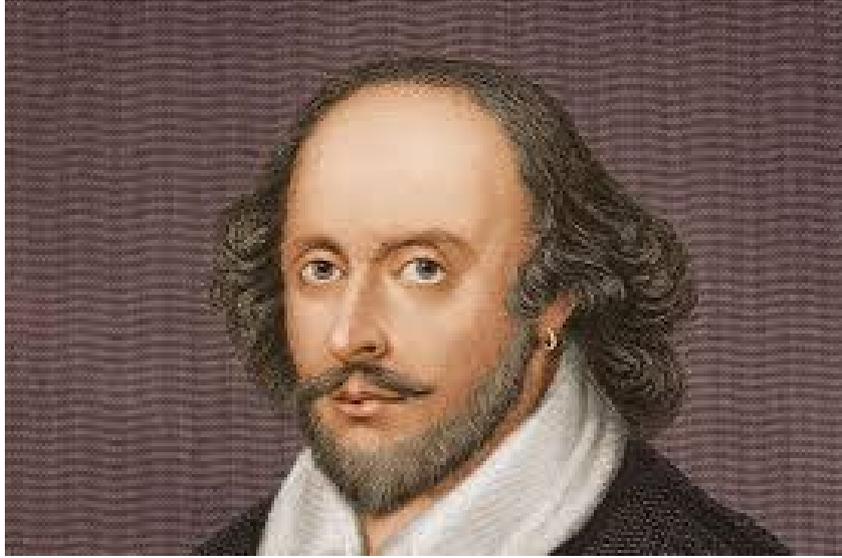


SHAKESPEARE



ON SCREEN

Week Three

Welcome to *Shakespeare On Screen*

Week Three

Welcome to Week Three of Shakespeare On Screen. Again, we'll be tackling a quartet of plays – two of which qualify inarguably for the all-timers club – *Romeo & Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Richard II and *Love's Labours Lost* on the other hand, are less well-known, though they've all found expression in cinematic form. It seems strange to have reached Week Three without conjuring the name of the Almighty Branagh, but he makes his first – but by no means last – appearance here with his musical take on *Labours*.

But what about our big hitters? *Romeo and Juliet* is an extraordinary example of the continued influence of Shakespeare on modern culture, not simply in the number of straight adaptations and obvious reiterations. Those two names have become *synonymous* with star-crossed lovers. It is considered, in many ways, *the* love story, despite the deeply dicey ages of its protagonists and, let's face it, the fact that they both *die at the end*.

No wonder we have weird expectations around romance.

On the other hand, to its demerit, no one turns into a donkey in *Romeo & Juliet*, which, to my mind, gives the *Dream* a decided edge.

The best advertisement for hallucinogenic drugs ever devised.

Side note. I once went to see *Midsummer Night's Dream* at the RSC with a girlfriend and made the mistake of referring to it, as above, as *the Dream*. (Because I am an act-or, darling.) There was side eye.

So buckle up, folks. There are fairies and kings and teenagers teenaging. Not to mention some Cole Porter. (Who has, so far, turned up twice as often as Branagh, which feels wrong.)

WEEK THREE FILMS

Love's Labour's Lost

Love's Labour's Lost (1985)
Elijah Moshinsky

Love's Labour's Lost (2001)
Kenneth Branagh

Groups of Ten or More People (2020)
Gaby Labotka and Zach Barr

A Midsummer Night's Dream

A Midsummer Night's Dream (1935)
Max Reinhardt & William Dieterle

A Midsummer Night's Dream (1968)
Peter Hall

A Midsummer Night's Dream (1981)
Elijah Moshinsky

A Midsummer Night's Dream (1999)
Michael Hoffman

A Midsummer Night's Dream (2016)
David Kerr

Romeo & Juliet

Romeo & Juliet (1936)

George Cukor

West Side Story (1961)

Jerome Robbins & Robert Wise

Romeo & Juliet (1968)

Franco Zeffirelli

Romeo + Juliet (1996)

Baz Luhrmann

Romeo & Juliet (2021)

Simon Godwin

Juliet & Romeo (2025)

Timothy Scott Bogart

Richard II

Age of Kings (1960)

Michael Hayes

Chimes at Midnight (1966)

Orson Welles

King Richard the Second (1978)

David Giles

The Hollow Crown (2012)

Rupert Goold