

Twelfth Night or What You Will



I my brother know/ Yet living in my glass.

*Ecole d'Humanité
March 20th and 21st, 7 o'clock*

*The Shakespeare Players Present
their 40th Annual Production,*

Twelfth Night

The Characters in the Play

Orsino, Duke of Illyria

Olivia, a Countess

Curio, a Lord attending Orsino

Valentine, a Lord attending Orsino

Viola, Sister of Sebastian

Sebastian, Brother of Viola

Sir Toby Belch, Kinsman of Olivia

Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Friend of Sir Toby

Feste, Olivia's Jester

Maria, Olivia's Lady-in-Waiting

Malvolio, Steward to Olivia

Fabe, Servant to Olivia

Ian, Servant to Olivia

Antonio, a Sea Captain, friend of Sebastian

Sea Captain

Cally Bixler, USA

Sophia Pettit, USA

Jonas Schmid, CH

Yuki Yoshida, Japan

Kathrin Gilbert, USA

Berenike Falk, Austria

Tobias Baumann, Germ.

Nina Noah, USA

June Suter, CH

Amanda Gray, USA

Robert Payne, USA

Mandela Shahto, Sudan

Noah Pettit, USA

Max Siemens, Can/Germ

Victoria O'Neill, USA

Sailors

*Aaron Frye, USA
Noah Pettit, USA
Viola Branch, USA/CH
Mandela Shahto, Sudan*

Priest

Aaron Frye, USA

Officers

*Jonas Schmid, CH
Aaron Frye, USA*

Ladies-in-Waiting to Olivia

*Victoria O'Neill, USA
Viola Branch, USA/CH*

*Fantasy Figures of Olivia, Viola,
Cesario, and Orsino*

*Viola Branch, USA/CH
Victoria O'Neill, USA
Yuki Yoshida, Japan*

Production

Directors

*Melissa Bagg
Natalie Lüthi*

Stage

*Melissa Bagg
Ashley Curtis
Henry Desjardins
Micha Hackinger
Cally Bixler*

Sound Technician

Ramin Talib

Lights

*Andreas Schaumburg
Jeremias Vozeh
Alexandre Smolokovski*

Costumes

*Marylin Reynolds
Gunta Cese
Doey Lüthi
Natalie Lüthi*

Make-Up

Jim Lowry

Properties

Melissa Bagg

Breath and Voice Workshops

Louis Spritzer

Prompter

Megan Thom

Program Cover

*Markus Bernsau
Heinz Zenger*

Program Design

Megan Thom

Musician

Ernst Thöni

*Songs by William Byrd, Thomas Morley, Christopher Schmidt,
Ernst Thöni*



"That that is is," says Feste the clown - and what seems on the surface to be an almost ridiculously obvious truth suddenly dizzies us with its confusing echo. Is reality so straightforward? Are our perceptions of experience so certain, especially when what we see is so often colored by our own peculiar desires? Feste, "corrupter of words," has shown us that, in fact, "Nothing that is so is so." And nowhere is this more clear than in the mad world of Illyria, where realities multiply and become distorted in the conflicting fantasies of its characters.

Duke Orsino woos the Countess Olivia by messenger, preferring to remain himself in the cushioned protection of a boudoir where his fancy can feed undisturbed on music and reflective metaphors, and where he does not have to witness his rejection. "I myself am best," he claims, "when least in company." The Countess, in her turn, veils her vision in obsessive mourning for a dead brother, and when she does fall in love, it is with a "dream": "I would you were as I would have you be," she tells the Count's messenger Cesario. Naturally, this is a dangerous position to take towards any lover, especially when the beloved has already admitted, "I am not what I play." Cesario is in fact a disguise. Identity in Illyria is shifting and the man you think you love may ("most wonderful!") turn out to be a woman.

"I see what you are," Viola/Cesario tells Olivia, "You are too proud." Despite her "acting," this "comedian" - like Feste - cuts to the truth. Olivia, like Orsino, is "sick of self-love." The disease plagues all Illyrians. And perhaps it is Malvolio, that "kind of Puritan," who seems most to deserve our disdain for this vice in him, who thinks that "all that look on him love him." He douses our revels with that "austere regard of control" - away with him! We are in on Maria's and Toby's plot to turn his diseased imagination

into our "common recreation." Unless, perhaps, we hear the truth in Malvolio's cry: "I am no more mad than you are."

"Are all the people mad?" Are we not all in some sense sick of self-love? Illyria's fantastical labyrinth of mirrors is not so far from our experience. We see our own ideas of things. That that is is. And yet, the play offers another perspective. Love is not only a mad echo of ourselves. It is also the feeling which keeps another "lively in my soul." "Prove true, imagination, O prove true!" Viola begs, hoping for her lost brother's return, for his real existence outside of her imagination. Since his disappearance in their ship's wreck, she has become his reflection: "I my brother know/ Yet living in my glass... For him I imitate." But in the end, this fantasy born of love does "prove true": love's echo becomes flesh and blood in a miraculous "natural perspective, that is and is not." We are and are not reflections of those we love. And so "Cesario," freed by her brother's actual existence from playing the role of his reflection, can finally become herself. "Thrice welcome, drownèd Viola!"

Melissa Bagg

*Contributions to the Ecole d'Humanité Theatre Fund
are gratefully accepted.*

