

College of DuPage Theatre Department

Presents

Twelfth Night, or What You Will

by William Shakespeare



Directed by Doug Long

The College Theatre Department sincerely thanks the Library for research support for classes studying the script and production, as well as for the cast, director, and production team working on the project.

Place: Illyria

Characters:

VIOLA, a lady of Messaline shipwrecked on the coast of Illyria (later disguised as CESARIO)

OLIVIA, an Illyrian countess

MARIA, her waiting-gentlewoman

SIR TOBY BELCH, Olivia's kinsman

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK, Sir Toby's companion

MALVOLIO, steward in Olivia's household

FOOL, Olivia's jester, named Feste

FABIAN, a gentleman in Olivia's household

ORSINO, duke (or count) of Illyria

Gentlemen serving Orsino:

VALENTINE

CURIO

SEBASTIAN, Viola's brother
ANTONIO, friend to Sebastian

CAPTAIN
PRIEST
Two OFFICERS

Lords, Sailors, Musicians, and other Attendants

There will be a 15-minute intermission.

Director's Note:

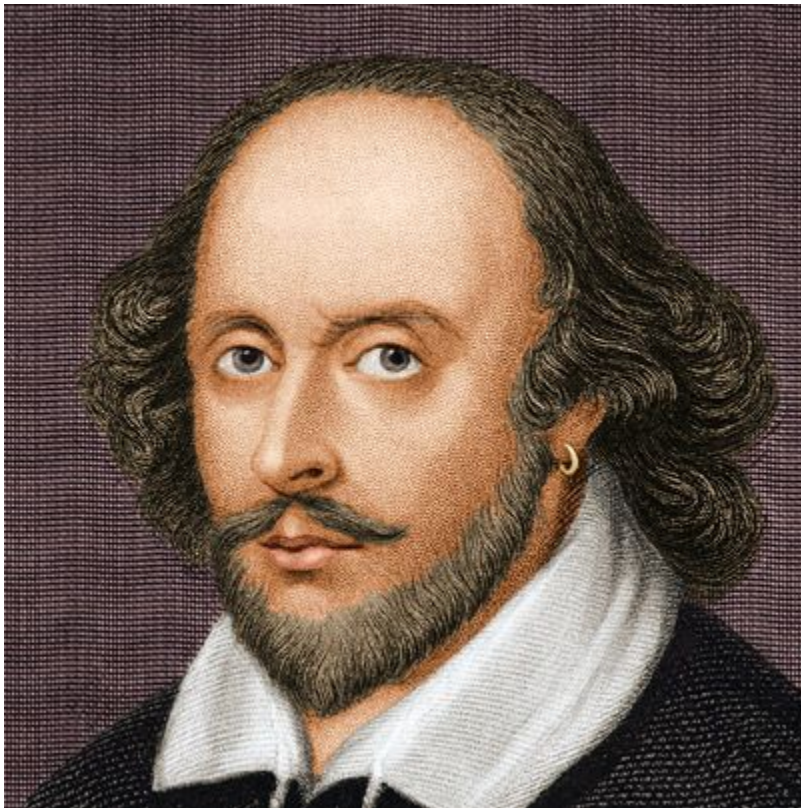
For a 423-year-old play, *Twelfth Night* continues to be one of Shakespeare's most-produced plays. I believe this is due to a few reasons. For one, it's one of his funniest comedies and laughter is a universal language. The first record of a performance was in 1602, as the evening's entertainment at the end of the Christmas season, where laughs and songs were in order. Another reason is its universal journey from grief to love. Numerous characters at the beginning of the play have experienced loss – of a parent, a brother, home – and through a series of masterfully interwoven storylines, all try to find a sense of belonging and someone to love.

This is my favorite Shakespeare play. I was first exposed to it during my own undergraduate years, through an excellent production and studying it in a Performance of Shakespeare class. When I was getting my MFA in Directing, I assistant directed *Twelfth Night* and researched productions of it in a History of Directing class. When I moved to Chicago to begin directing professionally, one of my first gigs was acting in the Buffalo Theatre Ensemble's 1997 production. To have a chance to direct this wonderful play at the College of DuPage has been a thrill, especially working with the wonderful production team and remarkable students.

“If music be the food of love, play on!” ~ DL

William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) is the English poet and playwright who is often described as the greatest writer in the English language. In 1588 Shakespeare moved to London and joined a leading theatre company called the Chamberlain's Men. He quickly established a reputation as a writer of plays and appeared in his own dramas at the Globe Theatre. He wrote 36 plays for the London stage including comedies such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *As You Like It*, tragedies such as *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*, history plays including *Richard II* and *Henry IV* and two romances, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. The plays are written mainly in verse and are greatly admired for their poetic language, dramatic technique and literary style. (Edited from the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary)



(Getty Images)

‘Twelfth Night’ the play and ‘Twelfth Night’ the celebration

Shakespeare’s play *Twelfth Night* gets its title from the celebration of Twelfth Night celebrated in the Anglican church. It begins on Christmas (Dec. 25) and culminates in the celebration of Epiphany, generally on Jan. 5. The tradition traces back to 567 A.D.

Traditionally, this involved twelve days of celebration (think “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” with its five golden rings and partridge in a pear tree). This extended celebration follows the fasting that took place during the season of Advent. The primary drink associated with Twelfth Night celebrations is Wassail Punch and a popular food is a cake in which surprises are baked into the cake itself. In medieval times, a bean or a pea was baked in. Whatever man found one was King for the night and whichever woman found one was Queen.

Another tradition during the festivities is that traditional roles are reversed: Men play women, women play men, lower-status citizens can play high-born citizens, etc. Many of these traditions show up in the play *Twelfth Night*.

In this article, Michael Dobson looks at the connections between the traditional celebration and the play....

Festivity, dressing up and misrule in *Twelfth Night*

by Michael Dobson, British Library, 15 March 2016

<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/festivity-dressing-up-and-misrule-in-twelfth-night>

In the Elizabethan period, 'Twelfth Night' was a festival celebrated with music, masked balls, misrule and general revelry. Michael Dobson considers the place of festivity and disguise in Shakespeare's play of the same name.

Attempts to tie *Twelfth Night* too directly to the festival from which its title derives have sometimes backfired – when the Duke of York’s theatre revived it on January 6th 1663, for instance, Samuel Pepys complained that it was ‘a silly play and not relating at all to the name or day’, while Kenneth Branagh’s decision to give his 1987 stage production the decor of a Victorian Christmas, so that Malvolio resembled Scrooge, didn’t please everyone. It is quite possible that Shakespeare himself called this play only by what subsequently became its subtitle, *What You Will*, perhaps thereby signalling its status as a contrasting companion piece to his previous comedy *As You Like It*. But it isn’t inappropriate that this play should be associated with a day which in Shakespeare’s time came as the climax of the festive season, the occasion for music, elaborate fancy-dress masked balls, and parties during which whoever found the bean baked into a special cake would be declared ‘Lord of Misrule’ for the night. With the complications produced by Viola’s disguise as a page boy occupying its main plot and the steward Malvolio’s sartorial transformation from steward to aspiring lover providing the central image of its subplot, *Twelfth Night* is very much a play about the potential hazards of dressing up, and with its dramatisation of the antagonism between the hedonistic, alcoholic and gluttonous Sir Toby Belch and the puritanical steward who longs to discipline him, it is also very much a play about the social implications of festivity.

Clothing and the social structure

These concerns resonated in Shakespeare’s time in ways which in ours – when public transvestism is legal and almost commonplace, and when the idea of a man wearing yellow cross-gartered stockings is suggestive of a golf tournament rather than of a come-on – have definitely faded. For many in the Tudor establishment, however, proper social hierarchy was perceived to be under threat, so that the Lady Olivia’s preference for a supposed page over a count, never mind her steward’s fantasy of marrying her so as to become ‘Count Malvolio’ (2.5.33), would have carried a definite transgressive thrill for this play’s

first audiences in 1601. Although the existence of an increasingly influential merchant class had been complicating matters of social status since the later middle ages, the Tudors continued to make last-ditch attempts to enforce visible markers of rank. Sumptuary laws, designed to make a person's place in life legible at a glance by regulating how much the members of different classes were allowed to spend on clothes, were reinforced by a series of proclamations throughout the reigns of Henry VIII, Mary I and Elizabeth I: it was actually illegal to wear fabrics or colours deemed inappropriate to one's station. This was one reason some anti-theatrical writers gave for wanting to close down the playhouses: not only did they provide an arena in which spectators could show off their own inappropriately dressy outfits, but when not watching each other they could enjoy the spectacle of mere common players dressed up as lords and kings.

Proclamation against Excess of Apparel by Queen Elizabeth I

So when Malvolio imagines toying not with his steward's chain – the badge of office which labels him as an upper servant – but with 'some rich jewel' (2.5.59, all this while wearing a 'branched velvet gown', 2.5.45–46), during an extended daydream about how marriage to Olivia will enable him not just to sleep with the woman who is currently his employer but to rebuke her aristocratic uncle Sir Toby afterwards, the play is offering a glimpse not just of comic sexual self-delusion but of a potentially subversive upward mobility. It is cruelly fitting that the revenge of Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and their servant cronies involves tricking Malvolio into a different inappropriate outfit, forging a letter by which he comes to believe that Olivia wants him to wear yellow stockings, cross-gartered (2.5.148–49). Not only was cross-gartering hopelessly outmoded by 1601, but wearing brightly-coloured hose was a badge of the young, free and single (there was even an Elizabethan popular song, in which a husband longs for his carefree bachelordom, called 'Give Me My Yellow Hose Again'). The practical joke turns Malvolio into a ludicrous and alarming fashion hybrid: sober steward above the waist, satyr below.

'Dost thou think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?'

Arguably, the whole of *Twelfth Night* debates the very nature and morality of comedy, in a manner informed by contemporary arguments about the religious politics of mirth. 'Is there no respect of place, persons, nor time in you?', demands Malvolio (2.3.88–89), roused in the middle of the night to complain about Sir Toby's drunken singing of, among other things, a carol ('O' the twelfth day of December', possibly a misquotation of 'On the twelfth day of Christmas' 2.3.81). According to Malvolio, described by Maria as 'a kind of puritan' (2.3.135), such behaviour is not a legitimate expression of festivity but merely 'uncivil rule' (2.3.119). In this he is indeed akin to the puritan faction within the English Church in Shakespeare's time, who wanted those pre-Reformation festival practices which remained part of the ecclesiastical calendar removed, and who were especially keen to ban recreational activities on Sundays and the fund-raising parish booze-ups known as 'church ales'. For the puritans, the whole year should be equally sober: there should be no more carnival, only a perpetual, law-abiding Lent. In 1601, then, Sir Toby's famous retort carried a topical edge as well as a grossly snobbish one: 'Art any more than a steward? Dost thou think because / thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?' (2.3.109–11). But if Malvolio is vanquished within the play, storming out of its denouement vowing vengeance on the 'whole pack' of his tormentors (5.1.374), it was his kindred spirits offstage who were destined for ultimate victory. Although James I eventually published a 'Book of Sports' soon after Shakespeare's death declaring certain pastimes, even maypole dancing, definitely legal on Sundays, the playhouses would in time be closed down during the rule of a puritan Parliament (1642) and James's son Charles I deposed and executed (1649). Even after the restoration of Charles II, the ex-puritan Samuel Pepys' dislike of *Twelfth Night* may have stemmed from a continuing sympathy with Malvolio: 'the business of abusing the Puritans begins to grow stale, and of no use,' he wrote in 1668, 'they being the people that, at last, will be found the wisest'.

Michael Dobson is Director of the Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Professor of Shakespeare Studies at the University of Birmingham. His publications include *The Making of the National Poet* (1992), *The Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* (with Stanley Wells, 2001, revised edition 2015), *England's Elizabeth* (with Nicola Watson, 2002), *Performing Shakespeare's Tragedies Today* (2006) and *Shakespeare and Amateur Performance* (2011). He is currently researching the role of the Shakespeare canon in the emergence of national theatre institutions worldwide.

Wassail Punch



One of the chief traditions associated with the Twelfth Night celebration is the Wassail Punch. Here is a modern recipe from the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. https://www.slaveryandremembrance.org/almanack/life/christmas/din_recipe.cfm

This punch dates to medieval times, when drinkers toasted one another with the Saxon phrase "wass hael," meaning "be whole," or, "be well."

Ingredients:

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 1 large can unsweetened pineapple juice
- 3/4 cup tea

Place in a cheesecloth sack:

- 1 tablespoon whole cloves
- 1 tablespoon whole allspice
- 2 sticks cinnamon

This is great cooked in a crock pot. Let it simmer very slowly for 4 to 6 hours. You can add water if it evaporates too much. Serves 20.

The connection between the twins in *Twelfth Night* and Shakespeare's own twin children

Central to the plot of *Twelfth Night* is a shipwreck that separates Viola from her twin brother Sebastian. The two spend most of the play presuming the other drowned, carrying a sense of grief throughout what is

often a raucous comedy. Many scholars have linked this story to Shakespeare's own twin children, a boy, Hamnet, and a girl, Judith, born in 1585. Hamnet died in 1596, at age 11, four years before the first production of *Twelfth Night*. In this excerpt, writer Vanessa Thorpe addresses how Hamnet's early death may have affected both Shakespeare and his play.

Excerpt from “**Alas, poor Hamnet: spotlight falls on Shakespeare’s tragic only son**” by Vanessa Thorpe, *The Guardian*, Feb. 22 2020 <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2020/feb/22/alas-poor-hamnet-shakespeare-tragic-son-finally-steps-into-the-spotlight>

The agreed facts are that Hamnet was indeed twin brother to Shakespeare's second daughter, Judith, and that he died at the age of 11. He was buried in the churchyard at Holy Trinity in Stratford-upon-Avon in the summer of 1596, one of the most productive years of his father's early London career. In an era of frequent plague outbreaks, the cause of death was not always set down in parish registers, so the circumstances of the boy's death are uncertain. It is also unclear whether Shakespeare attended the funeral.

“The twins had been baptised at Candlemas 1585,” said Greg Doran, artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company. “According to John Manningham's diary, the first recorded performance of *Twelfth Night* took place exactly 17 years later on 2 February 1602. Judith no longer had her twin to celebrate their joint birthday. As a twin myself, I find that poignant. Her father can reunite his fictional twins, separated in a shipwreck, and for Viola and Sebastian the aching loss can be magically healed, but he can do nothing to heal his family's grief revived every birthday.”



Left: Shakespeare's three children – Susanna and the twins, Hamnet and Judith, painted by Sofonisba Anguissola

Gender Roles and Disguises

One of the central plot elements in *Twelfth Night* is disguise. Sebastian has pretended to be “Roderigo.” Feste torments Malvolio by pretending to be “Sir Topas.” Most centrally, Viola spends most of the play pretending to be a boy named “Cesario.” This last disguise invites commentary throughout the play about gender roles, including androgyny and homosexuality. In this essay, Robert Kimbrough explores that theme, comparing Viola at times with Rosalind in *As You Like It* (1599).

“Androgyny in *Twelfth Night*” by Robert Kimbrough

from “Androgyny Seen Through Shakespeare’s Disguise,” *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 33 (1982), 17-33; this selection is pp. 28-32. Reprinted in the 1987 Signet Classic edition of *Twelfth Night*.

In *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare displays much of Viola’s person through soliloquies and asides that consider inner as well as surface facts and ironies. Like Rosalind, Viola experiences human freedom and growth in male disguise, but unlike Rosalind, Viola feels self-constricted and self-conscious throughout the play. She is especially conscious of her sexual identity, far more sex-aware, far more troubled by the sex of her sex than is Rosalind. As a result, the girl-as-boy motif is presented as somewhat , though innocently, unnatural, and the effect of Viola’s disguise on the play is different from the effect created by Rosalind’s. Here Shakespeare openly plays off sexual identity against gender identity in order to suggest with more impact than in *As You Like It* that one must accept one’s genetic sex before one can reach toward psychic androgyny. He touches on homosexuality as well as heterosexuality in order to bring home to the audience that androgyny has no necessary connection with any particular kind of sexual orientation. The audience, like Viola, must learn that androgyny is not a physical state, but a state of mind.

Shakespeare summarizes his plot, character, and themes in Viola’s soliloquy in the short II.ii: “I left no ring with her. What means this lady? / Fortune forbid my outside have not charmed her” (II. 16-17). When Viola says, “Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness” (I. 26), Shakespeare, beyond talking about the rising complication in the play, is mocking the Puritans whose mounting attack on the impious mummery of satanic players had always been based in part on the abomination of men dressing unnaturally as women – monstrous, indeed. According to Juliet Dusinberre, at the turn of the century some few women were roaming the streets of London dressed as men to taunt protesting Christendom. Surely Shakespeare must have enjoyed for himself the joke of having a girl mockingly apologize for playing a boy. In effect Shakespeare is saying that if that is all small-minded people can think about, so be it. But Viola’s self-consciousness about her unnatural transformation leads to a more serious moment as she characterizes herself as a hermaphrodite and a homosexual:

How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly;
And I (poor monster) fond as much on him;
And she (mistaken) seems to dote on me.
What will become of this? As I am man,
My state is desperate for my master’s love.
As I am woman (now alas the day!),
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe?
O Time, thou must untangle this, not I;
It is too hard a knot for me t’untie.

(II.ii.33-41)

When Viola parenthetically calls herself a “poor monster” (Elizabethan for unnatural) and Olivia “mistaken” (both deceived and morally wrong), Shakespeare introduces the concepts of hermaphroditism and homosexuality – to be sure, only fleetingly. A hermaphrodite was unnatural because of the presence of both male and female sex organs, supposedly the result of a kind of monstrous birth like that of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, out of the natural order of things. And, leaving aside any question of actual

practice, homosexuality was, of course, automatically stamped unnatural by religious and secular officialdoms.

In spite of her recognition of natural and social aberration, Viola decides to stay in disguise. She could “come out” at this crucial moment, but for the time being what she seeks is freedom within the restrictions of disguise.

Liberated from her role as a young Lady, she moves into realms of self-discovery. And having been raised with a twin brother, she knows how to adapt to her adopted sex. The result is Shakespeare’s furthest venture into androgyny as seen through disguise.

At the outset, after shipwreck, Viola’s normal, sensible course of action upon finding out where she is and whose domain it is would have been to have the captain take her to her father’s friend for protection and to arrange her return home as, she thinks, an heiress. But on hearing the name “Orsino,” she makes a statement which carries all the weight of a rhetorical question: “He was a bachelor then.” Her immediate plan, seen even in the talk about Olivia, is to woo him (or to see if she wishes to), which, paradoxically, she would not be able to do if she presented herself as hapless, for then it would be Orsino’s duty to send her right home. So she bribes the captain:

I prithee (and I’ll pay thee bounteously)
Conceal me what I am, and be my aid
For such disguise as highly shall become
The form of my intent. I’ll serve this duke.
Thou shalt present me as an eunuch to him;
It may be worth they pains. For I can sing,
And speak to him in many sorts of music
That will allow me very worth his service.
What else may hap, to time will I commit;
Only shape thou thy silence to my wit.

(I.ii.52-61)

In disguise, she can exercise that wit which women are not supposed to have, and the role and costume which she chooses are ones for which she is fitted:

I my brother know
Yet living in my glass. Even such and so
In favor was my brother, and he went
Still in this fashion, color, ornament,
For him I imitate.

(III.iv.391-95)

In acting like her twin brother, she becomes, so to speak, a walking example of Ascham on Imitation: the similar treatment of dissimilar matter. Even though one twin is female and one is male, they share a common humanity. Extending the rhetorical metaphor, she need not search for the basis of her *tractatio*; she is herself the basis of her own invention.

The effect of her disguise on Orsino is like that of Rosalind’s on Orlando: men can be relaxedly, if only superficially, confessional with others of the same sex – the sort of “just between us” collusion that men easily fall into. Within Viola’s first three days of service, Orsino shows more of his essential self (though young and in flux) to Cesario than he has so far been able to show to his neighbor, the distant Olivia, or would ever reveal to Viola as a stranger of the opposite sex.

Because he is older than Cesario, Orsino shares his experience in order to teach his young companion (he literally and figuratively lords it over him). But the lessons learned are not the ones being sought, as Cesario’s responses reveal. When Orsino, out of the presence of women, confesses that boy, however we do praise ourselves,

Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,
Than women's are,

(II.iv.32-35)

Viola wisely nods, "I think it well, my lord." And then not much later in the same scene, Orsino all so humanly and delightfully contradicts himself:

There is no woman's sides
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
As love doth give my heart; no woman's heart
So big to hold so much; they lack retention.
Alas, their love may be called appetite,
No motion of the liver but the palate,
That suffers surfeit, cloyment, and revolt;
But mine is all as hungry as the sea
And I can digest as much. Make no compare
Between that love a woman can bear me
And that I owe Olivia

(II.iv.94-104)

To which nonsense Viola can quietly respond, "Ay, but I know." While indeed she does, she also is coming to know, as Olivia and Orsino will learn, that many apparent differences between men and women are dissolvable. When Orsino asks her what she knows, she answers that women are as "true of heart as we," where "we" becomes truly androgynous because it means "we human kinds." And from her strategic advantage she in her turn can school Orsino while hiding behind a disguise that cancels out her sexuality, making her a "blank" (like blank verse, neither feminine nor masculine). From her position and experience, she knows

Too well what love women to men may owe.
In faith, they are as true of heart as we.
My father had a daughter loved a man
As it might be perhaps were I a woman,
I should your lordship.

(II.iv.106-09)

In response to Orsino's "And what's her history?" Viola says:
A blank, my lord. She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm I'th'bud,
Feed on her damask cheek. She pined in thought;
And, with a green and yellow melancholy,
She sat like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?
We men may say more, swear more; but indeed
Our shows are more than will; for still we prove
Much in our vows but little in our love.

(II.iv.111-19)

Because she is a man, Viola can turn women's complaints against masculine infidelity tellingly against that gender. The lesson she is learning and teaching is one her birth into life as the twin of a male has already prepared her for: once sexual differentiation is acknowledged, men and women are essentially very much alike. She has no trouble playing a boy, for her childhood has readied her for the role she is now successful in, even though Orsino remarks that Cesario has all the physical characteristics which would promote the successful portrayal of "a woman's part" (I.iv.34).

Thus Shakespeare allows us to see androgyny through disguise. Viola is first of all a woman, but society, being so conscious of sex identity (“what did she have, a boy or a girl?”), assumes she is a man once she puts on male clothing (which is enough to start Sir Andrew quaking). As a result she can be Viola and Sebastian, woman and man, at the same time. Since this is only metaphorically true, she is freed to act out the full range of her human personality. When Shakespeare has Orsino say that Viola could play “a woman’s part,” he is doing more than calling the audience’s attention to her girl-as-boy disguise; he is calling attention to a two-in-one nature through the part-acting metaphor.

By giving Viola this metaphor of acting in her dialogue with Olivia – “my speech,” “my part,” “I am not that I play” – Shakespeare develops the idea that Viola is Viola at the same time that she is Sebastian. Stated plainly, she does not *become* Sebastian; she *is* Sebastian – but without a penis (“a little thing would make me tell them how much I lack of a man”). Such is the nature of successful acting. As an actor, Viola is herself “a natural perspective that is and is not.” As Viola-Cesario she can charm Orsino; as Sebastian-Cesario she can charm Olivia. And the audience is just as charmed as are Orsino and Olivia; we are delighted to share with Viola her recognition of her emotional self – “I am almost sick for (a beard),” “I am no fighter,” “I am one that had rather go with sir priest than sir knight.” Because of her disguise, the usual social barriers of custom are removed, allowing Orsino and Olivia to get to know the essential Viola-Sebastian. Then, with the arrival of Viola’s literal surrogate, her self’s other self – “One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons” – the apparent problems afforded by sexual delusion are solved. A happy ending is a natural ending. The marriages are founded on surer ground than if they had been initiated through more artificial means than artifice.

In this sense, Viola’s disguise does not turn out to be a total “wickedness.” It merely covers those parts of her that too often prevent society from accepting women as human beings.

Over the three-month span of the play Orsino develops his instinctive liking of Cesario without having to wrestle with Viola’s sex. Meanwhile, Olivia’s decision to marry Sebastian is only seemingly sudden. She, too, has had three months to get to know the dominant human aspect of Viola-Sebastian. Not until Sebastian enters does sex – in the form of marriage, of course – enter Olivia’s stated plans. Here, as Sebastian says regarding this sexual attraction, “nature to her bias drew in that.” But sex is only part of the attraction. Because Viola and Sebastian are twins, Olivia has not really been deceived, a point we should not overlook. Shakespeare has Sebastian say in full:

So comes it, lady, you have been mistook.
But nature to her bias drew in that.
You would have been contracted to a maid;
Nor are you therein, by my life, deceived:
You are betrothed both to a maid and man.

(V.i.259-63)

Orsino, too, is betrothed to “a maid and man.” Ultimately, there has been no deception. Viola has shown us through her disguise that one can overcome gender differentiation regardless of sex. Olivia and Orsino, who each started the play as prisoner of gender, are blessed by disguise as is Viola. They are stimulated by her to draw on their androgynous potential for human growth and to develop toward full, whole, integrated selves.



Olivia and Viola (dressed as Cesario)

Artist: H.C. Selous, c. 1864-68

Source Text: The Plays of William Shakespeare / Edited and Annotated by Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke / Illustrated by H. C. Selous / With Thirty-five Full Page Wood Engravings after Frank Dicksee, RA., H. M. Paget, A. Hopkins, R. W.S., and others / And Thirty-five Photogravure Plates / Special Edition / Parts X-XI.

Things to think about prior to performance:

1. Have you ever seen or read a play by William Shakespeare? If so, were you able to connect with the story despite the classical language style? Why or why not?

2. In the modern world, what are the schools of thought about gender fluidity and cross dressing?
3. Can you think of any modern-day equivalents of the Shakespearean fool, who uses humor to reveal truths about those with agency and power in their community?

Things to watch for in performance:

1. *Twelfth Night* follows several characters. How do the playwright and this production help you keep track of all the story lines?
2. Why does Viola disguise herself as a boy?
3. Is Antonio in love with Sebastian?
4. Is Orsino truly in love with Olivia?

Things to think about after the performance:

1. Whose story is *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*? Viola's? Orsino's? Olivia's? Sebastian's? Feste's? Malvolio's? Someone else's? What scenes make you think so?
2. Viola spends much of the play dressed as "Cesario"? Both Olivia and Orsino find themselves attracted to Viola/Cesario. What does the play say about gender and sexuality?
3. Malvolio is made to pay for his admonitions of several characters. Is he a character to be pitied? Or is he a comic character to be humorously punished? Why do you think so?
4. What is Feste's function in the story?
5. Knowing that Shakespeare was the father of twins and that the boy, Hamnet, died at 11, four years before *Twelfth Night* premiered, what connections can you make between the real-life death and the situation of the play?
6. What happens to Malvolio when the play is over?

The running time for this production is approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes, including a 15-minute intermission. For more information: <https://www.atthemac.org/events/twelfth-night/>

Performance Dates: Nov. 2-19, Thursdays-Saturdays at 8 pm and Sundays at 3pm.

Studio Theatre, McAninch Arts Center at College of DuPage, 425 Fawell Blvd., Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

- Pre-Show Discussion with Director and Designers: Thursday, Nov. 2, 6:45pm
- Post-Show Discussion with Director and Actors: Friday, Nov. 10



College of DuPage production: Carolyn Goldsmith as Viola and Hope Nantongo as Olivia



College of DuPage production: Robert Valdez as Malvolio