

Visual Story for the Relaxed Performance of Prince Hamlet



January 27, 2019
1:30PM
Frederic Wood Theatre
at UBC

PuSh INTERNATIONAL
PERFORMING ARTS
FESTIVAL

 **WHYNOT
THEATRE**

About Prince Hamlet

Performance time

- At **12.45** there will be an introduction
- The performance will aim to start at **1:30 pm**
- After about **1 hour and 15 minutes**, there will be a **15 minute intermission**
- The show will finish around **4:15 pm**

Chill-Out Zone

- If you want to leave to theatre at any time, there is a Chill-Out Zone in the lobby
- An usher can help you go there
- There is be a TV so you can follow the show
- You can go back into the theatre at any time

What to expect

- The lights above you will always stay on. It may be a little dark sometimes, **but never completely dark.**
- It is ok to move
- It is ok to make noise
- It is ok to react
- The lights in the foyer and washrooms will flash on and off a few times before the show starts: **10 minutes, 6 minutes, and 3 minutes**
- This is a reminder that the show is about to start

The Set and the Performers

Here is a picture of the set with some the performers



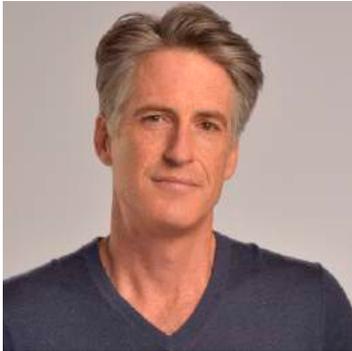
Here are pictures of all the performers



Christine Horne plays Hamlet



Dawn Jani Birley plays Horatio



Rick Roberts plays Claudius



Karen Robinson plays Gertrude



Here are pictures of all the performers



Jeff Ho plays Ophelia



Barbara Gordon plays Polonius



Khadijah Roberts-Abdullah plays Laertes



Hannah Miller plays Guildenstern



Here are pictures of all the performers



Miriam Fernandes plays Rosencrantz



Hannah Miller plays the Player Queen



Miriam Fernandes plays The Player King



Miriam Fernandes plays The Gravedigger



Here are pictures of the Stage Managers

NOTE: These people work behind the scenes, so you might not see them.



Neha Ross
Stage Manager



Tamara Protic
Assistant Stage Manager

About the Introduction

45 minutes before the show starts there will be an introduction, at 12:45pm.

This is what will happen in the introduction:

- The performers all introduce themselves and say something about the characters they play
- We talk about that to expect in the show
- We talk about how the relaxed performance works
- The performers will act out some of the intense moments in the show
That way you get to prepare yourself to know what will happen in the show.

By intense moments we mean:

- Scenes with fighting, violence
- When somebody dies
- Scenes that are very sad
- Romantic or sexual scenes
- Very happy or excited moments

Basically scenes that may upset or excite you.

SPOILER ALERT: If you don't want to know what will happen in the show, you can either leave before the actors do the scenes or cover your eyes and ears.

About the Story

This story takes place in Elsinore, which is in the country called Denmark.

It's a story about **Hamlet**. He is upset because his father, **the King**, has been murdered.

Hamlet's mother is called **Gertrude**. She remarried after the King's death. Gertrude married **Claudius**, who is Hamlet's uncle and the King's brother.

The ghost of the King visits Hamlet and tells him that he has been murdered by **Claudius**. Hamlet wants to avenge his father's death.

Hamlet has a trusted friend called **Horatio**.
Hamlet has two childhood friends called **Rosencrantz & Guildenstern**.

Hamlet is in love with **Ophelia**.
Ophelia has a brother called **Laertes** and a father called **Polonius**.

Things to Know Before the show

This production combines **English and American Sign Language (ASL)** to create a new interpretation of this famous text for hearing and Deaf audiences. This means that sometimes the show will be performed in English, sometimes in American Sign Language, and sometimes both.

Most characters are played by actors that are the opposite gender than written by Shakespeare. Hamlet, for example, is played by a female actor.

At the beginning of the show, all the actors are visible on stage. Sometimes you can see them even when they are not acting in the scene. There is a square wooded platform in the middle of the stage, a large pile of dirt, and a big mirror in the back.

Things to Know Before the show

Things to look out for:

- Sometimes there are **loud sounds**, shouting, and music – look for the signal, you will know when to put your ear protection on and when to take them off
- Sometimes the **sounds are very deep** and you might feel the vibration
- Sometimes there are **bright lights** - look for the signal, you will know when to cover your eyes
- In the show there is **fighting** – but the actors are **not really angry at each other** or hurting each other, they are **acting**. Even though some of the characters die in the story, **the actors do not die and you can meet the actors after the show**
- In the show there is **sexual/intimate content** – but the actors are **not really being sexual** with each other, they are **acting**
- Some of the actors play different parts, and sometimes wear different costumes. A **costume** is the name of the clothes that actors wear on stage

We will show you some of the **fighting and intimate** scenes before the show so you won't be surprised by them. We will show them **45 minutes before the performance** in the introduction.

Loud Sounds and Bright Lights

For the Relaxed Performance the lights won't be as bright and the sounds won't be as loud. But if they are still too intense for you, **Kevin** will warn you about them.

If you are bringing your own **ear protection**, look out for **Kevin** who will be showing you when to put your ear protection on, and when to take it off.

Kevin will also show you when to cover your eyes for moments with **bright lights**.



Maybe you will like the play, and maybe not, that is ok.
It's alright to feel happy or sad after seeing a show.

At the end of the play, people will clap. That is a way to
say thank you to the people who made the show. It is
also a way to say you like the show.

It's ok to cover your ears if that is too loud.
You can also wave your hands instead of clapping.

More questions?

If you have any questions, contact Anika Vervecken, she is the Accessibility Coordinator for the PuSh Festival.

You can email her: access@pushfestival.ca
You can call her: +1 604.605.8286 ext. 204

On the day of the show she will be there, you can always go to her.

This is what she looks like.



Prince Hamlet Visual Story

SPOILER ALERT : The visual story tells you everything that happens in the show.

PLEASE NOTE: Most characters are played by actors of the opposite gender. It can help to look at the pictures of the performers to remember who is who.

At the beginning of the show, all the actors are visible on stage. Sometimes you can see them even when they are not acting in the scene. There is a square wooded platform in the middle of the stage, a large pile of dirt, and a big mirror in the back.

Horatio walks on stage. Horatio only communicates using ASL. He tells the audience of a bloody scene that has taken place. He will tell us all about it. Horatio will often be seen interpreting the rest of the performers lines in ASL.

Hamlet appears and tells us that he is very sad that his father has died. He is also upset because his mother, Gertrude, has married his uncle, Claudius, less than a month after his father's death.

Gertrude and Claudius enter and tell Hamlet that he's being too gloomy about his father's death. Gertrude wants him to stop mourning and move on with his life. Claudius wants Hamlet to consider him his new father. Hamlet doesn't like this.

Horatio enters and tells Hamlet that he saw his father the night before as a ghost. We see a flashback to the night before, with a terrified Horatio confronting the ghost. Hamlet tells him that he will join him that night hoping that he'll see his father as well.

Ophelia and Hamlet enter. Hamlet tells her that he loves her and then departs, to join Horatio at the post. Laertes, Ophelia's brother, enters to bid her farewell before he leaves for France. He warns her about falling in love with Hamlet. Polonius, Ophelia's father, enters to say goodbye to Laertes. He gives him boring fatherly advice about how to be a good man. Laertes leaves. Polonius asks Ophelia what she and Laertes were talking about.

Suddenly the scene changes, and we are with Hamlet and Horatio. They are speaking to the ghost of the King. We cannot see the King, but the actors can as they look into the big mirror at the back of the stage. The King is completely silent, but he waves to Hamlet to follow him. Horatio thinks it is a bad idea, but Hamlet goes anyway. Hamlet disappears and there is a chaos as servants run around looking for him and calling his name.

We see Hamlet alone on stage. He falls to the ground in a frenzy and the King speaks through Hamlet's body. It is like he is possessed. The King tells him that he has been murdered! And by his brother, Claudius! Claudius killed him by putting poison in his ear while he was sleeping. There is a bright light and loud rumbling sound. The room goes dark.

Horatio and the other men find Hamlet. Hamlet makes them promise to not talk about anything they have seen that night. He tells Horatio that he is going to pretend to be crazy in the hopes of uncovering his father's murder. He tells Horatio that he cannot let on that he knows about it.

Later, Ophelia runs on to speak with her father, Polonius. She tells him that Hamlet was acting very strange and scared her. Polonius is worried that Hamlet is "crazy" in love with Ophelia. He wants to tell Claudius about it.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Hamlet's childhood friends, are talking with Claudius & Gertrude. Since Hamlet has been acting strange, Claudius wants them to spy on him and report back. Polonius enters to discuss Hamlet's madness. He presents them with a letter that Hamlet wrote to Ophelia. We see the letter performed by Hamlet to Ophelia. It is a love letter. Polonius thinks it is very inappropriate for Hamlet to have written it. He convinces Gertrude and Claudius to set a trap for Hamlet, to prove that he is crazy. Later, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern come to speak with Hamlet, but he quickly realizes their intentions to dismiss him and continues to feign madness with them.

A troupe of actors come to the castle. Hamlet likes them a lot and asks them to perform a speech that he liked as a boy. We see an actor perform for Hamlet. It is the tale of Pyrrhus avenging the death of his father Achilles after the Trojan War. (Much like Hamlet's own story!) The performance is performed in ASL. Suddenly the scene changes, Hamlet is left alone and we see Claudius and Gertrude performing sexual acts in the pile of dirt at the back of the stage. They disappear and Hamlet screams alone on stage. He is very sad and talks to himself about whether he should kill himself.

In the midst of Hamlet's despair, Ophelia appears. This is part of the trap that Polonius and Claudius have set for Hamlet, to prove that he is crazy. Ophelia tries to return Hamlet's letter. Hamlet is very upset about this. (Or maybe he's only acting upset, because he knows that he is being watched.) He tells her that he never actually loved her and that he believes that all women are monstrous and frivolous. He tells her to live in a "nunnery" as the only way for her to live a pure chaste life. Basically, he's really mean to her.

After spying on this scene, Claudius thinks that Hamlet is very depressed and should go to England for a change of scenery. Ophelia is very upset about her experience with Hamlet. She is sad that such a great man (even though he was mean to her!) has been overcome by madness.

Hamlet decides to use the actors to determine whether Claudius did actually kill his father. He will have them perform the very act of murder, killing a king through poison in the ear, which the ghost claimed. He asks Horatio to watch Claudius' reaction throughout the play. While the court is watching, Claudius gets upset and stops the play. He then calmly walks out of the theatre, in confrontation with Hamlet, reaching for Gertrude's hand. Hamlet is convinced that Claudius is the murderer of his father.

INTERMISSION

Claudius is very upset about the play. He thinks that it is a threat to him from Hamlet. He orders that Hamlet leave for England immediately. Meanwhile, Rosencrantz & Guildenstern approach Hamlet to tell them how upset Claudius and Gertrude are about the whole episode. Hamlet and Horatio mock them. Polonius enters and tells Hamlet that his mother requests a word alone with him in her bedroom. He assumes that they are all trying to set him up, but he agrees anyway.

Later in the chapel, we hear Polonius telling Claudius that he will spy on Hamlet as he speaks with his mother and report back to Claudius about what he hears. Polonius exits. Claudius, overcome with guilt for killing his brother, kneels down to pray for forgiveness. Hamlet comes upon Claudius praying. He considers killing him then and there. He picks up a chair and is about to hit him with it, but stops. He realizes that since Claudius is in mid-prayer he will go to heaven if he dies, so Hamlet decides to wait until Claudius is committing some sin. That way he will go to hell.

Meanwhile, in Gertrude's room, Polonius hides in the curtain to spy on her conversation with Hamlet. Hamlet enters and a violent argument ensues between them. When Hamlet hears Polonius shout for help he stabs him through the curtain thinking it is Claudius. Hamlet then berates his mother for re-marrying so quickly and to a man so inferior to his father.

The ghost of his father then re-appears to Hamlet and tells Hamlet to refocus on the task of killing Claudius. Gertrude cannot see the ghost and thinks that it is another sign of Hamlet's madness. Hamlet tries to convince her that he is not mad, but feigning it. He drags the dead body of Polonius from her room.

Gertrude hurries to Claudius to tell him of her encounter with Hamlet. She says that he is mad and has killed Polonius. Later, Claudius demands that Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern head to England. Claudius has sent a letter with them ordering Hamlet's execution during the trip.

Laertes returns from France on the news that his father has been killed. He furiously storms in wanting to avenge his father's death. Gertrude nervously tells him that Claudius is not his father's murderer, but Laertes isn't convinced. Ophelia enters, mourning for her deceased father. She digs through the dirt on stage, sings sad songs, and speaks nonsense. She has gone insane. Laertes, heartbroken by his sister's madness, is determined to get revenge on Claudius, who he assumes has caused all of this torment.. Claudius claims that he is not responsible for Polonius's death and says that Laertes' desire for revenge is a credit to him, so long as he seeks revenge upon the proper person.

While at sea, Hamlet discovers the plan Claudius had for his murder. He switches the orders for his death, causing Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to be executed.

Meanwhile back at Elsinore, Laertes learns from Claudius that it was Hamlet who has killed his father, Polonius. Claudius suggests that Laertes duel with Hamlet and poisons the tip of Laertes foil for a fatal blow. If Laertes loses the duel, Claudius will put poison into a drink for Hamlet.

Gertrude learns of Ophelia's death. She has committed suicide by drowning. We see Horatio tell us this tragic event in ASL. Gertrude informs Laertes of his sisters death.

Hamlet arrives back to Denmark and goes to the graveyard where he meets with a strange man digging a grave. Hamlet doesn't realize that this is a grave for Ophelia. Hamlet finds the skull of his childhood jester and reminisces about his old friend and on life.

The funeral procession for Ophelia enters, including Claudius, Gertrude, and Laertes. Hamlet, wondering who has died, hides as the procession approaches the grave. As Ophelia is laid in the earth, Hamlet realizes it is she who has died. Laertes leaps into Ophelia's grave to hold her once again in his arms. Overcome with sadness, Hamlet jumps out of his hiding and declares his love for Ophelia. Hamlet and Laertes get into a fight. They are pulled apart by the funeral company. Gertrude and Claudius declare that Hamlet is mad. The king urges Laertes to be patient, and to remember their plan for revenge. A duel is scheduled.

We move back to the castle for the duel. As the duel happens, we see Horatio describe the duel in ASL, but we do not see the actors perform it. Before the duel, Gertrude accidentally drinks from the poisoned chalice and dies. Hamlet is wounded with the poisoned sword, but in a scuffle, the foils are switched and Laertes is also wounded with the poisoned foil. In dying, Laertes confesses Claudius' plot to kill Hamlet. Hamlet stabs Claudius killing him. As Hamlet dies, he asks Horatio to tell his story for him.

THE END