

THESE! PAPER! BULLETS!

A MODISH RIPOFF OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

ADAPTED BY
ROLIN JONES

SONGS BY
BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG

DIRECTED BY
JACKSON GAY



WILLPOWER!
2013-14 STUDY GUIDE

welcome to WILL POWER!

As part of Yale Repertory Theatre's educational initiative WILL POWER! (2014), we are pleased to offer this Study Guide to accompany our production of *These Paper Bullets!*.

Synopsis and Character Map	1
An Honorable Adaptation: Rolin Jones on "Rewriting Shakespeare"	2
Adapting an Adaptation	6
Adaptor's Notebook.....	8
Youth Culture in 1960s London.....	10
Battle of the Sexes: The Flying Fur of Cat and Cur.....	13
Mark the Music: A Look at Shakespeare and Musical Adaptation	14
Hearthrobs and Hysteria: A Brief Look at Beatlemania and Boy Bands	16
A Place by the Sea: The Maritime Muses of <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> and <i>These Paper Bullets!</i>	18
Before and After: Discussion Prompts	20
Resources	21



This guide is yours!
Feel free to keep
notes, doodle, and
write throughout!

Much Info

To prepare for watching *These Paper Bullets!*, read this synopsis of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, which served as the source material for Rolin Jones's adaptation. Then, compare the cast list for Shakespeare's play with a list of the major characters from *These Paper Bullets!*.

Synopsis of *Much Ado About Nothing*

In the port city of Messina, wealthy nobleman **Leonato** welcomes home three friends who have returned from fighting a successful battle. They are the Spanish prince **Don Pedro** and two of his bravest soldiers: the confirmed bachelor **Benedick** and the young and gallant **Claudio**. They are accompanied by Don Pedro's illegitimate brother, the villainous **Don John**, who conspires to make trouble for everyone. Upon arrival, the mischievous Benedick resumes a longstanding flirtatious battle of wits with Leonato's sharp-tongued and quick-witted niece **Beatrice**. While Beatrice and Benedick exchange playful insults and clever comebacks, Claudio falls in love with Beatrice's beautiful cousin **Hero**. That night, Leonato hosts a masquerade ball, where Claudio, using his friend Don Pedro as a proxy, woos and proposes marriage to Hero. Don Pedro and Claudio are convinced that Beatrice and Benedick are secretly in love with each other, and they play a trick on the couple to get them to admit their true feelings.

Don John, jealous of everyone's happiness, decides to thwart the upcoming wedding between Hero and Claudio. To do so, he concocts a scheme to slander Hero and make everyone believe that she had been unfaithful. He sends his henchman **Borachio** to seduce Hero's maid **Margaret**. He makes sure that Don Pedro and Claudio see them in Hero's window and tells them that the woman they're seeing is Hero herself. Deceived by Don John's lies and the darkness of night, Claudio is devastated, believing that his beloved Hero has been unfaithful to him. At the altar, he accuses Hero of infidelity and humiliates her in front of all the wedding guests, although she swears she is innocent.

Leonato is furious to hear that his daughter has been unfaithful to Claudio, but the kind **Friar Francis** gives Hero the benefit of the doubt. He advises Leonato to keep an open mind and not jump to conclusions. Friar Francis comes up with a plan: they will tell Claudio that Hero died from grief to make Claudio regret being so cruel to her. In

About *Much Ado*

the wake of the fiasco they have witnessed, Benedick and Beatrice finally proclaim their love for one another. Beatrice asks Benedick to challenge Claudio to a duel. Benedick is reluctant to fight his old friend, but he agrees to honor Beatrice's request out of devotion to her.

That night, the local watchmen apprehend Don John's accomplices, Borachio and **Conrade**, who confess that Hero was framed. The scatterbrained Constable **Dogberry** delivers the news to Leonato, who is relieved that Hero had been innocent all along. Claudio, still believing that Hero had died, is crushed to learn that he misjudged Hero

and caused her death. He begs Leonato for forgiveness. Leonato tells Claudio he must make amends for this tragedy by marrying Leonato's "niece," a girl who supposedly looks just like Hero. Claudio goes to church, ready to marry this mysterious masked woman (really, Hero in disguise). At the wedding, Hero removes her mask and reveals that she is alive. Claudio is overjoyed, and Hero forgives him and takes him back. Inspired by their newfound happiness, Benedick asks Beatrice to marry him, and after subjecting him to some playful teasing, she agrees. Don John is captured, and the two couples celebrate their recognition that love conquers all.

Cast of *Shakespeare's Much Ado*

The Soldiers

Signor Benedick
Signor Claudio
Don Pedro
Balthasar
Don John
Conrade
Borachio

The Household of the Governor of Messina

Antonio
Leonato
Beatrice
Hero
Ursula
Margaret

Townspeople of Messina

Friar Francis
Dogberry
Verges
George Seacoal
Hugh Oatcake
Francis Seacoal

Cast of *These Paper Bullets!*

The Quartos

Ben
Claude
Pedro
Balth

The Fashion-Forward Ladies

Beatrice
Higgy
Ulcie
Frida

The Scenesters and Malcontents

Anton
Don Best
Leo Messina
Mr. Berry
Mr. Urges
Mr. Coal
Mr. Cake
Boris
Colin Rawlins



An Honorable Adap

Rolin Jones on



Although Rolin Jones, a 2004 graduate of Yale School of Drama, received a Pulitzer Prize nomination for his play *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*, he's

spent much of the last decade writing for television, not for the stage. He's written for *Weeds*, *Friday Night Lights*, *The United States of Tara*, *Boardwalk Empire*, and *Low Winter Sun*, and AMC has just ordered *Knifeman*, a pilot he wrote about an 18th-century surgeon. Now, with *These Paper Bullets!*, Mr. Jones not only returns to writing plays—but to Yale, an artistic home. Yale Rep's Literary Manager Amy Boratko sat down with Mr. Jones last fall to discuss this rock-and-roll adaptation of Shakespeare's comedy.

AMY BORATKO: Why did you want to adapt Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*?

About four or five years ago, I had this idea about adapting *Much Ado* and making Don Pedro, Benedick, Claudio, and Balthasar a band, like the Beatles. Then, this past winter, Jackson Gay was directing my play *The Jammer* at the Atlantic Theatre Company in Manhattan. She wanted to propose a Shakespearean comedy to [Artistic Director] James Bundy at Yale Rep. We looked back at Shakespeare's text and language in *Much Ado*, and the play keeps referring to music. The four men could become Ben, Claude, Pedro, and Balth, who are all in a band named The Quartos.

But, when I reread *Much Ado*, I thought that the play's stakes weren't very high. It's all outdoors. It's so dappled in sunlight. The guys just came back from war, and now they're going to hang out and have a crazy time for a week. I thought: why don't we just invert it? Put it all indoors, in a hotel. Give them a task—the band has to record an album. The Beatles' first album was recorded in a day, in 14 hours. Jackson and I liked putting this external pressure on Shakespeare's story. The characters are packed into one place, and everyone is surrounded by The Quartos' screaming, adoring fans. No one can get away from anyone else. So instead of the lollygagging in *Much Ado*, everything has more pressure. That's the jumping off point for *These Paper Bullets!*.

AB: Why did you choose to set *These Paper Bullets!* in 1964 London?

RJ: Actually, my original idea was to have it set in America. But when I looked at the first line of *Much Ado*, it's clear that the guys are coming back from someplace. Shakespeare's play opens with Leonato's line: "I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Aragon comes this night to Messina." In *These Paper Bullets!* (although it's no longer the first line), Leo says, "I learn in this magazine that Pedro and the lads have conquered America."

ABOVE: ROLIN JONES, ADAPTOR OF *THESE PAPER BULLETS!*, PHOTO PROVIDED BY ROLIN JONES.

tation

“Rewriting Shakespeare”

This cultural phenomenon came bursting from the UK, and *Much Ado* greedily accepted this new setting. In 1964, this Great British invasion was happening—it was a big moment for the country. It was an empire that had lost India and its colonies, had been blitzed in the Second World War, and was picking itself back up again. The Brits woke up to find out they weren’t Russia and weren’t America. They were now second tier—and that was very uncomfortable. Here came this British youth culture that suddenly wasn’t so interested in class, which is hugely important in the structure of Britain. Someone like fashion designer Mary Quant was trying to make clothes that would be fashionable, washable, and affordable. Fashion had been for rich women and had come from the continent, from France. But Mary Quant created something right there in Britain. The idea of modeling our Beatrice on Mary Quant came later in the adaptation process, but it was right. In *These Paper Bullets!*, with Beatrice and The Quartos, there’s a merger of fashion and music—two creative worlds smashing together.

AB: You are almost finished with the first half of *These Paper Bullets!*—which correspond to the first two and a half acts of Shakespeare’s play. Tell me about your writing process so far.

RJ: The language itself is sort of a mash-up. Jackson called it “Jonespeare.” And when Yale Rep told me that I could use a new title for my adaptation—it was a huge gift of freedom and took a burden off. In *Much Ado*, there is a lot of language that refers to the period. Literary references that were probably cute, funny, and smart in Shakespeare’s day but are now obscure. No one in the audience today wants to wade through 9,000 footnotes to understand every joke.

I go scene-by-scene in the Shakespeare until I get to one that I don’t want to go near. Then I go to another scene! [Laughs.] In all seriousness, I have to figure out the event of each scene of *Much Ado* first: what is going on, what the characters want, what isn’t happening, and what should be happening. How do I make it fun and filled with some

kind of philosophy in the end? Shakespeare was writing for a particular audience at a particular time in a particular way of making theatre. He had to paint a lot of pictures with words. He told the audience what happened off-stage, what just happened on stage, and what would happen on stage next. I’ve got the benefit of a fantastic team of designers to create a visual world specific to this production. I have more at my disposal to help with that storytelling, so the characters in *These Paper Bullets!* don’t have to paint pictures with their words in the same way. Modern audiences don’t want to be ahead of the story.

AB: What’s an example of a scene or passage that’s been a challenge for you?

RJ: The only thing I have left to tackle, at this time, in my first act is Beatrice’s speech at the end of Act 3, Scene 1, of *Much Ado*. It’s right after she’s been tricked. I’ve always found it very short. Earlier, Benedick gets the bigger speech, and then we see Beatrice in the same scene with a smaller bit of text. Shakespeare’s trying to move the plot along here. But, to me, it feels like so much is happening to Beatrice. Her closest companion is ragging on her, and even more than the revelation that she loves Benedick, she must ask if her friends were right about her. Is she self-absorbed? In *These Paper Bullets!*, we will have a giant billboard with Higgy dressed up in one of Beatrice’s designs—with a huge “Be for Beatrice” slogan on it. One of the things about setting *These Paper Bullets!* in this rock-and-roll world is that both Beatrice and Ben are super famous. It helps their story. She’s the designer-of-the-hour, and he’s the frontman of the biggest rock band in the world. So why these two?

Every scene has its giant crazy obstacles in a great way. I can’t just chuck them out. I can’t say, “I don’t like it,” and throw it out and do something new. I have to be in the spirit of the original, of *Much Ado*. Hopefully there will be an unbroken chain from *Much Ado* to *These Paper Bullets!*. Hopefully it’ll be an honorable adaptation.



Continued: Rolin Jones on “Rewriting Shakespeare”



AB: *The love stories between Hero and Claudio, and Beatrice and Benedick, are at the heart of Much Ado. How does putting the story in a contemporary context affect their stories—particularly when the plot turns on questions of Hero’s fidelity and honor?*

RJ: In *These Paper Bullets!*, I’m mostly interested in the moment of the fall, the moment when the characters fall in love. In *Much Ado*, Claudio and Hero (my Claude and Higgy) have an instantaneous, ridiculous, young, lustful love. Theirs is love at first sight. For Beatrice and Benedick—or Beatrice and Ben—they clearly had something before, and there’s a wild animosity about that break-up. It doesn’t take much, though, for them to go running back to one another. Their story is about cosmic timing. They are clearly meant for each other, but they clearly weren’t meant to be together years before. And I don’t know how long either of these couples, in our version, will last. How many rock stars stay married more than a decade? It’s not conducive to the lifestyle.

AB: *And how does the older generation—a character like Much Ado’s Leonato—figure into the youthful world of your adaptation?*

RJ: Leo and Dogberry, in *These Paper Bullets!*, are people who lived through World War II. They’re trying their best to fit in, but they’re still holding on to some old-fashioned values. In *Much Ado*, it’s always been problematic to me how quickly Leonato lashes out at his daughter, Hero, when learning of her supposed infidelity. This can make *Much Ado* a very dark play in the second half and hard to get back to a happily-ever-after ending. In *These Paper Bullets!*, I’ve given Leo a drinking problem. When he sees the “photographic evidence” (albeit doctored) of Higgy’s infidelity, he loses it. This is happening in the hotel he owns, and all the eyes of London are on their family. Higgy and Claude’s wedding is a big celebrity affair. He takes that first drink, in a long time, and overreacts. I don’t want to make the play about a man who’s an alcoholic, but I want to put something behind his reaction.

AB: *And as far as enhancing character histories to raise the stakes of the story, how are you handling Don John’s inexplicable villainous streak?*

RJ: To be quite honest: Don John is as big a paper villain as you’ll ever see in your life. There’s no backstory for him in *Much Ado*. In *These Paper Bullets!*, a backstory conveniently emerges. John got kicked out of the band; he’s mad, and he’s carrying their laundry now. It’s the Pete Best story, and you can almost sympathize with a guy who could have been in the world’s most famous band. Here, in *These Paper Bullets!*, the villain has a real reason for his schemes.



SEEMA SUEKO IN *THE INTELLIGENT DESIGN OF JENNY CHOW* AT YALE REPERTORY THEATRE. PHOTO BY T. CHARLES ERICKSON, 2004.

AB: We should mention that music will be a big part of These Paper Bullets!. How did you and Billie Joe Armstrong start working together on this project?

RJ: I am doing the film adaptation of Billie Joe Armstrong's musical and album *American Idiot*, and I met him through that. I went to see an LA production of the musical, and I was blown away by how tuneful it all was. So inventive and so melodic. When we were coming up with people to write 1960s-inspired songs for *These Paper Bullets!*, we went through a list of the usual suspects of musical theatre artists. Then I thought that I should ask Billie Joe. I met him in Oakland, near his home, and told him about the project: "This is for a regional theatre. It'll be done in a 500-seat theatre in New Haven for about two dozen performances, and we don't know if it'll ever be done again." He nodded and said, "So let me get this straight: I'm going to rewrite the Beatles. And you're going to rewrite Shakespeare." [Laughs.]

And he really jumped into it. Four days later, he already recorded two songs—entirely by himself in his home studio. Today, when there's all this electronic music, he's one of a handful of legitimate rock-and-roll stars out there. He's been lovely to work with.

AB: How does music work in These Paper Bullets!? It's not a musical.

RJ: No, it's not a full-blown musical. Only the guys—The Quartos—sing. Music is all over the place: on record players, in jukeboxes. People are dancing to it.

AB: Jackson Gay, the director of These Paper Bullets!, has been instrumental to the concept of the adaptation, and both of you have been working closely every step of the way. How did you first meet her?

RJ: I was a student at Yale School of Drama, studying playwriting. It was fall of 2001. Jackson was in her third and final year of the directing program at Yale. For her thesis, she directed Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. I loved her production; it was fantastic. I had a super theatre crush on her. Three years later, James Bundy wanted to produce my play *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* at Yale Rep. And the person that I kept thinking about

directing it was Jackson. We had a blast doing it, and she did the production in New York, too. I haven't done a whole lot of theatre since then. I think: if I'm a playwright who, when he dies, has seven plays total, why not have done it with the same person each time and grow together, collaborate that way?

AB: You've been working predominately in television since graduating from the School of Drama. How has your return to playwriting been?

RJ: To be honest, I'm not prolific. I write something good and new every two years, and lately, those have been television pilots. Right now, on my laptop, I have two plays that are half-written. But doing theatre is much harder for me. It seems to take nearly three years of my life to make a really great play. In this process, writing this adaptation, it's been very different. I've had to give out scenes or acts as I've been writing them, because we need to design and cast the production. Normally, I don't give out anything until it's done.

AB: And what do you hope that audiences—particularly the WILL POWER! high school audiences—will get out of These Paper Bullets!?

RJ: Shakespeare can be funny! It's not guys in tights, pontificating into the air, waving their arms. Shakespeare wrote for a theatre, because there wasn't rock-and-roll music. Going to the Globe to see a play was the closest they got to a rock concert. There was this pit where the groundlings would stand for three hours to hear the play. And the actors would speak all sorts of nasty stuff that you weren't typically allowed to say. It was people's theatre: a giant mosh-pit of its time. It's hard to remember that because often Shakespeare gets labeled literature, and we forget how fun it was. It's about the same themes and plots that are CW dramas on television today. Only Shakespeare did them a lot better. None of this means that our play won't have depth and beauty at moments. *These Paper Bullets!* is a play about people falling in love: desperate love, unrequited love, nutty love, first love, young love. More than anything, I want to tell young audiences: come to our theatre, to our Shakespeare play, and open up.

Adapting an Adaptation

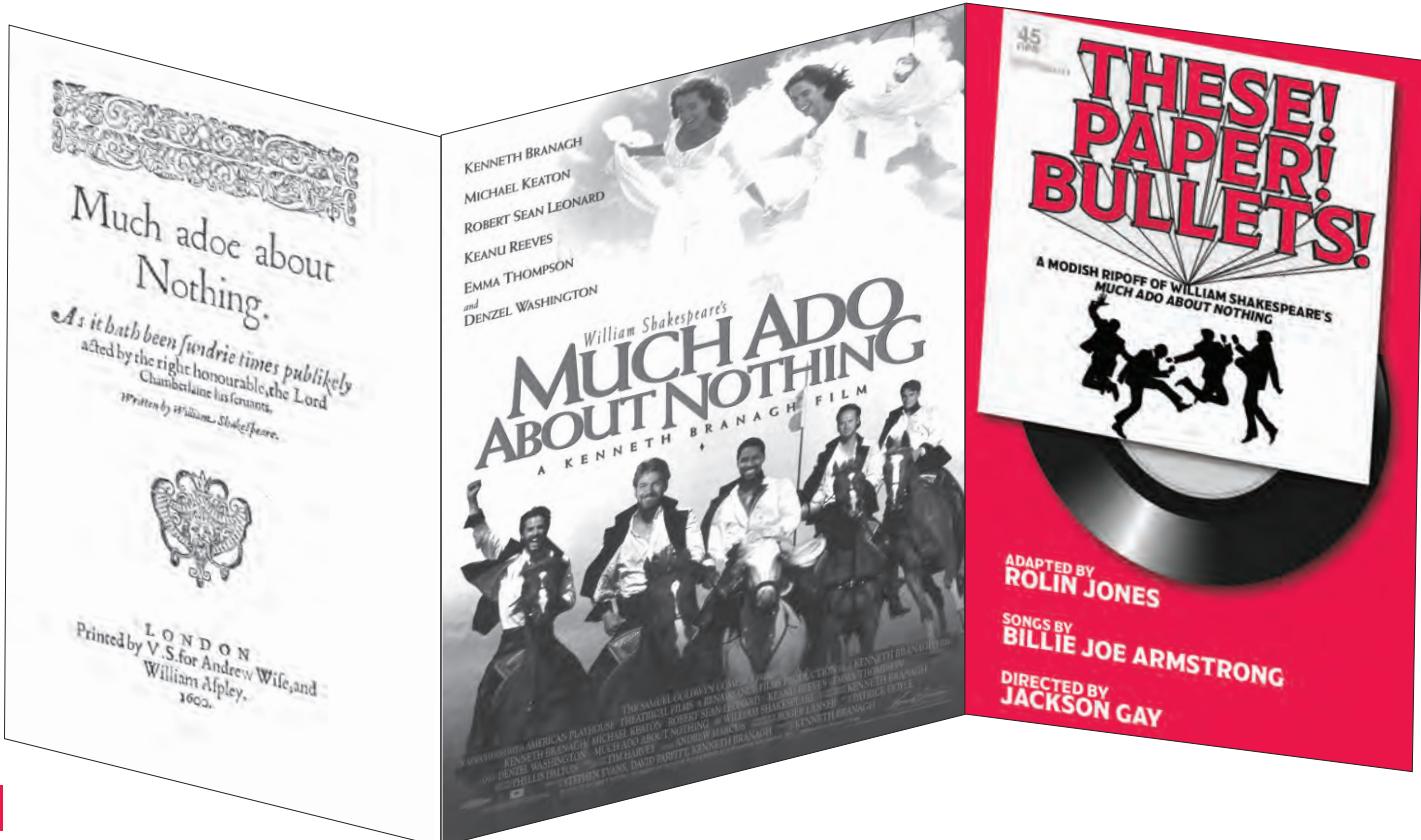
“...let but Beatrice/
And Benedick be
seen, lo in a trice/
The Cockpit galleries,
boxes, all are full.”

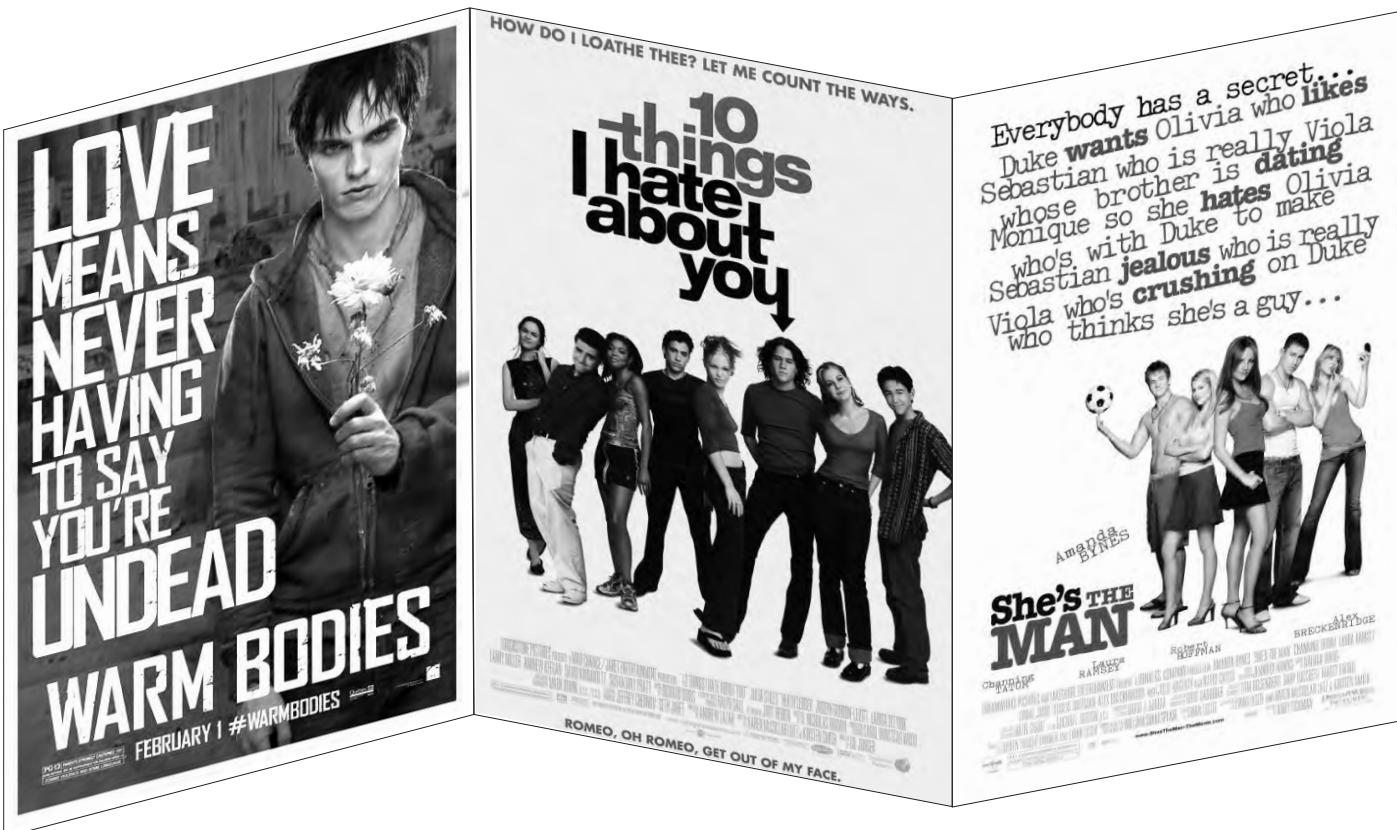
This amusing little poem by Leonard Digges, a minor poet from England in the early seventeenth century, illustrates the extreme popularity the original *Much Ado About Nothing* enjoyed with audiences when it was performed in Shakespeare's time. Indeed, *Much Ado* has rarely slipped out of fashion since Shakespeare first penned it at the tail end of the sixteenth century, and audiences continue to delight at the witty wordplay and romantic shenanigans of Beatrice, Benedick, *et al.* Now in 2014, *These Paper Bullets!* adapts these lively characters and their amorous misadventures and updates them for a contemporary audience.

Adaptation is a grand old tradition that Shakespeare was very much a part of. The Bard was known for cheerfully borrowing storylines and devices from other plays and literature. He would typically pilfer from popular stories to extract the basic plot, and then add new devices and characters and his own unique genius to create the finished play. In *The Sources of Much Ado About Nothing*, scholar Charles T. Prouty claims that, “At present we know of some eighteen versions of the tale written during the sixteenth century prior to Shakespeare's play.” Shakespeare is generally believed to have borrowed his main scenario—the betrothal, betrayal, and reconciliation of the lovers Claudio and Hero—from one of Matteo Bandello's *Novelle* (tales), written sometime between 1593 and 1605, and translated into French by François de Belleforest. Tales of men who were deceived into believing their lovers had betrayed

them were particularly popular in Italy at this time; one widely-read version that Shakespeare may have known was Book V of *Orlando Furioso* by Ludovico Ariosto, published in an English translation in 1591 (although there is also a similar plot in Edmund Spenser's poem, *The Faerie Queen*). Critics generally agree that in *Much Ado*, the story of Hero and Claudio has its origins in other sources, and the comic characters (Dogberry, Verges, the Watch) and the wooing of Beatrice and Benedick are Shakespeare's original inventions.

Adaptation of a Shakespearean classic can take two forms; the first is to adapt the original stage play to a new medium (such as film, television, or literary form). For example, in 1993, Kenneth Branagh directed a critically acclaimed film adaptation of *Much Ado About Nothing* (in which he also played the role of Benedick). Set in picturesque Italy, Branagh's version combined a





cast of American and British actors (including Emma Thompson, Kate Beckinsale, and Denzel Washington) and sought to make the witty language and passionate sexuality of Shakespeare's script seem vibrant and current to contemporary cinemagoers. Speaking of the challenges of adapting Shakespeare for the screen, Branagh said, "When you adapt Shakespeare, I think that above all you try to feel what makes the essence of the text...The concerns which seem to have tormented him four hundred years ago are exactly the same ones as today. What is he talking about? The human condition. And in *Much Ado About Nothing* he simply talks about the pleasure and the fear that love can prompt."

The second method of adapting Shakespeare is to take the story and characters and rewrite them into a new work. The enduring popularity of Shakespeare's plots and characters means that his plays have been adapted into a number of popular new versions. Some very overtly refer to their source material, directly

translating the script into modern idiom. Others are more oblique in their adaptation, using only the basic plot elements and changing all names, locations, and language. You may be surprised at how many Shakespeare stories you have already seen. In addition to the recent movie *Warm Bodies*, based on *Romeo and Juliet*, popular Shakespeare film adaptations include *10 Things I Hate About You* (based on *The Taming of the Shrew*), *She's the Man* (based on *Twelfth Night*), *O* (based on *Othello*), and *Gnomeo and Juliet* (based on, well, you can probably guess). In *These Paper Bullets!*, playwright Rolin Jones creates a "mash-up" of the Bard's original text and the language and lingo of 1960s London.

Adaptation of a well-known classic such as *Much Ado* has a lot of appeal for contemporary storytellers. From a very pragmatic perspective, Shakespeare's plays are out of copyright (since the playwright has been dead for almost 400 years); this means that any writer who wants to adapt his works can do so without

Everybody has a secret... Duke wants Olivia who likes Sebastian who is really Viola whose brother is dating Monique so she hates Olivia who's with Duke to make Sebastian jealous who is really Viola who's crushing on Duke who thinks she's a guy...



having to pay royalties to the author's estate. In addition, audiences who are fond of the original may be excited to see the story from a new perspective (but with the comforting pleasure of recognizing their favorite characters and plotlines). *These Paper Bullets!* uses the familiar characters and amusing plotlines of *Much Ado* to explore the hysteria and passion of rock-and-roll and youth culture, a fact Shakespeare might have been amused by, since his Benedick was baffled by the hypnotic appeal music appeared to have over people, "Is it not strange that sheep's guts [guitar strings made from sheep's intestines] should hale souls out of men's bodies?"

—TANYA DEAN

OPPOSITE PAGE: QUARTO FROM *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*, 1600; MOVIE POSTER FOR *MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING*, 1993; POSTER FOR YALE REP'S PRODUCTION OF *THESE PAPER BULLETS!*.

ABOVE: MOVIE POSTERS FOR *WARM BODIES*, 2013; *10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU*, 1999; AND *SHE'S THE MAN*, 2006.

Adaptor's Notebook

Adaptor Rolin Jones has been working on *These Paper Bullets!* for months, and he'll continue to rewrite and make adjustments to the text until opening night. We got a sneak peek of an early draft of the play. When you look at *These Paper Bullets!* (Act 1, Scene 6) next to the same scene from *Much Ado About Nothing* (Act 3, Scene 2), you can begin to understand Mr. Jones's process in creating this new "modish ripoff" of Shakespeare's beloved comedy.

Rolin Jones retained some of Shakespeare's language in his adaptation. Underline all the lines that are the same in both scenes. We've already started for you!

Much Ado About Nothing Act II, Scene 3

BENEDICK [Emerges.] This can be no trick. The conference was sadly borne; they have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady. It seems her affections have their full bent. Love me? Why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly if I perceive the love come from her. They say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry. I must not seem proud; happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair—'tis a truth, I can bear them witness. And virtuous—'tis so, I cannot reprove it. And wise, but for loving me. By my troth, it is no addition to her wit—nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me because I have railed so long against marriage. But doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live til I were married.

Enter Beatrice.

Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady!

These Paper Bullets!

Act 1, Scene 6

Higgy=Hero; name based on 1960s supermodel Twiggy

BEN

This can be no trick. That was a serious conversation; and they have it straight from Higgy and Leo. They seem to pity my Bea. Love me do, she does? Why, it must be requited.

The phone rings. Ben ignores it.

"Love Me Do" was the Beatles' first single, released in 1962.

BEN

The lads say I would bare myself proud if I heard she loved me. They also said she would rather die than tell me so. I did never think to marry.

The phone stops ringing.

"The lads" brings out Ben's Liverpool dialect.

BEN

They say she's talented—'tis a truth, I can bear them witness.

He pulls out her design book.

Beatrice is a successful designer, like the 1960s' Mary Quant.

These are her drawings.

BEN

She's quite famous. Not famous like me, course not. But in her circle...I like this one.

I had her once before, ya know? I was young. Wasn't the right time. Had to sew my seeds some, so it goes. Those were dollies...this is a woman...

The phone stops ringing.

BEN

Oh...I WILL BE HORRIBLY IN LOVE WITH HER! I may chance have some odd quirks a few jokes broken on me because I have...ya know...gone public a few times against marriage. But doesn't the appetite alter?

There is a loud knocking on the door. Ben ignores it.

In Shakespeare's text, Benedick remarks on Beatrice's beauty and virtue. Here, he falls for her talent and fame.

Fashion designers like Mary Quant caused a sensation in 1960s London, but their fame paled in comparison to that of pop stars like the Beatles.

BEN

A man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Go away. Shall joking and phrasing and these paper bullets of the brain awe a **bloke** from his career of wants?

GO AWAY!

NO! The world must be peopled!

"Bloke" is slang for "guy."

Enter Beatrice, smashing the door off its hinges, seething.

BEATRICE

Against my will, I am sent to bid you come to dinner!

BEN

Beatrice...By this day...I do spy some marks of love in her.

BEATRICE

I tried calling. That was me knocking.

BEN

Was it? Sorry, a bit lost in my thoughts.

BEATRICE

The rehearsal dinner, yes?

BEN

Beatrice, you minx you, I thank you for your pains.

BEATRICE

I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me. If it had been painful I would not have come.

BEN

You take pleasure, then, in the message?

BEATRICE

Don't call me minx.

She exits.



The phone and knocking on the door make use of These Paper Bullets' indoor hotel setting.

BEATRICE

Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BENEDICK

Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEATRICE

I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me. If it had been painful I would not have come.

BENEDICK

You take pleasure, then, in the message?

BEATRICE

Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach signore? Fare you well.

Exit Beatrice.

LEFT: MARY QUANT IN 1967 IN HER FLAT IN CHELSEA, LONDON. PHOTO COURTESY OF KEYSTONE-FRANCE/TIME-LIFE IMAGES.

Youth Culture in 1960s Britain

After years of hardship in the aftermath of World War II, Britain finally had cause to celebrate! The Swinging Sixties were an exciting whirlwind of unprecedented economic prosperity, social transformation, and groovy styles. Middle-class families bought their first automobiles, color television sets, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, and washing machines. Britons were introduced to coffee shops and supermarkets, James Bond and Doctor Who, popsicles and sliced bread, bell-bottomed jeans and miniskirts, and the greatest pop cultural phenomenon of all: the Beatles. Employment was at an all-time high and the stock market soared. As Prime Minister Harold Macmillan famously proclaimed, “most of our people have never had it so good.”

Youth culture flourished during those years. Half of the population was under 35 years of age—even Queen Elizabeth II was in her thirties. Mandatory military service was abolished in 1960, which meant that guys could grow out their hair. The word “teenager” came into common usage a decade earlier, and the world finally was listening to what teenagers had to say. British youngsters rebelled against the rigid class system and the inhibitive social and sexual conventions that had persisted since the Victorian era. They looked to America for brooding and angst role models: actors Marlon Brando and James Dean, pop idol Elvis Presley, and the fictional anti-establishment narrator of *Catcher in the Rye*, Holden Caulfield. Many young people expressed their dissatisfaction with social and political maladies through activism and protest. In 1961, twelve thousand peace campaigners crowded into Trafalgar Square in the center of the city, rallying for nuclear disarmament and civil rights.

Thanks to the liberal ideals of a younger generation, real social progress was at hand. Britain saw the rise of reform in favor of feminism, the rights of racial and sexual minorities, and environmentalism. London became one of the most cosmopolitan and diverse populations in Europe because of the influx of English-speaking immigrants from India, Pakistan, the West Indies, and newly independent African territories. Diversity led to broader ideas, and in 1964, the government announced a host of new reforms: the restoration of rent control, heightened protection for trade unions and small businesses against corporations,

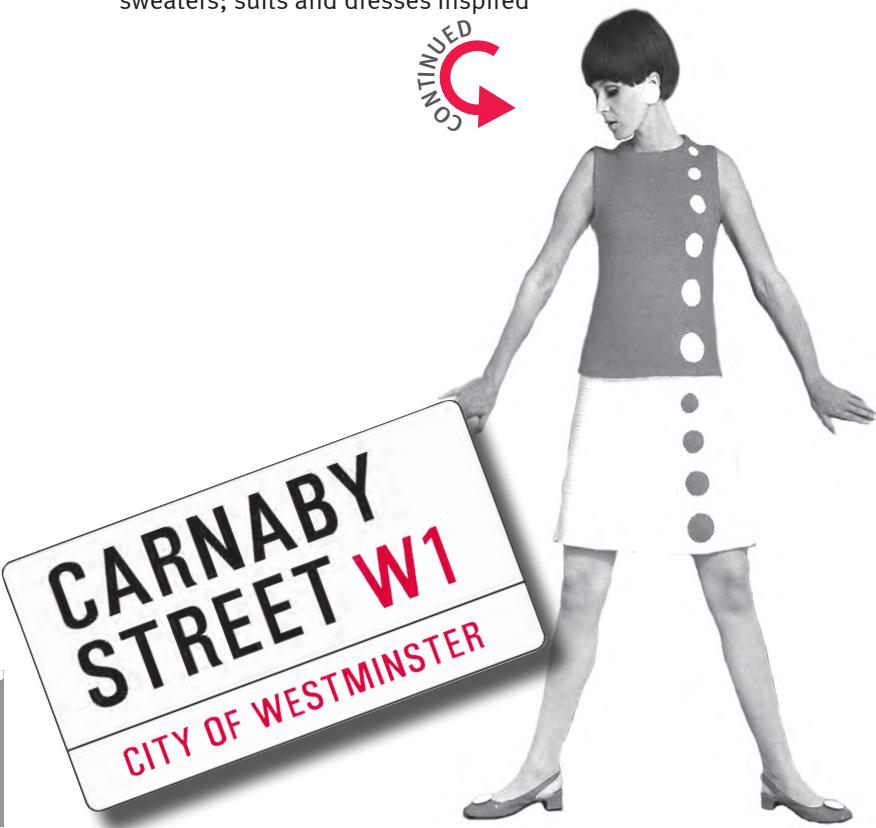


60s London

the abolition of the death penalty, better pensions and social security payments for the needy, more affordable prescription medication, measures to promote racial integration, and economic sanctions against the white supremacist regime in Rhodesia.

Society wasn't just more progressive, it was also more glamorous. Swinging London became a fashion hub that captured the world's imagination. Fashion used to be available only to the wealthy, but now, the invention of cheaper mass-produced synthetic materials and dyes helped the middle class afford a fashion-forward lifestyle. The new looks borrowed from the Pop Art aesthetic (which used the visual styles of comic books, Hollywood movies, and brand advertising) and Space Age design (inspired by the sleek, elegant silver lines of space shuttles). One of the most influential trendsetters was designer Mary Quant, who set up a boutique selling clothes with bright colors and bold patterns. Fashion mavens bought ribbed sweaters; suits and dresses inspired

CONTINUED
C



OPPOSITE PAGE: TWIGGY, PHOTO BY BARRY LATEGAN, 1966.

ABOVE, FROM THE TOP: PAUL McCARTNEY, GEORGE HARRISON, AND JOHN LENNON OF THE BEATLES, JUNE 1964. COURTESY OF BEELD EN GELUID ARCHIVE; WOMEN MODELING TRENDY LARGE SUNGLASSES BY ANDRE COURREGES; MARY QUANT WITH MODELS WEARING HER FOOTWEAR, COURTESY OF CORBIS.

LEFT: A WOMAN WEARS MOD CLOTHING.



by school uniforms; jumpsuits with minimalistic unisex designs; gleaming boots; pea coats; white lace stockings; oversized sunglasses; and miniskirts, which became a symbol of personal freedom and exhibitionism. Miniskirts were popularized by fashion icon Twiggy, one of the world's first supermodels, known for her streamlined, androgynous look that featured a short boyish hairstyle and striking dark eyelashes.

Despite a more permissive and prosperous society, some Britons were pessimistic. Technological miracles like the first man on the moon were accompanied by apocalyptic nightmares like the advent of the hydrogen bomb and the possibility of nuclear war. The sensationalist media created a panic over stories about teenage delinquency and promiscuity. Many people complained that society was becoming amoral and decadent, obsessed with fashion and celebrity, alienated from the sober working-class values that once made Britain great. Critics saw peacetime 1960s Britain as an anti-intellectual place with an inauthentic, synthetic mass-media culture. They gestured to the popularity of James Bond, the ultimate action hero for a materialistic and hypersexual Britain.

The 1960s were a time of change, when Britain looked to the future. Everything old was boring, and everything modern was fresh and wonderful—consumer goods, fashion styles, and social principles. It was a golden age for self-expression and the power of collective protest. The multiculturalism and vibrancy of the era transformed Britain's identity as a depressed and war-torn former empire into an exciting, problematic, creatively fertile, and diverse modern nation.

—ILYA KHODOSH

ABOVE: TWIGGY BY RONALD TRAEGER, 1965.

RIGHT, INSIDE BOX: THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW; TIME MAGAZINE'S "LONDON: THE SWINGING CITY" ISSUE, APRIL 15, 1966.

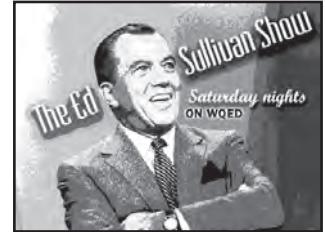
MEANWHILE, ACROSS THE POND...

By the time the biggest American television audience in history watched the Beatles perform on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1965, the so-called British

Invasion was in full swing. Americans who used to see Britain as stodgy and aristocratic now saw Britishness as the height of modern, youthful, bold self-expression. American teenagers went crazy for British music and fashion. British actors like Laurence Olivier and Michael Caine received dozens of Academy Award nominations, and American movie audiences flocked to see *Mary Poppins* (1964); *My Fair Lady* (1964); and, of course, the James Bond blockbuster *Thunderball* (1965), which filled theatres in New York. A 1966 cover story in *Time* magazine declared: “In a decade

dominated by youth, London has burst into bloom. It swings; it is the scene.” But perhaps the biggest reason young Americans embraced British culture was that they shared its essential values—civil rights, feminism,

and uninhibited personal freedom. The Beatles had long hair, and they were the most popular band in the world. Youth culture had prevailed, and young people's ideas were finally being taken seriously.



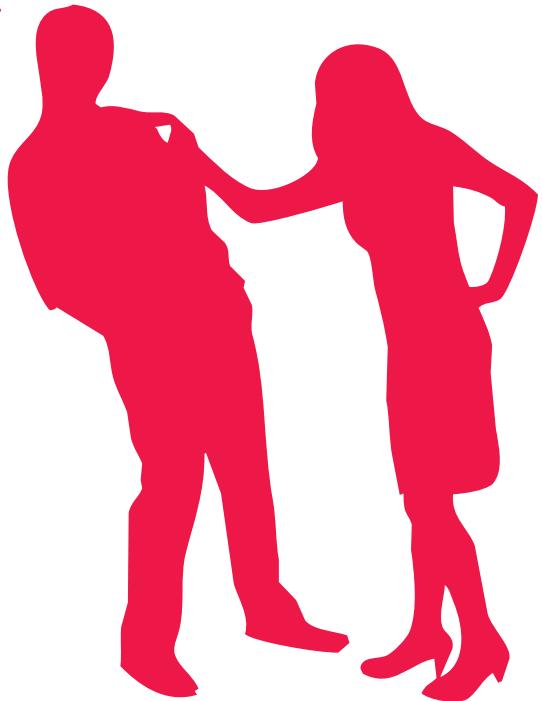
Battle of the Sexes

The Flying Fur of Cat and Cur

In Beatrice and Benedick, Shakespeare created one of the most iconic quarreling couples in literature. They flirt with each other by matching wits, exchanging quips and wisecracks, pretending they're not interested, and letting their one-upmanship and competitive banter conceal their true tender feelings for each other. Benedick calls their playful insults "these paper bullets of the brain"—words that sting. Only the drama surrounding their friends and family can bring this couple together. It gives them the opportunity to prove that they are worthy of one another through noble gestures that demonstrate that they are finally ready for a mature relationship. Their love lets them rise above their flaws.

At the beginning of *Much Ado About Nothing*, Beatrice and Benedick are witty and brilliant, but too proud to admit that they're hungry for love. Why should they, when their "merry war" is so much fun? Besides, who would want to date them? Benedick is a self-centered egomaniac who thinks he is "loved of all ladies," and Beatrice is brittle and disdainful. "I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me," she says. If they hooked up, it'd be a total nightmare! But everything changes after Claudio unjustly humiliates Hero and calls off their wedding. Beatrice, furious at Claudio, asks Benedick to challenge Claudio to a duel and defend the wronged Hero's honor. Benedick doesn't want to fight his best friend. But he is ennobled by his love for Beatrice, and his devotion compels him to do the right thing. Meanwhile, Beatrice, by asking Benedick for help, finds humility and grace through trusting another person.

Their *These Paper Bullets!* counterparts Ben and Beatrice can relate—they bicker incessantly, until their fondness for each other leads them to their own happily ever after. They tease because they want to help each other change. As Benedick says in *Much Ado*, "Happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending."



Often when we think of literature's great lovers, we think of the undying affection of Orpheus and Eurydice, of Romeo and Juliet, or of Jane Eyre and Mr. Rochester. In these stories, love fuels serious—and sometimes tragic—drama. But many other great love stories of plays, novels, and films show couples who trade as many barbed wisecracks as they do tearful professions, and fight as much as they love.

- **Zeus and Hera from Greek Mythology**
- **Kate and Petruchio in *Taming of the Shrew***
- **Elizabeth Bennett and Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice***
- **Valmont and Merteuil in *Les Liaisons Dangereux***
- **Tom and Daisy Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby***
- **George and Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?***
- **Princess Leia and Han Solo in the *Star Wars* films**
- **Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger in the *Harry Potter* series**



—ILYA KHODOSH

Mark the Music

A Look at Shakespeare and Musical Adaptation

Musical adaptations have flowed harmoniously from Shakespeare's plays, from the first Shakespeare opera, Henry Purcell's 1692 *Midsummer Night's Dream*-based *The Fairy Queen*, to rocking contemporary works like *These Paper Bullets!*. It's a mutual musical love affair: while Shakespeare urged "**If music be the food of love, play on**" (*Twelfth Night*, 1.1.1), shows like *Kiss Me, Kate* (based on *The Taming of the Shrew*) have returned the favor by allowing audiences to "**Brush Up Your Shakespeare.**" Here are several reasons why composers, lyricists, and librettists in the theatre and opera house have so often heeded Shakespeare's call to "**mark the music**" (*The Merchant of Venice*, 5.1.97).

Music in Tudor and Stuart Plays

If music seems a natural addition to Shakespeare's plays, the Elizabethans would have agreed with you: song and dance were integral elements of Shakespeare productions in the Tudor and Stuart eras. While Shakespeare frequently used musical references in his plays, often as metaphors for the delights and discords of romantic love, he also studded his plays with dozens of songs that create mood, illuminate character, and comment on dramatic situation. Shakespeare incorporated folk songs in such pieces as Desdemona's haunting "Willow Song" in *Othello* and Balthasar's lilting "Sigh No More (Hey Nonny Nonny)" in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Other times, as in Ariel's enigmatic "Full Fathom Five" in *The Tempest* and "Take, O Take Those Lips Away" in *Measure for Measure*, he set lyrics to original lute songs by King's Men composers Robert Johnson (1583–1634) and John Wilson (1597–1674). Dancing, too, appealed to Elizabethan theatre audiences. Will Kempe, the actor who originated many of Shakespeare's clowns, won fame for his "merry jigs" and danced in semi-improvised burlesque afterpieces at the Globe, where musicians accompanied actors to such instruments as the trumpet, flute, recorder, and shawm (an early oboe).

Shakespearean Verse and Soliloquies

The lyrical "measures" of Shakespeare's language—the Bard's glorious rhymed and blank verse—倾斜 his plays to musical adaptation. Similarly, the heightened expression of the Shakespearean soliloquy finds parallels with musical theatre song numbers. In both of these highly theatrical devices, characters break through the "fourth wall" and project their deepest thoughts and emotions directly to the audience. While Cole Porter created soliloquy-like numbers to hilarious musical comedy effect in *Kiss Me, Kate* (i.e. Katherine's "I Hate Men" and Petruchio's "Where Is the Life that Late I Led"), Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim, in their *Romeo and Juliet*-based *West Side Story*, wrote the rapturous "Maria" as a solo number for Tony, who sings of "the most beautiful sound I ever heard" after meeting his star-crossed lover at the dance at the gym.



Genre Conventions and Dramatic Structure

The natural affinities between opera and tragedy, and between musical theatre and Shakespeare's comedies, have also suited the Bard's plays to adaptation. Shakespeare's tragedies have long inspired operas (as well as musical plays like *West Side Story*) because of their shared elements of tumultuous emotion, psychological depth, and unhappy endings.

In the nineteenth century, Romantic composer Giuseppe Verdi (often with librettist Arrigo Boito) used music to enlarge emotional climaxes, and fill the spaces of dramatic subtext, in a number of famous Shakespeare operas including *Otello* and *Macbeth*. By contrast, Shakespeare's comedies and American musical comedy both draw upon the mistaken identities, gender confusions, and youthful ardors of the classic boy-meets-girl plot. While *Much Ado About Nothing* finds new musical life as *These Paper Bullets!*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Love's Labour's Lost* (adapted by Alex Timbers and Michael Friedman in July 2013 for New York City's Shakespeare in the Park) have all inspired musical comedies filled with romance and festive, colorful spectacle.

Shakespeare's Characters

The conventions of Elizabethan performance, verse, and theatrical genre all provide compelling reasons to set the Bard's plays to music. Above all else, however, there are Shakespeare's characters — infinitely dimensional and dynamic, and as poignantly intimate as they are grandly larger-than-life. In its power as a universal language, music has much in common with Shakespeare's world of characters to evoke the full scale of human experience. Music and Shakespeare form a natural relationship, and as theatre composers and writers continue to coax their "concord of sweet sounds" (*The Merchant of Venice* 5.1.92) from Shakespeare's plays, one can only agree with Don Pedro (addressing Balthasar) in *Much Ado About Nothing* (2.3.37): "Come...we'll hear that song again."

—MAYA CANTU



OPPOSITE PAGE: A WOOD ETCHING DEPICTING WILLIAM KEMPE, 1600.

THIS PAGE, ABOVE, FROM LEFT: A SHAWM, A LUTE, AND AN ELECTRIC GUITAR

Heartthrobs and Hysteria

A Brief Look at Beatlemania and Boy Bands



A girl clutches her head, looking like she'll tear out her hair. Young women scream ferociously. Hordes of people, their hands outstretched and groping, swarm a car and stop traffic. These aren't images from a horror flick: they're what Beatlemania looked like in the early 1960s. The young "mop tops" from Liverpool, however, were certainly not the first pop stars to rouse hysteria in female fans. Elvis Presley's televised pelvic thrusts had rocked American sensibilities five years before the "Fab Four" even formed, but the colossal fervor that trailed in the Beatles' wake shocked the world in an unprecedented manner. What possessed young women to become overwhelmed with passion for a rock band—and how did all the frenzy come about? The same way pop stars have been assembled ever since: through a combination of talent, trendiness, and a savvy marketing machine.

The Beatles were, first and foremost, a group of songwriters and skilled musicians from Liverpool, and their compositions blended genres and styles. Their music kept a proverbial finger on the pulse of the times, and

they evolved from the basic blues riffs and rock-and-roll melodies of their early work to later experiments with soul music and psychedelic rock. It is important to remember, though, that despite their keen awareness of what was "in" and ability to write sure-fire hits, the Beatles had formed of their own volition and continually pursued their own distinct sound.

In addition to their musical prowess, the Beatles were groomed for stardom from their first days. After early hits like "Love Me Do" and "She Loves You" snatched the top spots on the UK charts in 1963, the band's manager Brian Epstein and record label executives wound the gears of a well-oiled marketing machine to promote the group. When the Beatles made their first tour of the United States a year later, they were greeted by a few thousand fans at the airport and soon seen by 73 million Americans on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. Beatles movies quickly followed, as did Beatles board games, Beatles toys, Beatles buttons, and Beatles lunchboxes. Paul, John, Ringo, and George's faces were everywhere—and so were their instantly recognizable

haircuts and matching suits, not to mention their ubiquitous songs. The Fab Four became a larger-than-life brand almost overnight, a genuine icon of pop culture. Beatlemania proved that a group of guys making music together could inspire a type of near-religious idolization from fans, and the individual personalities of the bandmates added up to a magnetic general dynamic. This effect was due, at least in part, to the variety of boy-types on whom the screaming young women could crush. Maybe some girls went gaga over Paul's baby-faced charm, while others fell for John's exuberant wit. George exuded a mysteriously brooding appeal, and Ringo had his own kind of quirky cool. In their seven years together as a band, the Beatles skyrocketed to unparalleled heights of fame and remain the best-selling band of all time. Record producers have been trying to re-capture the magic ever since, and if the 18,000

THIS PAGE, ABOVE, FROM THE LEFT: JOHN LENNON, PAUL McCARTNEY, GEORGE HARRISON, AND RINGO STARR OF THE BEATLES ARRIVE IN AMERICA, 1964, COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; SCREAMING BEATLES FANS, COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES.

OPPOSITE PAGE: FANS AT A ONE DIRECTION CONCERT IN LONDON, 2013, COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES; LIAM PAYNE, LOUIS TOMLINSON, ZAYN MALIK, NIALL HORAN, AND HARRY STYLES OF ONE DIRECTION, PHOTO BY HENRY HARRIS, 2013.



fans who camped out at Rockefeller Center for a glimpse of One Direction last summer are any indication, a similar kind of celebrity mania lives on today: the boy band.

The term “boy bands,” as applied to contemporary music, refers to the all-male ensembles that began to appear in the 1990s, such as the Backstreet Boys, *NSYNC, and New Kids on the Block. The members of these groups, in contrast to the Beatles, did not usually write their own songs, and their formation resulted from talent hunts hosted by record companies whose primary interest was not necessarily to create innovative music, but rather to sell records.

Boy band recruitment was largely an attempt to catch lightning in a bottle, and producers perfected a formula almost guaranteed to yield quintets of pop princes. Both the Backstreet Boys and *NSYNC were molded by the hands of savvy impresario Lou Pearlman, who hosted casting calls in Orlando to which hundreds of young men flocked. Pearlman culled the auditioners down into bands of five, chosen for their ability to harmonize with each other and for the diversity of their “looks.” Part of the success of these bands came from the members having a wide-spectrum appeal for young female fans: just as ’60s girls had their favorite Beatle, a Backstreet Boy was constructed to satisfy nearly every ’90s girl’s taste, so to speak. And the boys, like the Beatles before them, dressed for the part, in coordinated but individuated style.

Some fans gravitated toward the boyish innocence of a Nick Carter or a Justin Timberlake. Others preferred the “bad boy” type of an A.J. McLean or a “goofball” like Joey Fatone. Still others swooned for the strong, silent types like JC Chasez and Kevin Richardson. The performance of these roles, coupled with tight harmonies and romantic tunes, led to rousing success on the charts. Today’s boy bands, then, can be understood as a species of reverse-engineered Frankenstein’s monster of youth culture. One difference worth mentioning between the Beatles and today’s boy bands, is that while the newer groups don’t play instruments, they sure do dance. Music videos from the ’90s display the boys’ skilled choreography, rife with hyper-masculine moves. John and Paul could evoke a young girl’s gasp with a gently weeping guitar chord, while Justin and JC did the same with fist bumps and hip thrusts, a strategy inherited from Mr. Presley himself.

Boy bands gain their stardom by being trendy, and by definition, that which is trendy is destined to have a short shelf life. Without the musical originality of a group like the Beatles, a boy band can’t last. The members will age, the fans will age, and new boys will take their places. Some former boy band-ers have gone on to successful solo careers, while others have faded into total obscurity. But the genre has not disappeared, and the boy band continues to replicate across the landscape of pop culture.

The recently defunct Jonas Brothers represented a blending of the old with the new, as Disney executives capitalized on the boys’ very marketable public image (fashionable young brothers who rock out together), while promoting the fact that the Jonases wrote the songs they performed. On the flip side, the formation of One Direction put a spin on the old formation formula. After failing to succeed as solo artists on the talent show *X Factor*, the judges saw the boys’ collective potential and urged them to unite. In other words, rather than auditioning individuals with the intent to make a band, the judges believed the band was already in latent existence and simply needed a push.

Even if contemporary boy bands are cobbled together more for looks and selling power than for pure artistry, their enormous, if fleeting, popularity denotes a significant impact on their audiences. Songs like *NSYNC’s “Bye Bye Bye” or Backstreet Boys’ “I Want It That Way” have survived as touchstones for the generation growing up in the ’90s, just as One Direction’s “That’s What Makes You Beautiful” became a mega-hit in 2011. Millions of people from multiple generations can still sing along when the radio plays the Beatles’ “I Wanna Hold Your Hand,” because bands of this ilk still spark the wild imaginations of their fans and harness a precious type of energy: the ecstasy of youth.

—BENJAMIN FAINSTEIN



A Place by the

The Maritime Muses of *Much Ado About Nothing* and *These Paper Bullets!*

Much Ado About Nothing takes place in sixteenth-century Messina, a town on the island of Sicily, off the coast of southern Italy, while *These Paper Bullets!* updates the setting to 1960s London, England, and its heroes, The Quartos, hail from Liverpool. Messina was a cultural center of the Renaissance, where sea merchants coming from distant lands brought with them not only new wares, but also new ideas for how to live, new values, and new aspirations for the future of mankind. That mantle was passed from city to city until the 1960s, when it was London's turn to teach people how to treat each other and what human ingenuity was capable of. And London looked fabulous doing it.

But first, imagine a breathtaking whirlpool where two Mediterranean seas meet, where glimmering mirages of mythical gods and creatures lure sailors with their songs and promises, as ships on stormy voyages disappear into the infinite horizon. This

is the Strait of Messina, whose mysterious beauty has inspired artists for centuries. One of Messina's legends describes the Colapesce, a half-man, half-fish who dives beneath the sea to support the island with his mighty frame. Classical poets Homer and Virgil wrote about Messina, as did German romantic poet Goethe, who imagined that Morgan le Fay, the beautiful enchantress of King Arthur's legends, would meet him there. A sixteenth-century pedestal bears the carvings of the ancient gods Neptune and Orion, the lord of the seas and the defender of peace and honor.

Now let's leap 400 years ahead, from the island of Sicily to the islands of the United Kingdom. Liverpool, the port city in northwestern England whose name derives from "Liuerpul," meaning simply "a muddy pool," is the birthplace of much more recent legend. It is the hometown of the Beatles, who banded together there in 1960.



Sea

London

Like the seafaring voyagers of old, the Beatles were indebted to the waters—they were inspired by rare recordings of American jazz, rhythm and blues, country western, rock-and-roll, and folk music brought to them by merchant sailors. Poets have paid homage to Liverpool, which became a cultural center where music and literature flourished. The beat poet Allen Ginsberg, who praised spiritual visionaries and social outcasts in his epic poem “Howl,” visited Liverpool in 1965 and declared, “Liverpool is at the present time the center of consciousness of the human universe. They’re resurrecting the human form divine there.” He added, “It’s like San Francisco, except the weather is greyer.”

Shakespeare found an exotic Italian setting in Messina, but he could easily have set his play in London of the Elizabethan era, a golden age of peacetime and economic prosperity, ethnic diversity, social reformation, and accomplishment in the arts and

humanities. Shakespeare’s London was a vibrant city: traders shouting in the marketplace, horses’ hooves and carriage wheels knocking against the cobblestones, silver gleaming in shop vitrines. Fashionable aristocratic ladies modeled bright colors and elaborate trimming atop a framework of wire and whalebone, while the gentlemen wore a padded doublet and hose. Elizabethan music featured complex vocal harmonies accompanied on the stringed lute. It’s only fitting that *Much Ado About Nothing*, written during such a creative period, would be updated to the 1960s, when London was once again the cultural epicenter of the world, leading the way in fashion, music, social movements, and ideas.

—ILYA KHODOSH

Messina



Before

After

1. “Adaptation is a grand old tradition that Shakespeare was very much a part of.” (See page 4.) Before attending Yale Repertory Theatre’s production of *These Paper Bullets!*, break into small groups and reflect on other adaptations you have encountered in film, television, music, or literature. Be prepared to discuss with the whole class what worked—or didn’t—in those adaptations. What are the key components of a successful adaptation?
2. When was the last time you listened to Beatles’ music? Before coming to see (and hear) *These Paper Bullets!*, listen to any of the songs from their early albums (between 1964 and 1970). Think about the style of the music and the lyrics. How does the music that Billie Joe Armstrong composed for *These Paper Bullets* capture 1960s pop music? In what ways does it speak to *Much Ado About Nothing*?
3. After reading the article about “Youth Culture in 1960s London” (page 6), discuss the cyclical nature of fashion and politics. Are there 1960s “trends” to which you relate? How would you characterize your generation—in fashion, taste, and political consciousness?

1. In the interview with Rolin Jones, the adaptor of *These Paper Bullets!*, he stated that director Jackson Gay referred to the play’s language as “Jonespeare.” Now that you’ve experienced this mash-up of Shakespeare and Jones, discuss how successful the production was in weaving language of the 1600s with that of 1960s London. How easily did your ears adapt to the language? Look back at Shakespeare’s text: were you able to tell when lines were directly pulled from the Bard?
2. Go back and read the synopsis found in the Study Guide on page 2. Compare *These Paper Bullets!* with *Much Ado About Nothing*. Which themes were carried over into this adaptation? Which characters in *These Paper Bullets!* were closest to their counterparts in *Much Ado*, and why?
3. At the end of Shakespeare’s comedies, there is often marriage. But does it mean “happily ever after”? Think about the major couples in *These Paper Bullets!*: Ben and Beatrice and Claude and Higgy. Do you think their love will last a long time, or do you agree with adaptor Rolin Jones (page 4) that their love is fleeting? How does the celebrity culture in *These Paper Bullets!* affect your answer?



Resources

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

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Online Resources

Folger Library Study Guide
[folger.edu/documents/Much Ado Layout for Web.pdf](http://folger.edu/documents/Much%20Ado%20Layout%20for%20Web.pdf)

National Theatre London Digital Classroom Resource Pack
nationaltheatre.org.uk/discover-more/digital-classroom/resource-packs

Signet Classic Teacher's Guide
us.penguingroup.com/static/pdf/teachersguides/muchado.pdf

Stratford Festival Guide
website: stratfordfestival.ca
navigate to: Education & Training/Teachers/Study Guides/Much Ado About Nothing

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In Search of Shakespeare: Shakespeare in the Classroom
pbs.org/shakespeare/educators

NEA Shakespeare in American Communities
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Shakespeare Online: Quotations about Music
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LIFE Image Archive
images.google.com/hosted/life
(Search for 1960s.)

The History Channel: The 1960s
history.com/topics/1960s

British Sixties Radio
britishsixtiesradio.com/
Internet radio station.

Sixties Britain
Primary documents from the National Archives.
nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/topics/sixties-britain.htm

Stylist Magazine
stylist.co.uk/fashion/sixties-style-icons
Thirty Sixties style icons.

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For more information on Yale Repertory Theatre and *These Paper Bullets!*, please visit our website:

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