

Stay tuned for an exciting announcement about a mysterious new NSR production in late April...

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You can email us at nrsco@nd.edu if you have questions



Not-So Royal Shakespeare Co. Presents

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Washington Hall Lab Theatre

Thur Mar 2, 7:30 pm


Fri Mar 3, 7:30 pm

Sat Mar 4, 4:00 pm

Tickets on Sale Now
\$7 at Lafun Box Office

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 nrsco.weebly.com

 Not-So-Royal Shakespeare Co.

NSR

Director's Note

I got involved in the Not-So-Royal Shakespeare Company last year when I performed in our Valentine's Day themed spring production. In that show, I was introduced to a dedicated and talented class of actors, producers, tech masters, and directors. Because of the impeccable effort of that group, NSR has grown in prestige every year. Tonight, I am proud to say that the cast and crew of this production have brought another one of Shakespeare's plays to life in Washington Hall. These actors and production staff members have all brought their heart and their blood into bringing this production to life. As the person who initially wanted to bring this play to NSR, I thank them for everything they have given.

As for the play itself, I chose it because I thought it represented all of the complicated questions Shakespeare dares to ask. In his plays, there are no real heroes and villains. His heroes are malicious, his villains are sympathetic. His characters say one thing and do another. They speak impeccably, but they are always a messy, complicated jumble of contradictions. They are human. And with the characters in this play, that is especially true. You may find yourself siding with the villain and hating the hero, and with good reason. Somewhere in the play, the hero might win you over again, and sometimes the villain may say something that resonates with all of humanity. The lines between good and evil aren't always so clear, and so we instead sink into the uncertainty of moral ambiguity. We learn about these people. We learn that they, like all of us, are ultimately alone. Alone to face the evils of a society that does not accept those who are different. Alone to confront one's self and realize that he or she is an outcast. Alone to suffer the consequences of another's actions.

This play is about outsiders. It is about the abandoned. It is about human beings. And that is what each of these actors has brought to you tonight. Enjoy the show.

-Joseph Blakely, Director

About The Club

The Not-So-Royal Shakespeare Company: Notre Dame's only Student-Run Shakespeare Company has been putting the B.A. in Bard since 1997.

Officers 2016-2017

Cassidy Leyendecker, Executive Producer
Tori Babcock and Anne Horcher, Producers
Ellis Sargeant, Assistant Producer
Sabrina Battiston and Ziyu Cui, Advertising Team
Joseph Larson, Technical Director
Lydia Costello, Treasurer

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Special Thanks

Shakespeare at ND

Scott Jackson

Peter Holland

The Robinson Community Learning Center

Christy Burgess

Notre Dame Department of Film, Television, and Theatre

The DeBartolo Performing Arts Center

Kat Van Vleet, Ron Grisoli, and the Washington Hall Staff

Plot Summary

Bassanio, a noble Venetian, asks his friend Antonio, a merchant, for money, so that he can travel to Belmont to woo the rich and beautiful heiress Portia. Antonio's money is abroad with his ships, so he instead proposes to borrow money from Shylock, a Jewish moneylender. Meanwhile in Belmont, Portia and her maid Nerissa complain about her late father's challenge for all her suitors. They must pick from one of three caskets, gold, silver, or lead, and if the casket they choose contains a picture of Portia, then she must marry them. If they choose wrong, they must swear to never marry.

Back in Venice, Shylock, after pointing out that Antonio has often ridiculed and even spat on him, agrees to lend the money, with the collateral being a pound of Antonio's flesh. Launcelot, Shylock's servant, makes plans to leave Shylock and serve Bassanio instead, and his daughter, Jessica, elopes with the Christian merchant Lorenzo. Shylock is devastated by his daughter's departure and the rumors he hears of her lavish spending, but he is happy to learn that Antonio's ships have all miscarried and he will not be able to repay the bond.

In Belmont, two suitors have already failed when Bassanio and his friend Gratiano arrive. Unlike the others, he has Portia's love, and when he succeeds, she is overjoyed. Gratiano and Nerissa also get married, and both wives make their husbands swear to forever keep the rings they give them. However, news comes that Antonio has forfeited on his bond and must pay the forfeiture, a pound of his flesh. Bassanio and Gratiano rush to Venice, while Portia and Nerissa plan to disguise themselves as male lawyers to come and help Antonio if they can, leaving Belmont in the care of Lorenzo and Jessica.

In Venice, Shylock demands in court that Antonio forfeit his pound of flesh. Portia and Nerissa arrive in disguise, but cannot stop Shylock. At the last second, Portia points out that Shylock has no right to Antonio's blood, and thus cannot take his flesh. Antonio is saved, and Shylock is forced to give up half his wealth and convert to Christianity. In disguise, Portia and Nerissa convince their husbands to give them the rings as a reward for saving Antonio. Portia and Nerissa race home to Belmont just ahead of their husbands, where they confront them about the rings they have lost. They accuse their husbands of faithlessness, before producing the rings and revealing that they were the lawyers, and that some of Antonio's ships were not lost after all. Bassanio and Gratiano swear to be true to their wives forever, and everyone exits.

Crew

(In alphabetical order)

Ellis Sargeant (Costume Designer) may or may not exist. He might be a real person, or he might be stage name used by aspiring Shakespeareans. In either case, someone using the name Ellis Sargeant is a freshman English major. The name has also been used by actors in fifteen Shakespeare plays, including someone playing Guildenstern in NSR's production of *Hamlet* last fall.

Joseph Larson (Technical Director) is from Upland, California and is a first year potential English major. He has been a long-time fan of musical theatre, first performing in a community theatre production of *Bye Bye Birdie*. Most recently, he worked as a sound designer for last fall's NSR production of *Hamlet*.

Laura McKernan (Sound Designer) is very excited to be a part of her first NSR production. In high school, she was involved in both the tech and acting sides of theatre, acting most recently in *Into the Woods* and the Shakespearean comedy, *Twelfth Night*. A freshman in McGlenn, Laura is super hyped to be joining the NSR family and is very proud of and thankful for everyone who is a part of the production.

Morgan Peck (Stage Manager) is working on her first show at Notre Dame and with NSR. A freshman living in Welsh Family Hall, Morgan is a sociology major originally from Hunt Valley, Maryland. In high school, she worked both on stage and behind the scenes, acting in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Our Town*, and *Rehearsal for Murder* and working tech for *Secret Garden*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, and *Once Upon a Mattress*. Enjoy the show!

Nicholas Taylor (Master of Props) is excited to support NSR's Production of *The Merchant of Venice*. This is Nick's second show with the Not-So-Royal Shakespeare Company, and his third show working on a Tech Crew. Nick is a first year student planning to major in Film, Television, and Theater with a focus on Television.

Cast

(In alphabetical order)

Candace LeBron-Williams (Morocco, Duke) lived and grew up in South Bend. She is serving her second year as an Americorps member at the Robinson Community Learning Center. She is a former Robinson Shakespeare Company participant from 2008-12. She has been in 8 Shakespeare plays. She is in her second year of service through Americorps and hopes that everyone enjoys the show.

Dom Acri (Antonio) is a junior neuroscience & behavior major from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He has appeared in NSR's productions of *ShakesFeare* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Student Player's *Almost, Maine, Loyal Daughters & Sons*, FTT's *Wildflower* and What Stage? Production's *Field Below*. Dom would like to thank his friends and family for being supportive of his theatrical pursuits and to send a special thank you to the all-star cast and crew for making this one of the most memorable shows he's ever been in!

Erik Mickiewicz (Arragon, Tubal, Old Gobbo) is originally from Moline, Illinois. He is a Senior History Major. His previous NSR experience includes productions of *ShakesFeare*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Pericles*, and *Shakespeare Stripped*.

Joe Crowley (Bassanio) is excited to announce that he is making his Shakespeare debut on stage. Although *The Merchant of Venice* is his first show with NSR, this sophomore English and Political Science major from Lansing, Michigan is ready to continue his extensive and distinguished acting career, eliciting many a laugh, many a smile, and copious tears of joy from the ever-wonderful audience.

Louise “Scout” Gregory (Launcelot, Solanio) is a first year student here at Notre Dame. This is her second show with NSR, as she previously appeared in *Hamlet*. Outside of NSR, Louise has been over two dozen productions, including *Phantom of the Opera*, *The Music Man*, and *Into the Woods*. She is majoring in Film, Television, and Theatre. She would like to thank the production team, specifically Morgan, Joe, and Scott Jackson for all their hard work on this production. Enjoy the show!

Lydia Costello (Nerissa) is a sophomore English and FTT (Film) major. She is originally from Chicago, IL. Her previous theater experience includes *Romeo and Juliet* (Juliet), and NSR performances of *Shakespeare Stripped* (Leonato, Toby Belch) and *Hamlet* (Gertrude). She would like to thank the hard-working officers of NSR for making this production possible.

Cast

(In alphabetical order)

Mary Elsa Henrichs (Portia) is delighted to return to the stage with NSR after playing Laertes in the fall production of *Hamlet*. She is a freshman from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, intending to major in English and FTT with a minor in German. Previous theatre experience includes: Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Costard in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Ophelia in *Hamlet*, and Cornelius in *Cymbeline*.

Michael Vaclav (Shylock) is pursuing his Master's Degree in English Literature. He has been involved with NSR since 2013, appearing on stage four times, directing twice, and designing lights for the last five shows. He also sold his father's jewelry to the devil for a wilderness of monkeys.

Morgan Swan (Salerio, Balthasar) is a freshman at Notre Dame. She plans on studying Anthropology, Business Economics, and Spanish throughout her college career. Morgan has primarily performed in musical productions, such as *Hairspray* and *Guys and Dolls*. This is her first time performing in a Shakespeare play. Morgan has enjoyed getting to know the cast of *The Merchant of Venice* and would like to thank the entire cast along with Morgan Peck, the stage manager, and Joseph Blakey, the director, for all of the work they have put into this show.

PJ Harig (Lorenzo) is a First Year English major from Chicago. His past theater experience includes major roles in such shows as *A Christmas Carol*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Camelot*, and *Ten Little Indians*. He performed last semester in NSR's production of *Hamlet*.

Tori Babcock (Jessica) is a senior Math and FTT (Theater) major from Warren, Massachusetts. Previous NSR productions and roles include *Hamlet* (Ophelia), *Pericles* (Marina), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena), and *Julius Caesar* (Soldier/Plebeian). Tori would like to thank all the people who have made NSR into a loving, welcoming, hilarious home over the past four years: "Love you all, miss you tons, and to quote a certain 80s themed Midsummer: 'I've had the time of my life, and I owe it all to you.'"

Zach “Spitting Cobra” Spitzer (Gratiano) is a high school junior majoring in chemical engineering and currently living in Dunne Hall. He enjoys playing frisbee, long car drives, and chasing cats in his free time. A good way to make friends with Zach is to ask him "Who's a good boy?" or about Marco Rubio.