



REVIEWS

The Globe is very old looking because of the Tudor style walls and thatched roof. It is a circular building with a big hole in the middle of the roof. When you first arrive you feel very excited to find out what it will look like inside. The Globe stands a few hundred yards from its original site.

I watched *The Merchant Of Venice*, a comedy. In the play Antonio borrows some money from Shylock and agrees with Shylock that if he can not pay back the money Shylock can take a pound of flesh from Antonio. Antonio thinks he can pay back the money because he had some ships coming to him and he can get money from that. Shylock was Jewish and didn't like Antonio because he was a Christian (which was why he was glad to take his flesh). The play was modern, the actors/actresses did this by wearing modern clothes and using modern props.

I enjoyed Antonio's part because he used very good facial expression and body language, especially when he was about to get cut. The staff at the theatre were very helpful, they happily showed us to our seats and wished us a good time. When we walked in we saw the actors/actresses singing and dancing on the stage around a pole, two gold columns, a gold boat and the word Venice flashing red. I think the costumes added to the performance because the actors/actresses outfits were colourful. The musicians were not always seen when they were playing. For example when we first entered the theatre the musicians were not on the stage. I think an improvement would be to have the musicians on stage whenever they play. However I think the musicians were very good and added a good touch to the performance.

I think the way the actors used the stage was very innovative. An example is when the small stage in the middle of the theatre was opened and turned into a hot tub. I liked that. I do not think that it would have been performed like this when it was written. The current version has been made very modern, when it was written I think it would have been more sophisticated and the costumes more plain. But I think if I saw the performance as it was written and then saw the current one I would enjoy the current one more. At the end of the performance I was sad because I was enjoying it very much and didn't want it to end. However I was happy, the performance was very good. I would definitely go again, the actors/actresses were exceptional and the plot was very interesting.

Victoria Long

When I first saw the Globe Theatre, I was amazed. It was a lot bigger than I imagined - it was very tall and circular. The theatre was part-covered with a thatched roof. It looked like it was from the past so the reconstructed version of the Globe must be very similar to the original.

The Merchant of Venice was written between 1596 and 1598. The play is a tragedy and also a comedy because some parts were very funny. The play was very naturalistic. It seemed as if they just knew the lines and hadn't learnt them off a script. Their voices did really affect the way they performed (getting louder as they got angry and quieter as they got sadder). I think Catherine Bailey (Portia) was very good as her character was very believable. Mark Kane was very funny when he played Lancelot.



I liked how the costumes were mostly modern and not old fashioned. I liked their version of Happy. I thought the large Venice sign really stood out and helped to set the scene. I think the costumes, lighting and sound added to the performance and didn't distract from it. The live musicians were excellent too. I liked how there were only three of them. I think they made the Globe stage innovative because the set made it feel more modern and not very traditional, which I liked. The director's interpretation wasn't how Shakespeare had intended and it wouldn't have been performed this way when it was written because it seemed a lot more fun. I don't believe there would've been as much singing, dancing or music when it was originally performed.

I felt happy at the end because I liked how they ended it with singing and dancing. I found that form of Shakespeare a lot easier to understand and more intriguing and would want to see it again if it was in that style.

Jessica Saint

When our school first arrived at the Globe I thought it looked traditional and old-fashioned. I felt very excited as I had never seen a play at the Globe before. It was black and white in colour and had a thatched and open roof. The wooden furniture and features were very authentic. I knew that it wasn't the original but it was set like it was. I believe this play's genre would come under comedies because there were many funny parts that, I myself enjoyed.

I think the main message/moral of the story is don't want everything or become greedy. This is because Bassanio is Portia's suitor but she has had many admirers and they have either chose the silver or gold case but Bassanio is wise and chooses the least likely out of the two, the case, in which, is made of lead.

I think the actors were convincing because they used good facial expressions and used great emotions. The way Launcelot Gobbo moved around the stage was very good - I remember him entering on a scooter and he beamed and his voice was funny. I believe that all the actors played their parts well the used good expression and used Shakespeare's language within the dialogue. The attention to detail was out of this world. I especially liked the part when Jessica climbed out of the letter I in Venice and slipped down a rope. I believe Portia played her part well because she got into the character's shoes and used different tones in her voice which I thought was very effective.

I was welcomed by greeters who were dressed up in conventional clothes and knew where to take us. I saw on stage a band, some stage props and the huge word 'Venice' lighted up. I really liked the way they started because the band was playing and the actors would come and surprise the crowd. Then the performers would return to the stage have a dance then start. The band were included in the background and the word Venice was put to use as Jessica climbed out of it in one of the scenes. They used the props for parts of the scene and I thought they were really realistic. I think the band and the lighting added something to the performance because the band was very useful and the lighting just added some colour and made the play come to life.

I think the way the actors used the Globe was partly traditional and innovative. This is because



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EDUCATION**

**PLAYING SHAKESPEARE
WITH DEUTSCHE BANK**

they added Shakespeare's language into it and they added some new features as well. The play was definitely more understandable than the film. I think the director has twisted it slightly but Shakespeare's actual play might have not been completely understandable. It would have been performed differently because the language is different and hard to understand but the director has interpreted it in a more modern way and has made it more suitable for children.

I felt very surprised at the end because I never thought it would be as good as it was. I would definitely recommend for friends and family to go and see it and I would go and see it again. I would give it a 5 star rating and 10/10.

Katie Hawkes

I have never been to the Globe before so I was excited to see what it looked like. When I walked in I was shocked because I was expecting something bigger with more seats. There was a stage at the back in the centre and seats in a circle, all around the edge. There were 3 levels of seats and people were also able to stand up in the middle at the bottom, near the stage.

The play I saw was 'The Merchant of Venice'. It was originally written as a comedy but to me, it seemed more of a tragedy. The play was originally published in 1596-1598. I think the play was trying to tell you shouldn't borrow money that you know you can't pay back and also, that money can't buy love.

I thought that the actors were really good. I liked how they worked well together, made the play seem realistic and how they showed their emotions. A part where I could see that Shylock was sad was when he changed the tone of his voice and made his eyes look sorry and sad. I could tell when it was a happy scene because everyone smiled and hugged and were really enthusiastic. I thought that the actors were very convincing because they changed the way they acted. They changed their tone of voice; they used different facial expressions and body language too. By using different voices and movements, the play became more realistic. By changing them, they also made it seem like they BECAME their character. I thought that Catherine Bailey and Rachael Ofori worked really great together and made the play better. I liked the way they spoke to each other and how they made people know that Rachael was the maid-in-waiting, without actually saying it. I thought that Thomas Coombes at the beginning when he was pretending to be drunk was slightly bad because it seemed unrealistic and a little stupid, but the rest of his acting was great!

When I was walking through the gates with the rest of the school, to people were standing there, asking to check our tickets. We were then nicely showed to our seat by a member of staff, and they then stood at the end of the row watching the show with us. On the stage, I saw two big pillars and a big red, Venice sign and behind it, the musicians and their instruments. In different scenes there were different things. Such as, when the princes were choosing the chests, there were 3 stools and 3 chests on them. When Portia was in her house, there was a hot tub and a chair. When Portia was in the hot tub, she was wearing a swimming costume. When she was out, she wore a dressing gown. She also wore a black and red dress and a white coat while Nerissa wore yellow shorts, grey tights, grey top and a leather jacket.



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**PLAYING SHAKESPEARE
WITH DEUTSCHE BANK**

I think that the lights, costumes and sounds worked very well with the performance. The big light at the back saying 'Venice' was slightly distracting but not so much so that I stopped watching the show. I think that the costumes were really nice but not for a Shakespeare play. They should have worn more olden time clothes. The musicians were great too. When it was a dramatic scene, they played dramatic music. When it was a happy scene, they played happy, jolly music. And when it was a sad scene, they played sad music.

I thought the director's interpretation was very good. He kept the basic story line but changed it slightly. He made the settings a bit more modern but kept the wording the same. When the play was first written, I would have thought it would have been different. I think the clothes would be older and the way they acted would be different. In the play I saw, there was sort of a modern twist but when it was performed back then, it would have been kept simple and the language would be more olden time.

I felt curious at the end because I thought of what could have happened to Antonio if Portia and Nerissa hadn't had pretended to be the lawyers. I also felt happy because everyone was happy (apart from Shylock). I would want to go back again.

Amy King

I saw *The Merchant of Venice* at the Globe theatre on the 18th of March 2014. The Globe is amazing! From the outside it looks exactly like the old one, especially with the moss on the roof which I particularly noticed. The inside looks nice and at the same time really old. It was made in 1599 but was burnt down when a canon ball hit the roof. However the one I went in is a replica made in 1997. *The Merchant of Venice* was mostly a tragedy but they added in some funny parts, so it was a bit of a comedy.

The actors played their roles amazingly and with emotion. The actors were very convincing at their jobs, most of the time I forgot they were acting because it was so good. One of the reasons was because of their body language which was acted out very well. The actors also reacted with the audience very well, because when they walked through the crowd they made it seem like the crowded streets of Venice.

The Globe was very welcoming and straight forward with the entry. I think it was very good that the actors were dressed in modern clothes and the music was very good as well, but especially the short bits they played in certain parts which added to the performance. I could just about see the musicians but not so much that it distracted me.

The stage was really cool as it had a hot tub in the middle of the crowd and a hatch in the roof for rope to come down. It was performed almost like Shakespeare would have back then apart from the clothes, which I didn't mind. Overall I thought it was really cool apart from a bit of the language which was old English.

Leon Carter



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**PLAYING SHAKESPEARE
WITH DEUTSCHE BANK**

The Globe theatre is a big white building with wooden beams on show. The building faces the River Thames and inside it is all wooden and there are different seats. There is the option of standing up in the middle or there are seats just off the floor the next row, where I sat, is about five meters off the ground then, there is the top row where in the olden times rich people sat. I think that the theme of the play was to show how much Jews were hated and that Christianity was the main religion.

We were welcomed into the theatre by a man who told us the way up to our seats. On the stage were two huge pillars which were apparently made of real trees but it would be incredibly hard to find two trees exactly the same. Almost everything was golden, the seats were gold the pillars were gold most people wore a golden ornament and the Venice sign was gold. The music that was used sounded modern and didn't really suit the old English performance.

The Globe is designed to be classical and old like the original one was. The actors were dressed up in very modern clothes but they all spoke in old English, the sort of speech that Shakespeare would have. The old English was slightly hard to follow because we are not used to hearing it in our modern world. The play would have been similar when Shakespeare performed it but the women parts were played as men but in the modern twist, women played their own parts. Shakespeare would have also made his actors wear older clothes.

At the end of the performance, I felt cold because obviously it is outdoors and also I was slightly tired as you have to sit down for one hour and a half on a wooden bench with no breaks in the middle. But I also felt privileged to have been able to watch a classic performance like I did.

Ben Walton

Shakespeare's play, *The Merchant of Venice* performed at the Globe Theatre, is an interesting tale of love and religion. In the floating city of Venice, the young Bassanio wants to marry the beautiful Portia but doesn't have enough money. He visits his close friend Antonio to make his dream a reality but Antonio is currently broke until his ships come into port. So they go to see Shylock, a Jew. Once Shylock finally agrees to loan Antonio the 3,000 Ducats (Venetian money) to give to Bassanio. Meanwhile, Portia and her lady in waiting, Nerissa are visited by many suitors wanting to marry Portia but they have to pass a test first. In one of three boxes, one made of lead, silver and gold contains a picture of Portia but when others fail, it seems that only Bassanio knows that all the glisters is not gold. While in Venice, Shylock's daughter Jessica runs off with a Christian, Lorenzo along with almost half of Shylock's riches. Eager to get his money back he calls on Antonio and demands his money but Antonio's ships have all sunk so Shylock demands a pound of Antonio's flesh but in order to do this they have to take the case to court. A letter from Antonio explaining his problems soon reaches Bassanio and Portia immediately sends him to Venice to aid his friend. As Bassanio rushes off to Venice, Portia and Nerissa hatch a plan to go to the court disguised as male judges to help save Antonio's life. The plan successfully works but even though Antonio keeps his pound of flesh, Shylock is forced to become a Christian.

The Merchant of Venice is a touching play of love and loss that people ages from 11 onwards can enjoy. I personally found this play worthy of a glowing review and to have seen it



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**PLAYING SHAKESPEARE
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performed in such a glorious place as the Globe Theatre is perfect as the seating makes it able for you to view the stage from all angles of the building. Seeing the play in a theatre that is authentic for the time of Shakespeare made it all the more enjoyable and atmospheric.

Also the actors are incredibly interactive with the audience, by using all the parts of the Globe as much as they can, the dialogue, the body language and even the music makes Shakespeare's production as realistically authentic as possible. Congratulations to the wardrobe department as the clothing suited each and every personality to the characters.

In conclusion I highly recommend seeing *The Merchant of Venice* as it is an intricate and complex tale that people will adore for many years to come as people need to know that in our ever changing world of entertainment it is important to know that there is always room for the works of William Shakespeare.

Honor Wilson

The Globe looked amazing when I first walked in, it looked exactly how I imagined it would have looked in Shakespeare's time and was really big. I knew it wasn't the original and it's a replica, but it still looked great. *The Merchant of Venice* is a comedy with some romantic aspects, which I like and it was written in 1598.

The characters were played very well by the actors and they seemed to enjoy themselves like we enjoyed the play. I would definitely go to see it again or the different plays that are performed there as well. At one point I believed we were in Venice because the actors and the way they performed the play was very convincing. They all had different accents put on to portray their characters and they moved how they thought their character would act.

We were shown to our seats and at the beginning a band was playing which got everyone in the mood after the long journey and the characters also came round the theatre to interact and greet us. The stage had big sign saying 'Venice' in red lights and there were big golden pillars to make it look good. The only thing I didn't like were the costumes as they were quite modern (such as suits and designer dresses) because I thought they would dress like the character would've in Shakespeare's time, but it was still great.

As the Globe doesn't have a roof, the characters came out and started to sing 'Happy' by Pharrell. I thought this was good because they emphasised the line: "Clap along if you feel like a room without a roof." It is similar to how I think it would've been performed, but I thought I wouldn't have been able to understand it and I did. Luckily, they had updated it a bit and I understood the whole play and thoroughly enjoyed it.

The play was brilliant and it was one of the best I have seen. I would strongly recommend it to anyone looking for somewhere to go or something to see.

Brooke McGee