



American Players Theatre
Presents



William Shakespeare's
AS YOU LIKE IT
2018 STUDY GUIDE

American Players Theatre / PO Box 819 / Spring Green, WI 53588
www.americanplayers.org

As You Like It by William Shakespeare

2018 Study Guide

All photos by Liz Lauren

Many Thanks!

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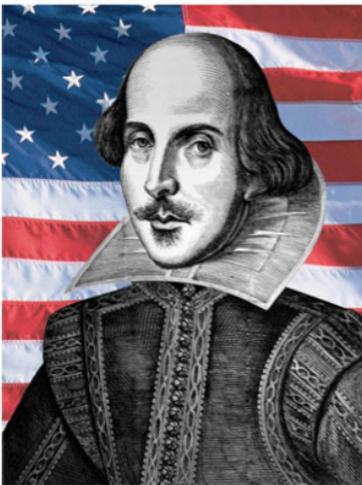


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Who's Who in *As You Like It*



Celia (Andrea San Miguel)
Daughter to Duke Frederick, she disguises herself as Aliena in order to accompany Rosalind into the Forest of Arden.

Rosalind (Melisa Pereyra)
Daughter of the exiled Duke Senior, and Celia's cousin, she disguises herself as a youth named Ganymede. While in this disguise, she teaches her love, Orlando, to woo Rosalind.



Touchstone, a clown (Marcus Truschinski)
A clown in the court of Duke Frederick, he finds life in the Forest of Arden both pleasing and tedious. He makes peace with his rustic life when he meets and courts Audrey.

Orlando (Chris Klopatek)
Youngest son of Sir Rowland, he falls in love with Rosalind. His older brother Oliver banishes him to the Forest of Arden out of jealousy.



Adam (John Pribyl)
Servant to Oliver until he asks to serve Orlando, who recognizes in the old man "The constant service of the antique world."

Oliver (Nate Burger)
Eldest son of Sir Rowland, he plots to kill his younger brother Orlando while he sleeps.



Le Beau (Juan Rivera Lebron)
A courtier, he always arrives "with his mouth full of news."

Charles (Casey Hoekstra)
A successful wrestler who has broken many bones, but Orlando beats him in the ring.

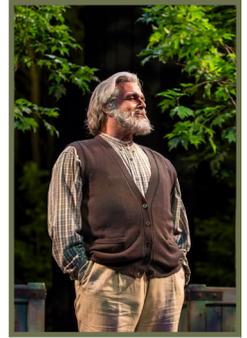


Who's Who in *As You Like It*



Duke Frederick (Brian Mani)
The younger brother of Duke Senior, and Celia's father, he usurps the dukedom.

Duke Senior (David Daniel)
Rosalind's father, he's banished to the Forest of Arden by his brother, Duke Frederick.



Jaques (Tracy Michelle Arnold)
A wise but sometimes melancholy lady attending on Duke Senior.

Amiens (Cher Desiree Alvarez)
A lady attending on Duke Senior, she's a gifted singer.



William (Roberto Tolentino)
A Country fellow, he is also in love with Audrey, but is scared off by Touchstone.

Corin (Tim Gittings)
A shepherd, he is a "true laborer: I earn that I eat, get that I wear...envy no man's happiness."



Silvius (Eric Schabla)
A shepherd, he is in love with Phoebe.

Audrey (Emily Daly)
A country girl, Touchstone pursues her, and she may become his bride.



Who's Who in *As You Like It*



**Sir Oliver Mar-text
(Alejandro Cordoba)**
A vicar, he is called upon to officiate the marriage of Touchstone and Audrey.

Phoebe (Kelsey Brennan)
A shepherdess, she falls in love with “Ganymede” while shunning the love-lorn Silvius.



Ensemble, musicians, lords, foresters & guards: Carl Bryant, Alejandro Cordoba, Michael Goldstein, Casey Hoekstra, Marco Lama, Jack Schmitt, Cassia Thompson, Roberto Tolentino & Christian Wilson

About the Play

The Forest of Arden is a fabrication in this play, but it was based on a real swath of woods that, during Shakespeare's time, stretched from Stratford-upon-Avon to Warwickshire. Not only did Shakespeare grow up near this forest, but his mother's maiden name was also Arden - a surname likely derived from these woods.

Duke Senior has been usurped by his younger brother, Duke Frederick, and now lives in the Forest of Arden with a small group of followers. Senior's daughter Rosalind has been allowed to remain at court with Frederick's daughter Celia, but Frederick suddenly banishes her when he concludes she may hurt his daughter's marriage prospects. Celia loves her cousin dearly, and decides to run away with her, and the two make plans to leave for the Forest of Arden with Rosalind disguised as a boy named Ganymede and Celia as a girl named Aliena, accompanied by Touchstone, a clown.

But before they leave, Rosalind falls in love with, Orlando, one of the sons of Sir Rowland De Boys. Orlando is ruled and hated by his elder brother, Oliver, who plans to have him killed in a match against the Duke's chief wrestler, Charles. Instead, Orlando defeats him. He is then advised by Le Beau to leave the court before his brother finishes the job of murdering him, so he flees to Arden with his old servant Adam. They are starving when they encounter Duke Senior, who takes them in, and is delighted to discover that Orlando is the son of his old friend Sir Rowland.

Rosalind has the most lines of any female character in Shakespeare's works, which has led many scholars to refer to her as "the female Hamlet."

Rosalind and Celia observe two shepherds, Corin and Silvius, talking, and learn of Silvius' love for Phoebe, a shepherdess. They buy pastures and herd from them, and decide to live as shepherds. Touchstone spends much time in the company of Audrey, a country girl who is loved by William, eventually wooing her himself. Jaques, a melancholy noblewoman of Duke Senior's company, becomes fascinated by Touchstone, and spends much time talking to him.

Jaques, the melancholy woods-dweller who recites the famous "Seven ages of man" speech is typically a man. APT chose to cast a woman in the role for a little change in perspective. It is, after all, a play that revels in gender-swapping.

Orlando leaves love messages for Rosalind all over the forest, which she in due course sees. When the two girls meet Orlando again, 'Ganymede' persuades Orlando to treat 'him' as his Rosalind, so that he may practise wooing. Frederick, believing Celia and Rosalind to have fled with Orlando, sends Oliver after his brother, threatening to take the De Boys' lands if Oliver returns without him.

Oliver is saved from a lion by Orlando, and the two brothers are reconciled. Oliver relates the story to the two girls, and falls in love with Celia. Phoebe has fallen for Ganymede, which causes some confusion until Rosalind reveals herself. Phoebe then agrees to marry Silvius. Rosalind is reunited with her father, and marries Orlando. Oliver marries Celia. Touchstone marries Audrey.

A messenger arrives to announce that Frederick had intended to invade the forest with an army, but on his way he met a religious man who converted him from his harsh ways, and he has now begun a religious life. Jaques decides leave the group and join him. Duke Senior has his lands and crown restored. The play ends with an epilogue from Rosalind.

Prose and poetry is split pretty evenly in this play, 54% vs 46%, respectively. Poetry is typically reserved for the upper classes in Shakespeare's plays, but here the woods allow for humble shepherds to speak beautiful verse, and nobles to let loose with prose, free from restrictions of court life.

American Players Theatre's *As You Like It*



Orlando (Chris Klopatek) hangs poetry in the trees for his beloved Rosalind.

As You Like It is one of Shakespeare's latest true comedies. It's true that *Twelfth Night* came along a year or two later, but after that lies the path of late romances and "problem plays" that don't perfectly fit the category of comedy or tragedy. This play is split pretty evenly between poetry and prose (54% to 46% respectively), but that's not the unusual detail. Unlike most Shakespearean plays where poetry is spoken almost exclusively by nobility, in the Forest of Arden, poetry belongs to everyone. And on the flip side, the banished nobility is allowed some lively prose exchanges. Because when you're in the woods, all bets are off.

As director James Bohnen states, *As You Like It* is a play where nothing really happens. Though, to be fair, there is a wrestling match and an off-stage lion attack. James

says that *As You Like It* "has the best balance of all of Shakespeare's comedies. But it's idea-heavy." And it really is the ideas and conversation and, of course, love that keep this comedy moving. Which in no way diminishes how entertaining this play is. As James puts it, "This is a very funny play. But it has a lot to say about the way we choose to live. It's full of optimism and growth and change. It is bountiful."

Much of that bounty is thanks to the play's heroine, Rosalind, who has the most lines of any female character in Shakespeare's canon. This has led scholars and theater-lovers to refer to her as the female Hamlet. This season's Rosalind is played by APT Core Company Actor, Melisa Pereyra, who is no stranger to playing great Shakespearean heroines – she played Juliet in APT's 2014 production of *Romeo and Juliet*, Hermia in last season's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and is also playing Isabella in this year's production of *Measure for Measure*. Rosalind spends about half the play disguised as the boy, Ganymede. Back in Shakespeare's day, all the roles were played by men, so that would have been an easy switch for a male actor. And Melisa is more than up to the task, saying, "I'm so excited, I get to do it! I think that Rosalind was a revolutionary then, when she was played by a man, and that she is a revolutionary now, played by a woman. And that she will be, regardless of who she is played by. So I think she is able to transcend gender, in a way, on her path to love. I don't think that it matters what she wears, I think that hers is a journey that I am so interested in discovering and figuring out, along with James, about what it means to, you know, 'every man in his age plays many parts.' So yeah, I think that Rosalind is definitely part of that story, and of that journey of figuring out what love means."

And love takes so many complicated forms in *As You Like It*. The love between brothers is tested and, eventually, mended. Love between fathers and daughters is explored in the stories of Duke Frederick and Celia, and between Duke Senior and Rosalind. Romantic love is portrayed as both poignant and powerful, and lustful and silly. But the two central love stories in this play are between Rosalind and her love, Orlando, and between Rosalind and her cousin, Celia. So we'll take those relationships one by one.

Rosalind and Orlando

Of her character's relationship with Orlando, Melisa says her friendship with actor Chris Klopatek, who plays Orlando in the play, helped get a jump on playing that relationship out on stage. "Well we're great friends. Me and Chris, we go way back. He was my Romeo the first time that I played Juliet. We worked at Utah several summers together as well. So we have great chemistry I think. We listen to each other as best as we can, and I think it's really great to do a play like this with somebody who I already have a great relationship with in my

personal life – it really helps these characters transcend and bring the kind of love that needs to be represented on the stage.”

James agrees that having a friendship off stage helps chemistry on stage, and that makes the work easier for everyone at APT, which has a company of actors who’ve worked together for years, and have built a sort of on-stage shorthand that help move rehearsals, and eventually the productions, along. James says, “Love is the hardest thing to do with strangers. To trust that someone will respect you and care for you and care for the way you work. So if that’s been taken off the table, we can just jump right in and they can provoke each other because they feel safe with each other. And that’s a huge gift that you don’t often get. It’s very, very nice and it’s a real pleasure to watch them work.”



The friendship between actors Melisa Pereyra & Chris Klopatek helps ease the tension of on-stage love between their characters.

The chemistry is especially important in *As You Like It* because Rosalind and Orlando have a love-at-first-sight romance. The first time they see each other, they don’t really even speak, but they’re completely smitten from there on out. So when they both arrive in the Forest of Arden, Orlando starts pinning love letters to trees with no expectation that she’ll ever see them. And Rosalind, who is at that point disguised as Ganymede, is the only one of the two of them that knows who she’s talking to when she teaches him how to woo Rosalind. (Love is complicated, right?). But if he loves her so much, how is that he doesn’t know who he’s talking to? Melisa explains, “I think that Orlando has no expectations of seeing her in these woods. It is SO unlikely that a lady of the court would end up in Arden, let alone dressed like a man. There are moments in the play where Orlando senses something, but we don’t explain this and neither does Shakespeare. Rosalind wants him to fall in love with Ganymede. What she is wearing is less relevant. She wants Orlando to spend time with her and comes up with the cleverest way to keep him around. Call ME Rosalind, she basically says. I don’t think he CAN know that she’s Rosalind. Shakespeare answers this for us in the last act when Orlando says to Rosalind’s father,

*My lord, the first time that I ever saw him
Methought he was a brother to your daughter.
But, my good lord, this boy is forest-born
And hath been tutored in the rudiments
Of many desperate studies by his uncle,
Whom he reports to be a great magician
Obscurèd in the circle of this forest.*

Rosalind and Celia

Rosalind and Celia may be cousins, but they’re more like soulmates. Celia didn’t have to forsake her crooked father and upper-class life in the city to run away with the Rosalind to the woods. The fact that she chose to do that, despite the dangers, shows just how strong their bond is. But like all the relationships in the play, theirs has its ups and downs.

Melisa says, “This is one of the strongest female friendships in the canon. Celia is whip smart and they can banter together like the best of them. We have all had friends like that. In the early scenes, it is Celia that is able to bring the best out in Rosalind. But what happens between friendships is so dependent on our surroundings - like anything else, I suppose. Once Rosalind falls in love with Orlando the communication with her cousin takes a sudden shift. All Rosalind wants to talk about is Orlando. All she thinks about is Orlando. Once she gets to Arden and she hears that the love of her life is also in these woods, all she wants



Celia (Andrea San Miguel) and Rosalind (Melisa Pereyra) have the closest female friendship in Shakespeare.

CELIA to talk about is Orlando. The topic of their conversation goes from discussing the inequality of lady fortune, to love and Orlando. This kind of ‘growing up’ together forces the friendship to shift. It is not until Celia falls in love herself that she can understand what Rosalind has been going through. But Celia is not replaced in Rosalind’s mind, she just hasn’t found a way to value both of them equally. She doesn’t until the very end; when she sees Celia fall in love and becomes the third wheel herself for the first time. Unfortunately, it is not until Rosalind is in Celia’s shoes that she understands how valuable Celia has been in her life. I think that is a very powerful thought to leave our audiences with.”

Happily Ever After

Shakespeare comedies always end in a wedding, but *As You Like It* has four – more than any other Shakespeare play. But not all marriages carry the same weight. James says of the abundance of nuptials, “We kind of think of them as three marriages that probably ought to happen on some level, and one marriage that is a little perplexing (between Touchstone and Audrey). And as Jaques said, is ‘only victualled for two months.’ Touchstone and Audrey represent this kind of sudden, romantic collision between city and country. But they’re yearning for a kind of connection that I think that most people can understand.”

Connection and understanding is a good summary of what lies at the heart of *As You Like It*. And this play has a very good heart. Few plays are tied up so happily – from the “evil” Duke Frederick who has a change of heart and leaves the city to go do good in the world, from Orlando’s brother Oliver, who goes from wanting to murder his brother to making amends with him, and falling in love with Celia – and all the smaller stories of humanity and redemption in between. As Melisa says, “This is a play that brings joy. It is about love. And daring to discover who we are, regardless of the masks we chose to wear. It is about taking a leap of faith and trusting that your loved ones will be there to catch you and forgive you for your shenanigans in the end. It is put together with love and sweat and only happy tears. I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed making the language clear, accessible, and most importantly...making it FUN!”

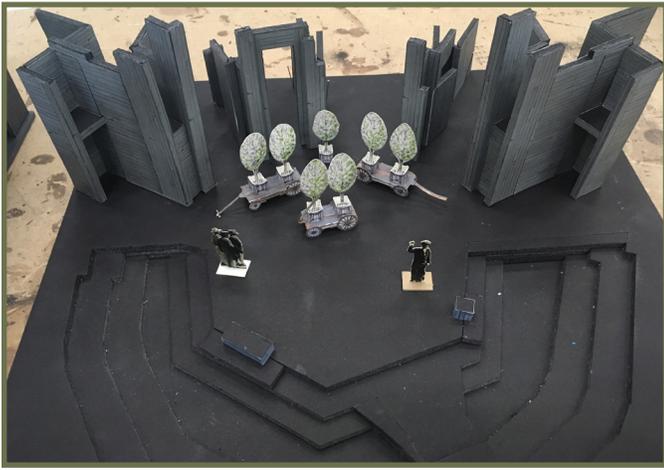
APT’s Design

APT’s production of *As You Like It* is set in France in the 1870s. Director James Bohnen says they made that decision because Shakespeare talks about France early in the play, and that “he frequently would move his plays away from England in order to give himself some protection in case anyone in London took offense.”

At the beginning of the play, the stage is almost completely bare. But that doesn’t necessarily mean there’s no set. Scenic Designer Michael Ganio wanted to let the woods – the real woods around and behind the stage – speak for themselves. After all, what better place to set a play that takes place almost entirely in the Forest of Arden than in the forest of Spring Green?



The forest of Arden on the APT stage.



A model of the set by Scenic Designer Michael Ganio.

In addition to his role as scenic designer, Michael also designed the stage itself when APT completely renovated it in 2016 – 2017. So his design is evident not only on stage, but in every board and nail throughout the theater.

Once the characters leave the city, the Forest of Arden is literally wheeled onto the stage. (Note: Those are live trees that will be planted once the play's run is finished, though they won't be planted on APT grounds as they're not a species native to our area. But don't worry, we'll find good homes for them). Once again, we can thank Michael Ganio for that little bit of genius – in more ways than one. APT never would have been able to use those trees in the design on our old stage, as there would have been no way to safely wheel them onto the stage.

The simplicity of the set allows the audience to focus on the language without distraction, and also gives them the freedom to come up with their own interpretation. James says, “it allows the audience to not feel like we're stamping it with some particular idea. And it allows for a kind of fluidity for the play.”

The costumes are on the simple side, too. Though the costumes of the city are lush and beautiful, the dress of the foresters is much simpler. But those costumes offer a different kind of beauty. According to James, setting the play in this time period allows for “great silhouettes for the women earlier in the play when they're in the city. And then all the foresters have this kind of late Victorian view; they look like, I don't know, Eddie Bauer commercials or something. But it's very freeing. It just kind of sets the language up, and the ideas up, in a really great way.”

Costume Designer Robert Morgan has been designing at APT for 19 years, so he knows all the ins and outs of designing costumes for outdoor theater. In a recent interview with *American Theatre Magazine*, Robert explained the secret to successful costume design by saying “Design first, problem solve later.”

And while design is key, there *are* problems to be solved. The stage gets slippery in the dew and rain, so non-slip rubber is added to the bottom of actors' shoes, and texture is added to surface paint to provide more traction. And then there's the temperature differentials. APT's season runs from June through October, so the theater gets everything from very high temperatures, to much cooler ones, and even the rare snowfall. That's where the costumes' heat and cold plans come into effect. Costumes are designed with built-in pockets that can hold ice packs when the temperatures are high. In addition to that, Robert said, “We determine what garments can be left behind in the dressing rooms, usually boiling down to coats and vests for men, shawls and outerwear for women. Wigs, interestingly enough—which one might expect to be the first to go—protect actors from mosquitoes and direct sun.” The opposite goes into effect during chilly fall shows – layers are added and heat packs can be placed in those interior pockets if necessary.



A costume rendering of Ganymede by Robert Morgan

Theater is all about transformation and the design of the production is an immeasurable part of that transformation. James says, “I mean this is a wonderful play for outdoor theater. You know, this and *Midsummer* are the sort of two classic plays about the potency of the woods, and the potency of the “other place” that frees you to transform yourself into something else.”



As You Like It Design Team

Director: James Bohnen
Voice & Text Coach: Susan Sweeney
Costume Design: Robert Morgan
Scenic Design: Michael Ganio
Lighting Design: Michael A. Peterson
Sound Design & Original Music: Gregg Coffin
Fight Director: Brian Byrnes
Assistant Costume Designer: Kirsten Jones
Musical Director: Bob Willoughby
Stage Management Team: Rivka Kelly
Stage Manager: Rebecca Lindsey