the conditions that are necessary for Shakespeare to let the lovers blossom on the stage (assassinating Tybalt and Mercutio as a first step); and the theme that passion must die, even if we don’t. As a special treat, Philippa, Clive and Isabel – all of whom participated in the recent *Romeo E Juliet* workshop – will be inviting KJ Sanchez to speak about this workshop. And we’ll be inviting an actor to deliver a monologue in both English and Spanish.

*NOTE: There will be no class on Tuesday, November 3 due to the Presidential Election. The second lecture will be on Thursday.

A Midsummer Night’s Dream: feeling the “love juice” of comic complication

Lectures: November 10 & 17, 5:30-6:30 PM

Study Group: November 21, 11:00 AM

We will end the term on a bright note - the symphonic *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, written back-to-back with *Romeo and Juliet*, living as an inversion of the earlier tragedy. How do tragedy and comedy exist so closely together, in life and in drama? Philippa will argue that Shakespeare’s brilliant nestling of comedy with tragedy is his way of exploring the paradox of what it means to be human. It’s impossible to live with that paradox all the time, which is why one or the other of the two genres rises to the top. And finally, Philippa will close with some remarks about what she and Professor Greenblatt talked about back on 28 July – second chances, the reason *why* we hope, the reason why we repent, the reason *why* it is OK to apologize and try again.