

BORN WITH TEETH

A COMEDY OF ELIZABETHAN PROPORTIONS

EDUCATION GUIDE



WHAT TO EXPECT AT LE PETIT THEATRE

HISTORY

New Orleans' most historic playhouse, Le Petit Théâtre Du Vieux Carré, has played an important role in our nation's theatrical history since 1916. Located just off of Jackson Square in the French Quarter, we have called our current stage at 616 St. Peter Street home since 1922.

Since moving into its current home in 1922, Le Petit has entertained thousands of audience members in a wide array of dramas, comedies, and musicals. First conceived as a community theatre, and later grown into a professional venue, hundreds of actors, designers, directors, and technicians, both locally and nationally, have shared their talents to make Le Petit a true shining star in the theatrical world.

THIS SHOW

Born With Teeth is a new play about an old subject matter. Playwright Liz Duffy Adams has taken a basic historical supposition - that William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe likely collaborated on the plays Henry VI parts I, II, and III - and decided to show us that process taking place over three years in the back room of a London tavern. Beyond the fact that they likely collaborated on the plays, little else is known. And the playwright has great fun in imagining what the process might have entailed.

The play, like many modern plays today, is written as a 90-minute one-act play, meaning that there is no intermission. Like a movie, it starts and goes until the end without stops. Some parts are very funny, and some parts are deeply dramatic. Some parts may even make you feel uncomfortable or shocked. But that is the very nature of theatre: to provoke feeling. No matter what you may feel, we hope you enjoy our production!

ARRIVING & DEPARTING

Once you arrive at Le Petit, one of our staff members will greet your group leader in the lobby and lead you to your seats. Please be certain to make sure to fill in every seat, as our student performances are very often completely full. The show will run approximately 90 minutes without an intermission. So make sure to run to the restroom before we begin so you don't miss anything. The restrooms at Le Petit are shared with Tableau, our neighbor restaurant, and located in the shared courtyard between the two businesses.

After the performance has ended (and following your rousing ovation), your group leader can lead you back into the lobby where you can exit the theater. If you wish to greet some of the cast members or take your photo up on our stage, just be sure to let a staff member know. We are very happy to oblige any reasonable request to make your time at Le Petit a memorable one.



HOW TO SHOW UP

We are so excited to host you at our student matinee, and we hope you are excited to see our show! Attending a live piece of theatre or music is a wonderfully unique experience because you get to share the same space with both the performers on stage and your fellow audience members for a couple of hours. Even though the audience section is darkened for lighting purposes, EVERYONE can see and hear one another; Actors can see and hear you, and you can see and hear them! The communication is much more direct than watching a video or listening to something with your headphones. And that is what makes it special.

So in order for you to have the most exciting and engaging experience possible, we highly recommend the following:

UNPLUG! - Turn those phones and devices off and escape the electronic world for a couple hours. Taking that kind of break is great for your mental health and will also help you tune into the story in front of you.

REACT! - If you enjoy what you see and hear, let the artists know it! We love to hear your natural reactions, such as laughter and applause. It lets us know you are there with us and it helps feed the actors' energy.

RESPECT! - Make sure to keep the show up on the stage. Resist the urge to draw attention to yourself by talking or looking at your phone. The actors can all see and hear those things, and it probably is annoying to those around you.

EMBRACE! - Theatre, by its nature is designed to challenge, to educate, to provoke, and to engage. That means you may see and hear things that are outside of your comfort zone or beyond your current understanding. You may see characters do things and express ideas that challenge your present perception of the world, or you may see a reflection of the world just as you see it. Either way is a welcome experience! We just ask that you keep an open mind and an open heart to what you see and hear. We hope whatever you experience provokes thoughts and feelings within you. That is why we tell stories on stage after all.

We can't wait to see you soon!



ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT: LIZ DUFFY ADAMS

LIZ DUFFY ADAMS Author of BORN WITH TEETH; WITCH HUNT; WET or, Isabella the Pirate Queen Enters the Horse Latitudes; BROKEN MACHINE; and THE SALONNIÈRES

Liz Duffy Adams' play *Born With Teeth*, recipient of a 2021 Edgerton Foundation New Play Award, had its world premiere at the Alley Theater in 2022. Her *Or*, premiered Off Broadway at WP Theater and has been produced some 80 times since, including at the Magic Theater, Seattle Rep, and Roundhouse Theatre. Her work has also premiered or been developed at Contemporary American Theater Festival, Humana Festival, Bay Area Theater Festival, Portland Center Stage, Syracuse Stage, Greater Boston Theater Company, New Georges, Clubbed Thumb, Crowded Fire, Shotgun Players, and Cutting Ball, and includes *Dog Act*; *The Salonnières*; *Dear Alien*; *A Discourse on Wonders of the Invisible World*; *Buccaneers*; *Wet or, Isabella the Pirat Queen Enters the Horse Latitude*; *The Listener*; *The Reckless Ruthless Brutal Charge of It or, The Train Play*; and *One Big Lie*.

She's a New Dramatists alumna and has received a Women of Achievement Award, Lillian Hellman Award, New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, Weston Playhouse Music- Theater Award, Massachusetts Cultural Council Fellowship, and the Will Glickman Award for Best New Play. Her Artistic Stamp virtual play in letters, *Wild Thyme*, was nominated for a 2021 Drama League Award for Outstanding Interactive or Socially-Distanced Theater.

Publications include *Or*, in Smith & Kraus' "Best Plays Of 2010;" *Dog Act* in "Geek Theater," Underwords Press 2014; *Poodle With Guitar And Dark Glasses* in Applause's "Best American Short Plays 2000-2001;" and acting editions by TRW Plays, Playscripts, Inc. and Dramatists Play Service. Adams' portrait appears in Sally Davies' collection, *New Yorkers* (Ammonite Pres 2021).

Adams has an MFA from Yale School of Drama and a BFA from New York University, and was the 2012–2013 Briggs-Copeland Visiting Lecturer in Playwriting at Harvard University. She has dual Irish and American citizenship, and lives in New York City.



THE ARTISTS

MICHAEL AARON SANTOS - DIRECTOR



MICHAEL AARON SANTOS (Director) is excited to make his directorial debut at Le Petit Theatre. A veteran of several New Orleans stages, he has won Big Easy Entertainment Awards for his roles as John in *Coyote on a Fence* and Tulpolski in *The Pillowman*. He's penned several plays, including Big Easy winner, *The Henchman: A Shakespeare Story*. Michael is an MFA graduate from the University of New Orleans and a faculty member of theatre at Delgado Community College.

IAN HOCH - CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

IAN HOCH (Christopher "Kit" Marlowe) is an ensemble member of Goat in the Road Productions and a five-time Big Easy Award Nominee and winner of "Best Supporting Actor in a Drama." He has film & TV appearances in "Mayfair Witches," "Nashville," "Woke," *22 Jump Street*, and many more, plus more than 50 stage appearances since 2002. Up next: *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare [Abridged] (revised) (again)* at the Tulane Shakespeare Festival. It's chaos; be kind.



DYLAN HUNTER - WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



DYLAN HUNTER (William "Will" Shakespeare) is an actor, sound designer, and composer. He is an ensemble member of Goat in the Road Productions and has been a part of numerous GRP productions, most recently *The Family Line* (Uncle Pascal). He holds a master's in music composition from Tulane University.

DREW STROUD - UNDERSTUDY

DREW STROUD (Understudy) is thrilled to be a part of the Born with Teeth team. Drew holds his MFA in theatre performance from the University of New Orleans. NOLA Credits: *Exhausted Paint*, *Fully Committed*, *Broken Codes*, *The Cuck*. Regional Credits: *Newsies*, *The Lion in Winter*. Other credits: *The Last Five Years*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *Richard III*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Drew is also a founding member of Illinois-based, Capital City Improv. Love to Carly. IG: @drewth_be_told



Lucas HarmsSet Designer

Amy ChaffeeDialect Coach

Laura Sirkin-BrownCostume Designer

Deborah MorrisseyProperties Designer

Diane K. BaasLighting Designer

Sarah ChatelainProduction Stage Manager

Ryan WilesSound Designer

Jessica MaroneyAsst. Stage Manager



PLOT

An aging authoritarian ruler, a violent police state, and a restless, polarized people seething with paranoia: The 1590s are a dangerous time for poets and playwrights. In a private back room of a London tavern, two writers of the day — the great Christopher “Kit” Marlowe and the up-and-comer William Shakespeare — meet to collaborate on a history play about Henry VI. But writing a historical play is not nearly as straightforward as it sounds.

Under pressure from all sides--artistically, politically, and personally--their play must entertain the masses, appeal to the ruling royalty, and not draw too much attention to the writers themselves and their own personal beliefs. Under such immense scrutiny, their quick-witted face-off commences around a long, wooden table where they write, debate, insult, and interrogate one another as to their true motivations.

Marlowe, we discover, is actually employed as a spy entwined in a complicated triangle of allegiances. He has been instructed to find out information about the religious beliefs of Shakespeare's own family back in Stratford. But his hot and cold affection for Shakespeare clouds his judgement as well as his allegiances. In the end, he must give Shakespeare up to the powers that be, but young Will has concocted a secret plan of his own.

WHY THE TITLE?

In a clever nod to Shakespeare and Marlowe's alleged collaboration (and fierce rivalry), Adams pulled a phrase from the murderous final act in Henry VI, Part III for the play's title:

*The midwife wonder'd and the women cried
'O, Jesus bless us, he is **born with teeth!**
And so I was; which plainly signified
That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.*





IN REHEARSAL



“HOW'D YA LEARN ALL THOSE LINES??”

Our rehearsal process at LPT is about 4 weeks long - That's it!

The first 3 weeks of rehearsals occur off-site at a separate rehearsal facility to allow carpenters, painters, lighting technicians, and sound technicians to work in the theater building the scenery for the play.

To start our rehearsal process, we have a “read-through” of the play. This is the first time the whole cast and crew hears the play spoken aloud. There is then a chunk of time devoted to “**table work**” where the director and the actors dive deep into the meaning and themes of the play, the characters’ motivations and backgrounds, and move through the play’s “**beats**” one at a time to discuss every moment of the show. It is called “**table work**” because none of the performers are yet up on their feet and moving around. This is all done while sitting in chairs at a big table, a lot like in a classroom.

For this particular play, one of the very first things we did after the read through was begin work on the British accents or “**dialects**” the actors would use to portray Marlowe and Shakespeare. The actors worked with a dialect coach to learn how to manipulate their tongues, lips, and sound placement in order to sound like genuine English-born human beings. This work would continue on throughout every remaining rehearsal until things sounded just right.

After this, it's time to get the play on its feet! For 26 hours a week (about 4 hours per night) the actors work with the director and the stage managers to “**block**” the play. This is the term used to describe the process when actors and directors determine where the characters will move around in every scene. Once this is decided upon, the actors will perform the same movements night after night to ensure that the movement feels natural and familiar.

After about two weeks of this type of work, the actors are ready to put down their scripts and try to perform the play “**off book.**” This is the industry term meaning fully memorized. This process is always a tricky one because plays have SO many words! Though each individual actor has their own special trick to memorizing dialogue, there is no one set way to do it other than practice, practice, practice. When actors are on stage and do not remember what comes next, they can call for “**Line**” to the stage manager, and the stage manager will prompt them with the next few words.

After three weeks of this kind of rehearsal, using “**doofer**” or stand-in props and costumes, the team is ready to move into the theater just in time for “**tech week.**” Tech is the process when the actors go through the show extremely slowly so that the lighting and sound designers can add in every light or sound change that occurs. These are called “**cues**” and the slow tech rehearsal is commonly called a “**cue-to-cue**” rehearsal.

Once this slow and methodical cueing process is completed, it is time to add the costumes and props used for the actual show. These rehearsals are called “**dress rehearsals**” and usually occur a couple of nights before the play opens to the public.

After each of these rehearsals, the cast will change out of their costumes back into their “**street clothes**” and come sit in the audience (what theatre professionals call “**the house**”) to get “**notes**” from the director and stage manager. At the next rehearsal, the actors will attempt to implement all of the notes to better perfect the overall performance.

Following dress rehearsals, it is time to show our work to the public. At Le Petit, we typically perform one “**preview**” performance in front of a live, paying audience. The preview is a show where the director watches the show with a live audience reacting to it and then is also followed by more notes for the actors based on the reactions from the live audience.

Following the preview, it is on to “**opening night**” when the show is “**frozen**” and no further changes are made. After this night, the director departs and heads off for other directing jobs and it is up to the actors, the stage managers, and the crew to ensure that the performance happens the same way night after night until the “**closing night**” performance. All in, the entire process lasts about 7-8 total weeks.



THEATRE VOCAB

- table work
- beats
- dialects
- block/blocking
- off-book
- line
- doofer
- tech week
- dress rehearsal
- cues
- cue-to-cue rehearsal
- dress rehearsals
- street clothes
- the house
- notes
- preview
- opening night
- frozen
- closing night

WHO WAS CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE?

HIS LIFE

Born in 1564, Canterbury, England, Christopher Marlowe (nicknamed "Kit") was a poet/playwright and William Shakespeare's most important predecessor in English drama. Considered foremost a poet, Marlowe is noted especially for his establishment of dramatic blank verse that was often used throughout his poems and plays.

Young Christopher attended The King's School in Canterbury where he was awarded with a scholarship to pursue his studies at the Corpus Christi College in Cambridge.

Despite being the same age as Shakespeare, Marlowe achieved success as a writer much sooner and was a celebrated and renowned playwright by the time Shakespeare's writing career was only getting started. It is theorized by historians that Marlowe likely collaborated on the Henry VI plays with Shakespeare. The action of this play is based on this supposition.

On May 20, 1593, Marlowe was arrested for the crime of heresy and atheism (not believing in any god). During that time, such an act was a serious offense punishable by death through burning at the stake. He was released after two weeks in Newgate prison without any signs of torture, an unbelievable feat.

Like many a young artist, he died tragically young, at the age of 29 when he was stabbed in the eye during a bar fight.

Despite being incredibly famous during his lifetime, his premature death cut short his artistic output, allowing Shakespeare a much more prolific career, which resulted in Shakespeare's plays becoming more famous and beloved than those of Marlowe. We may never know what might have been if Christopher Marlowe had lived and worked as long as William Shakespeare.



HIS PLAYS

- The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus
- The Jew of Malta
- Tamburlaine The Great
- Dido, Queen of Carthage
- Edward II
- The Massacre at Paris

FUN FACTS

- Might have been a spy for the government
- Died in a bar fight at an inn
 - He was stabbed in the eye
- Many conspiracies surround his death, including one that he was killed by an agent of the crown
- 10 days before his death, he was arrested for Atheism after fellow playwright Thomas Kyd outed Marlowe while under his own torture and duress
- Some of our common phrases that came from his work
 - "sink or swim", "Che serà, serà", "The face that launched a thousand ships"

This is a production photo from a 2016 Royal Shakespeare Company production of Marlowe's play *Doctor Faustus* about a man who makes a bargain with the devil. The play is still performed today, though, ironically, often at places named after his theatrical rival.

WHO WAS WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE?

HIS LIFE

Despite his work being known and performed the world over, very few solid facts are known about the man named William Shakespeare. For instance, nobody knows Shakespeare's true birthday. Based on church records, we know he was baptized on April 26, 1564 and through tradition and guesswork it is predicted that William was born three days earlier on April 23, 1564 – which is now celebrated as his birthday. Most elements of Shakespeare's life were only later discovered through careful research of court and church records of the time.

When he was 18, William married a woman 8 years older than him, Anne Hathaway. She was 26 when they married at Temple Grafton, a village approximately five miles (8 km) from Stratford. It is assumed that the quick marriage was the result of Anne's first pregnancy by William.

The couple had 3 children. The eldest child was daughter Susanna, born in May 1583. Their twins, Hamnet and Judith, were born in January 1585. Sadly, Hamnet (familiar sounding name?) died of illness as a child at only 11. The tragic death of his son is said to have inspired some of Shakespeare's most famous plays, including what many consider his greatest play, *Hamlet*.

He wrote his early plays for the Lord Chamberlain's Men, an acting troupe he also performed with as an actor. They became one of the most popular acting companies in London thanks to some of Shakespeare's early work, including *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

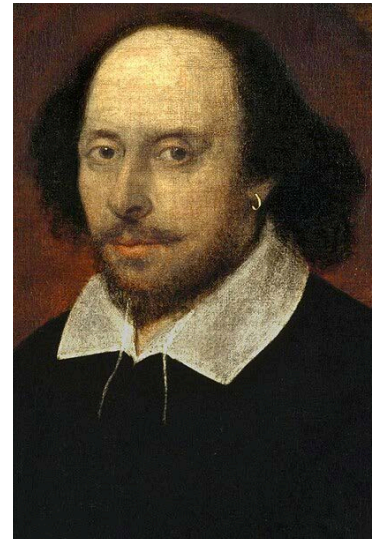
Despite working primarily in London, Shakespeare's family, including his wife and children, remained in their home in Stratford, where Shakespeare was raised. While Stratford is only a few hours drive from London by car, in Shakespeare's time it was a 3-4 day horseback ride. For this reason, it is believed that Shakespeare went months, even years without seeing his own family.

Throughout his career, plague frequently saw to the shutdown of theaters, much like during our own Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. Because of this, in order to continue making money, Shakespeare wrote sonnets (154 in all), short love poems believed to be inspired by both men and women he was said to have loved. He also wrote famous long-form poems such as *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Venus and Adonis*. Both are referred to in *Born with Teeth*.

In all, he wrote about 38 plays in the span of 20 years. Though we do not know the reason, he ended his playwrighting career around 1611 when he retired as a rich man back to Stratford at the age of 47. He died in 1616 at the age of 52.

Following his death, members of his acting company decided to write down all of his plays in a single collection now known as the "First Folio."

Without the work of these men, it is virtually guaranteed that Shakespeare's work would be lost forever.



HIS WORK

- 38 total plays including
 - Romeo and Juliet
 - Hamlet
 - Macbeth
 - Twelfth Night
 - A Midsummer Night's Dream
- 154 sonnets
 - the sonnets do not have names. they are merely numbered 1-154
- Epic poems *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Venus and Adonis*

FUN FACTS

- Shakespeare is often referred to as "The Bard". The word "bard" means poet.
- He struggled with spelling (though spelling was not as important as it is today)
- Some of our common phrases that came from his work
 - "melted into thin air", "wild goose chase", "I haven't slept a wink", and "break the ice"
- Shakespeare invented over 1700 words
 - assassination, addiction, advertising, blanket, champion, elbow, gossip, generous, lonely, mimic, ode, puking, rant, secure, swagger, torture, and zany
- All of his plays were rehearsed and performed by men

THE ELIZABETHAN AGE



Queen Elizabeth I

HISTORY

The Elizabethan age is derived from the 45-year reign of Elizabeth the First, daughter of Anne Boleyn and King Henry VIII, the king who famously had six wives and beheaded two of them, including Elizabeth's mother, Anne. Queen Elizabeth I famously reigned as a single female, neither marrying nor having children. As a result, when she died, her cousin James was named King.

The Elizabethan age (1558-1603) is a time that is considered a golden renaissance era for art because of the many poets, philosophers, and playwrights that came out of it, including William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Francis Drake, Walter Raleigh, Robert Cecil, Thomas Kyd, and John Webster.

Though theatre was considered by many ultra-religious leaders to be a lewd and sacrilegious art form--and thus delegated to be performed on the other side of the Thames river near other unseemly activities such as prostitution and bear bating--Queen Elizabeth was a great lover of plays and frequently attended the work of both Shakespeare and Marlowe.

RELIGION



Catholic crucifix



Anglican cross

At this time, there was only one respected and acceptable religion to be in England: Anglican, a member of the Church of England. The Anglican religion is a part of the protestant reformation that happened in Europe as a way to separate themselves from the Catholic religion, while still being Christian. Elizabeth's famous father, King Henry VIII (8th), formed the Church of England in the 1530s, famously breaking away from the Catholic church so that he could legally divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and marry a new wife in hopes of producing a male heir to the throne. The Catholic church at this time did not allow for divorce.

After the split and the founding of the new Anglican Church, it was dangerous to practice any other religion. This resulted in millions of English citizens carrying on their Catholic faith in secret, resulting in the thousands of spies that Elizabeth employed to root out and punish or execute secret Catholics. The rift was so bad that the Catholic Pope declared that the assassination of Elizabeth I would NOT be a sin!

ENTERTAINMENT



Typical forms of entertainment in the Elizabethan age were jousting, dancing, poetry, theatre, hunting, and bear-baiting.

Theatre at this time was available for people of all social statuses and was mostly performed during

the daytime in open air theaters located on the South bank of the Thames River. Several popular theaters existed at this time, including The Curtain, The Rose, The Swan, The Globe, The Fortune, and The Hope. The plays were performed on a thrust stage with small amounts of props and furniture, but with elaborate costuming.

For an extremely small coin fee, placed into a box at the entrance of the theater (thus the phrase "box office") even the poorest citizens could enjoy the plays by standing around the foot of the stage. There were no seats or benches in this area of the stage and the patrons who stood here were referred to as "groundlings." The rich would have actual seats farther away from the stage in booths.

Another popular entertainment often held in theaters besides plays was bear-baiting. Much like a modern day rodeo, but with bears, the baiting would draw spectators hoping to see an angry bear maul a man to death. It was wild.



SHAKESPEARE INSULT GAME

In the 1590s, long before television, movies, and video games, the primary source of “special effects” was rooted in language. Plays by writers such as Shakespeare and Marlowe were written in a heightened style of English meant to show off their dexterity with language. No one actually spoke this way, but the plays were performed with the language as a means of impressing and wowing the audience.

One way to demonstrate such a mastery of language was in the form of the insult. In today's parlance, Shakespeare was a master of the “sick burn.” Below, you will find examples of Shakespeare's famously written insults and have the opportunity to create your own combination of words to roast your friends.



Combine one word from each list on the following page and add ‘thou’ at the beginning

Thou + [column 1] + [column 2] + [column 3]

Example:

**Thou + craven+ milk-livered + codpiece =
Thou craven milk-livered codpiece!**

SHAKESPEARE INSULT GAME

Column 1 (adjectives)

artless
bawdy
beslubbering
bootless
churlish
cockered
clouted
craven
currish
dankish
dissembling
droning
errant
fawning
fobbing
froward
frothy
gleeking
goatish
gorbellied
impertinent
infectious
jarring
loggerheaded
lumpish
mammering
mangled
mewling
paunchy
pribbling
puking
puny
qualling

Column 2 (compound adjectives)

base-court
bat-fowling
beef-witted
beetle-headed
boil-brained
clapper-clawed
clay-brained
common-kissing
crook-pated
dismal-dreaming
dizzy-eyed
doghearted
dread-bolted
earth-vexing
elf-skinned
fat-kidneyed
fen-sucked
flap-mouthed
fly-bitten
folly-fallen
fool-born
full-gorged
guts-gripping
half-faced
hasty-witted
hedge-born
hell-hated
idle-headed
ill-breeding
ill-nurtured
knotty-pated
milk-livered
motley-minded

Column 3 (nouns)

apple-john
baggage
barnacle
bladder
boar-pig
bugbear
bum-bailey
canker-blossom
clack-dish
clotpole
coxcomb
codpiece
death-token
dewberry
flap-dragon
flax-wench
flirt-gill
foot-licker
fustilarian
giglet
gudgeon
haggard
harpy
hedge-pig
horn-beast
hugger-mugger
joithead
lewdster
lout
maggot-pie
malt-worm
mammet
measle



ENJOY THE SHOW!

LE PETIT THEATRE