



Theatre in Education
King Lear Review

Note From Ben Barnes

This is the sixth year of The Shakespeare Review for senior cycle second level students. Our formula revolves around a presentation of the key scenes of the prescribed text and an enlightening commentary interwoven into the performance. The Shakespeare Review is very much focussed on the angles within the play which the students are studying for the leaving cert, while at the same time ensuring that they understand that a play is more than a literary text and only truly comes alive when it is performed on the stage. A corollary of this is that any great text is open to many different interpretations and as long as any interpretation is supported by the text, it can be deemed valid. This year we are also delighted to add an additional element to our offering by way of the booklet of essays prepared by the faculty of the Department of Creative and Performing Arts at WIT.



SYNOPSIS

Each January the Theatre Royal works with teachers, Shakespearean actors and experienced young adult theatre facilitators to review the current Leaving Cert text.

Under the direction of Ben Barnes, formerly of the Abbey Theatre, the actors vividly present **key scenes on stage** which are then **explored in detail by the facilitator**, bringing to life Shakespeare's



vibrant characters. This year the mediation role is performed by Edward Denniston, formerly of Newtown School in Waterford.

This bold and exciting 90 minute performance of King Lear helps students gain a deeper understanding of Shakespeare's iconic masterpiece by **lifting the play off the page and onto the stage**, making it accessible for the students as they start their exam revision.

More than one thousand students from all over the south east attend The Review annually. Feedback from teachers who bring their students to the Review is overwhelmingly positive and many teachers bring their students year after year.

QUOTES ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

'Very beneficial for students to look at this kind of review – it helps them develop their own views more thoroughly'

Wexford Teacher

The hour long selection of scenes and commentary was exactly what the students needed as a refresher to the play.

East Cork Teacher

Provided unique and deep insight that will make the whole play truly meaningful and enhance the whole learning experience.

Kilkenny Teacher

I have rarely seen such focus from an audience of secondary students, well done!

Waterford Teacher

First time at a Review event, will definitely tell colleagues.

Carlow Teacher

BACKGROUND

The Shakespeare Reviews originated in 2010, during a conversation between Ben Barnes and Charles Boland, a teacher in St Angela's Ursuline Covent Waterford. Charles and Ben discussed



the work of Shakespeare in education and how to bring it alive for students going into exams. Rather than a full production, the key scenes were chosen that the students could investigate with a facilitator on stage. This enables the production to stop and start and for students to converse with the facilitator to interpret what they have just seen. The stage is set out to resemble a rehearsal room. Minimal set design, well lit, professional acting and an experienced young adult theatre facilitator guarantee an interactive and insightful experience for the students.

THE TEAM

Director: Liam Meagher

Facilitation: Edward Denniston

WIT liaison: Richard Hayes

Communications: Oren Little

Design consultant: Dermot Quinn

Lighting: Eoin Sheridan

Costume consultant: Clare Walsh

Touring transportation and tech: Liam Rellis

WATERFORD AND TOUR DATES

Theatre Royal Waterford on Tuesday 12 (10.30am & -12.30pm), Wednesday 13 (10.30am & -12.30pm) and Thursday 14 (10.30am) January.

Dunamaise Arts Centre, Portlaoise on Monday 18 January.

National Opera House, Wexford on Tuesday 19 January.

Visual, Carlow on Wednesday 20 January.

Booklet prepared by Department of Creative and Performing Arts at Waterford Institute of Technology containing essays relevant to the production will be available free of charge to students and teachers on performance days.



HAMLET 2012



MACBETH 2013

