

# Newsletter #6

July 2020

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[www.youtube.com/c/SYPkolkata](http://www.youtube.com/c/SYPkolkata)

Dear Readers,

Our newsletter is now Monthly! This newsletter celebrates International Joke Day (1 July) so we have made this all about Shakespeare's jesters!

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### FOOLISHLY WISE THOUGHTS

*Compiled by Archik Guha (Team Supervisor, SYP)*

Here are some quotes from Shakespeare's fools!

**All the world's a stage, and all men and women merely players** – Jaques (*As You Like It*)

**The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool** – Touchstone (*As You Like It*)

**Truth's a dog must to kennel** – The Fool (*King Lear*)

**Anything that's mended is but patched: virtue that transgresses is but patched with sin** – Feste (*Twelfth Night*)

**If men could be contented to be what they are, there were no fear in marriage** – The Clown (*All's Well that Ends Well*)

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### ABOUT SYP

SYP was formed in 2016, commemorating the 400<sup>th</sup> death anniversary of Shakespeare. Although the group started out to perform drama, SYP has, in the span of a few years, expanded to other forms of performance activities, including performing for the screen on YouTube.

SYP doesn't just perform Shakespeare's plays. Our performance is Shakespearean. We also take up works by others.



**Subscribe** to our YouTube channel:

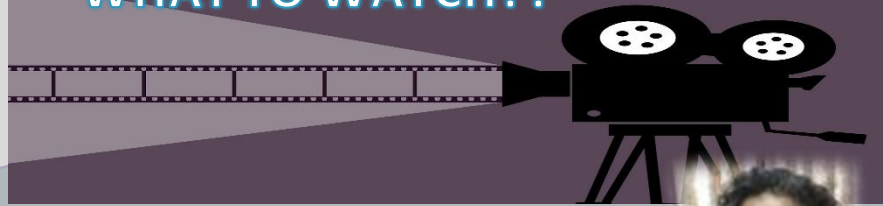
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# Some Light Moments

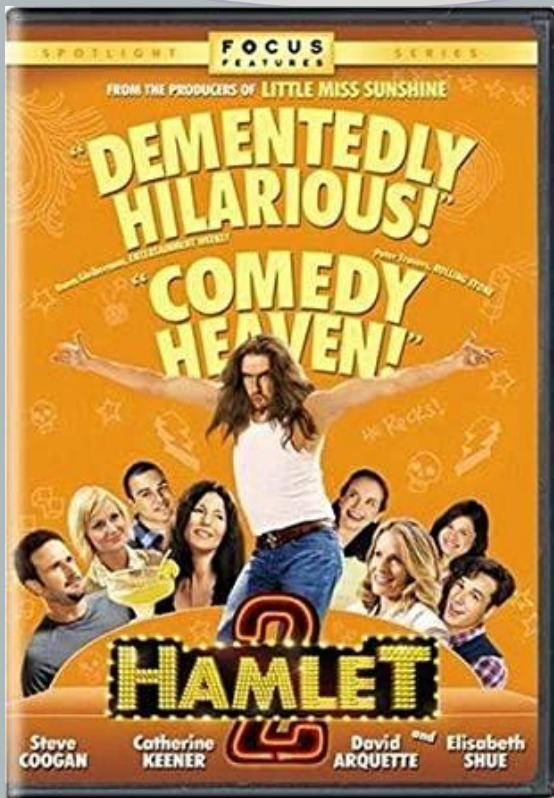


## Hamlet 2

## WHAT TO WATCH??



Movie Review by Srishti Bhowmick,  
Event Manager, SYP



Have you ever heard of a place “Where dreams go to die...”? Well apparently there is one such place! Tune in to find out. ‘HAMLET 2’, released in the year 2008, is the craziest movie I stumbled upon in this lockdown, and honestly, you are missing out if you haven’t watched it. There’s a lot of comedy and fun adorning a beautiful message about our dreams and aspirations in this movie.

The title of the movie is quite baffling. After all, who can think of a sequel to one of the greatest plays of William Shakespeare, where all the pivotal characters die? And that’s exactly what Dana Smarsh, our protagonist, is trying to do in the movie.

‘Weird’ doesn’t even cover this man but there is an insight to his character that the masses can relate to. We often come across failures and doors being shut upon our faces. But the

play that Dana puts together with the help of his new edgy drama students is not only a fighting attempt to keep the drama club a functioning part of the school but also to voice their perspectives in a hostile world. With the help of a time machine Hamlet undoes the death of his mother Gertrude, his beloved Ophelia and her brother Laertes. While it may seem like the tragedy is being removed from the Tragedy, their honest attempt is to do what we often forget to, forgive and make amends. This musical play will make you realize the significance of Art and you may stumble upon the cause of all our mournings which is of utmost importance in today's world, where depression is taking lives everyday!

And for all you readers out there, who watched Kurosawa's ‘Ran’, yes, you guessed it right – Kurosawa draws inspiration from both Macbeth and King Lear in the film.



## The Unidentified Fools

by Dr. Nilanko Mallik, Founder-Director, SYP

It is known to all students of Shakespeare that the jesters found in his plays – the fools, as they are labelled – play an important role. The comment and critique on the characters, and often, become the voice of the playwright, or the voice of conscience, or the voice of rationality. Their vision is sadly, not shared by other characters.

Historically, jesters were kept in royal houses and sometimes, in some aristocratic houses. They did not necessarily stay with kings and queens only. This article will not focus on the history of jesters in places and



SYP Macbeth (2019), Porter played by Sounak Datta.

other places. Instead, this article will focus on the unidentified jesters in Shakespeare's plays. This identification is purely mine, and opinions might differ.

It is known to all Shakespeare in Performance researchers that the roles of the characters were often based on the actors present in the company. It was not like modern times, where someone writes the play, and then there is a call for auditions and then the actors are selected. Shakespeare – and all playwrights who were associated with acting groups – had to write keeping their group in mind.

Analysing the plays, one finds a lot of characters who would, undoubtedly, play the role of the jester, but not all plays mention the role so explicitly. Launcelot Gobbo and Gratiano certainly fit the role of fools, but as per the play, they play other characters. Think about the drunken porter in *Macbeth*, for instance. Recent trends to cast him as an aide and confidant of Macbeth, till his death, overshadow the role for which he was originally intended – to play the fool. If one examines all that the drunken porter says, one would find his words to be a critique of the contemporary society, with topical issues like the gunpowder plot also coming as allusion. He is drunk, and seems to speak irrationally, but all that he says is philosophy. And practical truth. Told while fooling with the audience, and later, Macduff.

The porter's words on equivocation not working to get passage to heaven is pure morality, which brings the theme of equivocation, which is so important in the drama. He decides to be the porter of hell, which is symbolic, for he makes the audience understand that Macbeth's castle is hell. He conveys themes to the audience, which is definitely one of the roles of the fool. His comments on the effects of drinking are typical of the erotic jokes of Shakespeare's Fools. He is definitely wise and deserves a place among the great Fools of Shakespeare.

In *Othello*, Roderigo seems to play the role of the fool – not a wise fool, though. He is played by Iago and does not realise he is played till the very end. *Hamlet* satisfies the role of the fools in the pair of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Here again, the two are made fools of. They are surely not wise, and supposedly die off-scene, but they deserve attention. Roderigo, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are all actors who bring the comic elements to life, and although they are not wise, they successfully bring out the themes and character traits of others who converse with them. Characters who converse with them show their true colours to the audience, even though they remain unaware of those. They surely deserve entry in the Shakespeare's Hall of Fools.



# PUZZLE TIME!!

Find names of prominent Shakespeare's jesters, hidden in this maze of alphabets. Answers will be revealed in the next issue!

Words can be left-right, right-left, up-down, down-up, diagonal (in any manner). Need help? Here are

clues to help with the characters!

T	O	L	E	C	N	U	A	L	D
O	O	J	J	F	E	S	T	E	R
U	Q	W	E	A	O	R	T	Y	O
C	U	I	O	L	Q	O	P	P	M
H	A	S	D	S	F	U	L	H	I
S	G	H	J	T	K	L	E	A	O
T	Z	X	C	A	V	B	N	S	M
O	Q	W	E	F	R	T	Y	U	I
N	I	O	P	F	D	F	G	H	J
E	H	J	K	L	V	B	N	M	Y

*This jester appears in two plays.*

*His name is synonymous to festivity.*

*A compound name, a verb and a noun.*

*Two jesters, one name, one play.*

*A jester who thinks a lot about running away.*

*A fool has no name.*

*He is a melancholic fool.*

Take a screenshot of this puzzle, solve it by marking the names and save the image. Send your image by email to [newsletter@syp.nlsr.org](mailto:newsletter@syp.nlsr.org) and we shall mention the names of the first 10 correct entries in the next newsletter! Mention 'Newsletter 6 Puzzle' in the subject line and state your name, school/college, class (and year, for college).

B	P	R	O	S	P	E	R	O	D
R	S	U	I	N	O	L	O	P	U
A	F	R	E	D	E	R	I	C	K
B	Q	W	E	D	R	T	Y	U	E
A	I	O	P	U	A	S	D	F	S
N	G	M	O	N	T	A	G	U	E
T	H	J	K	C	L	Z	X	C	N
I	V	B	N	A	M	T	Y	U	I
O	O	P	A	N	S	D	F	G	O
L	E	A	R	J	K	L	C	V	R

## Newsletter #5 Solution:

*This father realises too late which daughters have his best wishes in their hearts (Lear).*

*He feels his daughter has been bewitched to marry (Brabantio).*

*His daughter comes to him in disguise, and doesn't reveal her identity till the end (Duke Senior).*

*He wants no one to rival his daughter, but daughter runs away (Brabantio).*

*His son is exiled for killing his brother-in-law (Montague).*

*This father feels thoughts can be hidden (Duncan).*

*This father stays for years with his daughter in an island, before they are both able to return (Prospero).*

*He is full of preaching, but does not practise what he preaches (Polonius).*



### SYP Comics Time!

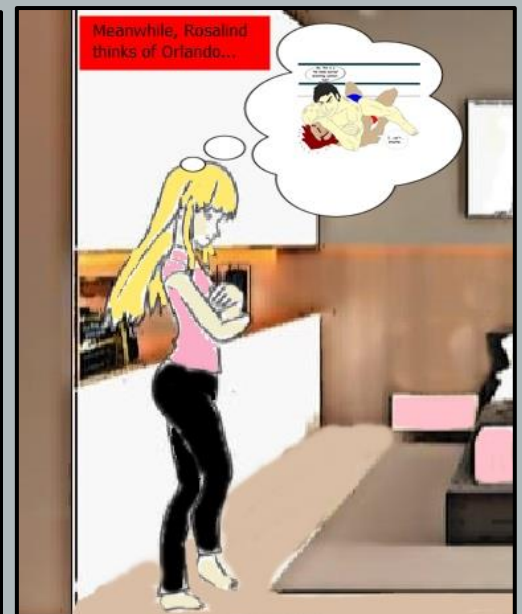
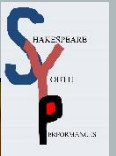
## As You Like It – Frederick asks Rosalind to leave

Drawing and Colours: Ayush Roy, Ad-Hoc Member, SYP

Words: Nilanko Mallik (based on Shakespeare’s text)

Plot: Adam feels tired, and thinks he will die. Orlando goes to find food for Adam. Meanwhile, Rosalind and Celia discuss about the wrestling match – and about Orlando...

1/2



SYP COMICS – As You Like It – Adam warns Orlando 2/2

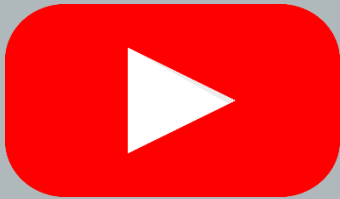


**If you are an educator** and would like to contribute an article (on Shakespeare), we would like to hear from you.

Please email [newsletter@syp.nlsr.org](mailto:newsletter@syp.nlsr.org) with the subject 'Prospective Article for Newsletter'. Mention the topic and the outline in the body of the email, and state your present designation and affiliation.

We will get back to you if your interest matches with our needs.

**Thank You!**



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