

# ASIDES



## **ASIDES 1.4: EMMA**

**Date: May 12, 2020**

**Featuring: Sara B.T. Thiel, Lora Lee Gayer, Brad Standley, Bri Sudia, Devin DeSantis, Ephie Aardema, Regina Buccola**

**Emma Orchestra: Kory Danielson (Keyboard/Conductor), Charlotte Rivard-Hoster (Keyboard), Andrew McCann (Violin), Jill Kaeding (Cello), Mike Matlock (Reeds)**

**Sara B.T. Thiel:** I'm going to tease out a question that I've always asked myself, which is "Why do we do Jane Austen at Shakespeare theaters?"

Today I'm going to talk a little bit about the story of *Emma* in this particular adaptation. I'm also going to talk about Jane Austen—I'll say a little bit about her biography and what we know about it, and sort of what made *Emma* a sort of innovative piece of writing for her.

My name is Sara Thiel. I'm a member of the Education team here at Chicago Shakespeare, but I'm also a scholar of early modern theater history and also of theater in adaptation, so thinking about what happens when we sort of take a piece of work from one medium and translate it to the next. So, I'm really excited to talk to you about this adaptation of *Emma* today.

**Sara B.T. Thiel:** Hello and welcome back to ASIDES, the new podcast from Chicago Shakespeare Theater. I'm Sara B.T. Thiel, Public Humanities Manager at CST. My role at the Theater is to manage our audience enrichment and adult education programs, such as post-show discussions between audiences and actors, this podcast, and our Pre•Amble program. Before coming to CST, I earned my PhD in Theatre Studies from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

So, on this episode of ASIDES, we're sharing my introduction to Paul Gordon's musical adaptation of *Emma*, Jane Austen's iconic novel. This production was directed by Chicago Shakespeare Artistic Director Barbara Gaines. The Pre•Amble you'll hear

today was originally recorded on February 16, 2020.

**SBT:** For anyone who maybe isn't familiar or would like a refresher, I'm going to talk a little bit about the plot of *Emma*. So, Emma Woodhouse is rich, beautiful, and confident in her own matchmaking abilities, but at the start of our story, she's mourning the loss of her dearest friend and her former governess, Miss Taylor, who is now Mrs. Weston. She has married the long-widowed Mr. Weston, and Emma, as we'll come to know her, has no problem taking credit for this marriage.

**Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer)**

*Singing*

I'll make the match myself  
I'll make the match myself  
I'll ask her and I'll hand her to him on a silver  
plate!  
It's glorious,  
It's crystal clear,  
Now he has me to—  
Pity that you do not see what I do...

**Mr. Knightley (Brad Standley)**

*Singing*

God forbid,  
That poor man,  
I can assure you,  
He'll find a wife himself  
May I just say,  
Yes, to interfere.

**SBT:** To cheer herself up, she's decided to make yet another match, despite the protestations of her careful, nervous father, played by CST veteran, Larry Yando today, as well as their close family friend, and her brother-in-law, Mr. Knightley. Certain that she herself will never marry, Emma decides to meddle in everyone else's affairs and become the town matchmaker.

So, when she makes the acquaintance of young Harriet Smith, who's called the "natural daughter of nobody" in this production. I think in the book, she's called the "natural daughter of someone," but she's parentless, she doesn't know who her family is, and she grew up in a boarding school nearby, and she has just graduated and finished her education. So, Emma's decided to take Miss Harriet Smith under her wing and match her to the town's most eligible bachelor, Mr. Elton, the town vicar.

Emma becomes convinced of their compatibility for really, no reason, and she convinces Harriet to refuse an offer of marriage from a local farmer named Robert Martin. Now, despite Harriet's deep, deep feelings for Robert Martin, which we'll hear expressed today repeatedly to great effect, she takes Emma's direction and pursues the affection of Mr. Elton. Now, when Emma confides her plan—her plot—to Mr. Knightley, he chides her for her arrogance and overconfidence and insists that Mr. Elton, is in fact, a social climber who will never marry anyone like Harriet Smith because he's looking for social or financial advancement, hopefully both.

**Mr. Knightley (Brad Standley)**

But what is the meaning of this? Harriet Smith refusing Robert Martin? Madness. I hope you are mistaken.

**Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer)**

No. I saw her answer. Nothing could be clearer.

**Mr. Knightley (Brad Standley)**

You saw her answer? You mean you wrote her answer. This is your doing, isn't it Emma?

**Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer)**

So, what if it is? I do not feel I am in the wrong. Mr. Martin is a very respectable young man but he is not Harriet's equal.

**Mr. Knightley (Brad Standley)**

Not her equal?

**SBT:** Now, as Emma's matchmaking plot really begins to dissolve, her world is really turned on its head when two visitors arrive to Highbury. So, Highbury is their town, it's a fictional town. So, these two visitors are the young Jane Fairfax, she's a beautiful, orphaned niece of her neighbor, Miss Bates, and Frank Churchill, Mr. Weston's estranged son. So, Emma admits an immediate dislike to Jane Fairfax. They've sort of grown up together, on and off, and Emma describes her as the person she likes least in the whole world, and yet everyone finds her lovely and all-around pretty likeable.

Meanwhile, Emma is ensnared by the charms of "The Esteemed Frank Churchill," as she calls him. But, as you might imagine, or perhaps you already know because you're familiar with the story, Emma's own hubris blinds her to the many truths that stare her in the face, and it's only when she comes to recognize the pain that her arrogance causes to those around her that the pieces of her story really start falling into place.

Now, this adaptation by Paul Gordon was commissioned by TheatreWorks Silicon Valley in 2006 and has had a few scattered productions since 2007, and it was actually when Artistic Director Barbara Gaines, who directed this production, and CST Creative Producer, Rick Boynton, went out to San Francisco to see a production of *Emma* that they commissioned *Sense and Sensibility*. So, I don't know if there might be a lot of folks in here who were here for our production of *Sense and Sensibility* in 2015, but that was its world premiere. For Chicago Shakespeare Theater, these two productions, *Emma* and *Sense and Sensibility*, have gone sort of hand in hand over the last several years.

This adaptation really moves at a clip. Of course, it is a 450-page novel that has been condensed into two and a half hours, so there are things that are sort of cut and alighted, but the adaptation very much feels part of Jane Austen's world—it feels very much part of her canon, without trying to be a realistic novel. And we get that, especially in the music.

So, Paul Gordon, in an essay in your program, he talks about sort of the steps that he takes when he is going to adapt a book or a piece of literature into a musical. And the question that he really asks himself is “Do these characters sing?”

What's interesting about the music is that it's funny, the music itself is funny and really works to punctuate the humor in the book, and that's all amplified by Barbara Gaines's direction. You'll sort of see that in moments when Emma is making a face to the audience or she's taking a quick look at the audience to bring them in on her joke.

There is a live orchestra onstage. They are largely hidden by really large, beautiful, white drapes. They are semi-transparent, so you can see them back there. In one moment, those drapes pull all the way back, during a ball, and they become the ball orchestra, so that orchestra is really pulled into the play at certain points.

So, the design, the score, and the direct address—which I'll talk a little bit about in a few minutes—they show us that this isn't a musical that's trying to be a book or to replicate the book, but instead evoke the book and the experience of reading that novel. And this adaptation really leans into its theatrical medium.

I want to say a little bit about Jane Austen as a human being and sort of what we know about her, which isn't a lot. We know she was born in December 1775, and then she died at the age of forty-one in July 1817. A question I've received is, “Was that young?” You know, life expectancy was lower in the nineteenth century, but that number largely comes out of an average that is derived from infant mortality, so forty-one was quite young, and it still is, I dare say. She was considered a young death. She was one of seven children, and she was the first of her siblings to pass away.

*Emma* was Jane Austen's fourth novel, and it was the last one that she published before she died. So, she began writing *Emma* in 1814, published it in late 1815. It's sometimes called an 1816 novel, but it's because it was sort of published on the cusp of 1815 and 1816.

So, like her three earlier novels, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Mansfield Park*, *Emma* was published anonymously. So, her first novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, was just published—the by-line just said “By a Lady”—so there was no sense that she was trying to convince everyone that she was a man writing this novel. It was very much a novel written by a woman, she just didn't put her name on it.

*Pride and Prejudice* was published “By the Author of *Sense and Sensibility*,” *Emma* was published as “By the Author of *Pride and Prejudice*”, so this sense of hearkening back to her earlier works and trying to connect them as being by the same person, to me, that indicates that there was some popularity there, that there was some reason why you would want people to know this is the same person who wrote this other book that you may have enjoyed.

And we know that she did have some success with her books. *Sense and Sensibility* was published in three volumes and was a hit. I wouldn’t call them “blockbusters,” but they were popular. *Pride and Prejudice*: she sold the rights to that for 110 pounds, and just to put that in perspective, her yearly income, which she had to share with her mother and her sister Cassandra, was only 210 pounds. *Mansfield Park* was her most financially successful book, so it was her third novel, and she made 320 pounds.

So, why publish anonymously if she’s doing well? Austen was seeking financial independence for herself and her family, since they were not at all wealthy once her father died. She was sort of left impoverished once her father died. It was considered, nevertheless, lewd and improper for a woman of her stature to be authoring novels and to become sort of a “public woman” in that way, in all of the sort of implications of that word. She sought to save her family and herself the sort of potential public embarrassment, despite the popularity of her work.

Now, Austen’s other two full-length novels, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, were published posthumously in 1818 by her family. She was named in that publication and in that publication, they named her as the author of these four earlier novels. Her books have really rarely been out of print, and we are still continuing to see adaptations and new re-envisioning of her work. I don’t know if anyone’s watching *Sanditon* on PBS, but that is an unfinished work of hers that sort of being re-imagined for the screen. And yet, she enjoyed only moderate success and very little fame during her own lifetime.

While Austen’s first three novels were relatively successful, *Emma* wasn’t as much, even though critics and scholars now consider it to be her masterpiece. It’s not only for the book’s humor, incisive wit, and sharp critiques of class and classicism, as well as the financial and social vulnerability of young women, which we find in all of her novels, but because Emma Woodhouse is a unique heroine in her canon.

In the often quoted opening line to Austen’s novel, which you’ll sort of hear adapted at the beginning of today’s performance, we know immediately that the novel’s titular character is “handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, who had lived nearly 21 years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.” That’s so nice...

Now this is in stark contrast to the relatively impoverished *Sense and Sensibility* sisters, Elinor and Marianne, or *Pride and Prejudice*'s Bennet sisters. These women fall victim, or nearly fall victim to the circumstances of their birth or family purse, and instead Emma is blessed with every comfort. So, unlike the heroines of Austen's earlier novels, Emma is not dependent upon finding a wealthy husband in order to keep her from certain poverty. Instead she is a "gentleman's daughter," as she says repeatedly throughout today's performance, and we come to understand that it's a really important part of her identity. And something else that's sort of important about that "gentleman's daughter" is that there is no son, there's no male heir to intercept the estate that she will inherit once her father dies. So, she wants nothing, she wants for nothing, she says she refuses to marry, and really, why should she? She'll have every comfort for the rest of her life, whether or not she finds a husband.

Austen's *Emma* is written in a refined version of the style she started perfecting in *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. The novel is written in third person. It's not at all narrated by Emma, and yet that third person is still somehow Emma's point of view. You understand as you're reading it, that you are sort of in Emma's mind despite the fact that it's written in third person. So, Emma's not telling her own story, but we're both sharing her judgments about the world and we're watching her make them. We're sharing in her mistakes, in her misadventures so to speak, but we're also on the outside sort of watching it happen.

Paul Gordon's musical gives us that sense in a really interesting way. In lieu of Austen's sophisticated indirect free style, as it's come to be called by literary scholars, Gordon's musical works very much like a Shakespeare play. Emma speaks directly to us, so there's direct address from the very top of the performance all the way to the very end, and it's almost as if we as an audience are her new pet bosom friend, much like Harriet Smith becomes. So, we're both watching her live this life, but we're also drawn into it through her direct address. And it's almost flattering in a way, she's talking to us, like, "Oh, it's me," and I think that is part of the effect of Lora Lee Gayer, the actor who is playing Emma, too.

Emma is beloved by her community, or at least *she* thinks so. Just as she begins to introduce herself to us, the entire town of Highbury joins her onstage, so from the very beginning, Lora Lee Gayer as Emma welcomes us into her sphere and her charming, funny, false modesty really makes us want to stay.

In the play's opening song, "Queen Anne's Lace," performed by the entire company, they call her the "saving grace," the "belle of the ball," and the "gleam in our eye," but as Emma begins the play speaking direct address, directly to the audience, we understand that we're not hearing their opinion and their perspective, but rather hearing her perspective.

And then Director Barbara Gaines and her artistic team really echo this through the design. You'll see, as soon as you walk in, Scott Davis's scenic design is dominated by these large, beautiful, white drapes, and they sort of define Emma's spatial world in a lot of ways. These drapes give us the sense of this lush, romantic decadence as soon as we walk in, and then throughout, these drapes will pull back almost like pages in a book. I don't really mean that figuratively, I mean there were times when I was looking, and it looked like pages flipping open revealing the next chapter in the book.

So, this fabric not only catches light beautifully, but they echo Emma's costume, and I'll talk a little bit about the light design in a few moments. Mariann Verheyen's costume design perfectly encapsulates the romance of the Regency period, but what you'll notice is the color of the costumes, I think. So, on first blush, it looks like all the women are wearing white, but if you look closely, there are very slight differences in these colors. While most of the women are in shades of off-white, ivory, blush pink, Emma is the only character that's in pure white, and there are then echoes between her costume and the scenic design. We understand then, as our eyes are shifting from these drapes to Emma, that we are very much in her world—in her space.

These costumes also help us to see a difference in station between all of the women onstage, both in silhouette, color, and in fabric. So, while all of the women are in soft, neutral shades, like I said, Emma's the only one in pure white, and the further these characters are from white, the further they are below Emma in status. So, you'll see this in differences between Emma and Jane Fairfax and her aunt, Miss Bates. While they're in sort of off-white and taupes, Harriet is in sort of a blush pink dress, there's kind of a stark contrast between Emma and Harriet.

The character that comes closest to Emma in terms of color is Mrs. Elton, and she is a sort of larger than life character that seeks to take over Emma's place in Highbury in a lot of ways, and she is sort of a disrupting force to Emma's life. You'll meet her at the top of Act Two. She's played by Bri Sudia. Bri Sudia's been on our stage quite a few times, and for those of you who have seen her before, she is an extremely tall woman and she uses every inch of that height next to Lora Lee Gayer's sort of diminutive stature to great comic effect.

**Mrs. Elton (Bri Sudia)**

YOO HOO! Miss Woodhouse, I am so happy to finally make your acquaintance. Mr. E has spoken of you often.

**Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer)**

Mrs. Elton, I cannot express my anticipation of meeting you at last.

**Mrs. Elton (Bri Sudia)**

Oh yes. I have heard it said on more than one occasion that my particular charms are of benefit to any community of high standing.

**Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer)**

Vanity must always be forgiven, you know, because there is no hope for a cure.

**SBT:** Another way that the costumes and the scenic design are sort of in conversation with one another is through the way that space is defined. So, when we're inside, when we're in these interior spaces, you'll see a stark difference, for example, between Emma's Hartfield, which sort of has an imposing entrance, decadent chandeliers, soft furniture, and the Bates home, which is pretty stark by contrast. There's a modest dining table, simple hard furniture, and strangely, those drapes that take over the entire stage, whenever we're in the Bates home, they almost seem to disappear.

Finally, look to Scott Davis' floor design. It can play—kind of—tricks on your eyes once the lights are up. You'll see sort of, it looks like wood planks, and in the middle, you'll see sort of a blonde wood rectangle, and outside of that, the whole stage is painted kind of a grass green. We sort of get the sense that there's Hartfield, so Emma's sort of carefully confined, controlled, defined space, and we sort of play within that blonde wood rectangle, and then everything that's outside of Hartfield, everything that's outdoors, and it's when Emma steps into that space outside of her own that she sort of starts to lose her balance.

During this production, you're going to see the world through Emma's eyes, and we fall in love with her, we do, or at least we fall in love with Lora Lee Gayer's interpretation of Emma, but it's a bit confusing, because though we love her, we're not really sure if we like her. When Austen sat down to write this novel, she wrote that she planned to "take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like." Another essay in your program is by Stuart Sherman. In that essay, he'll dissect that line a little bit more, so I'll leave that good work to him. What I want to talk about is what makes her unlikeable and how does she get us to like her throughout the two and a half hours that we'll be with her today?

Gordon's musical shows us every worst part of Emma, and yet we're drawn to her anyway. She's both arrogant and clueless about the feelings of others, not to mention her own, but her frankness somehow makes her charming despite the fact that she's meddling. She's in the middle of everyone's business. She's quite a snob. She encourages Harriet to reject Robert Martin on the basis that she can't imagine that anyone who she's close with would marry someone of his status. But Emma's self-aware in a way. She sings at one point, "snobbery and arrogance only look good on me."



Emma is also jealous, and she's insecure. In Austen's novel, Emma is often asked to perform, whether it's to paint, sing, or play the piano, and it's understood that a woman of her status would have excelled at all of these because she would have had plenty of time to practice. Austen's novel suggests that Emma doesn't really, and Paul Gordon's adaptation really makes this explicit. You'll see this in a scene where she's asked to paint Harriet Smith's portrait, and everyone's reactions.

You'll see this again. There's a dinner party, and sort of after dinner, we're gathered around the piano, and Emma is asked to play the piano and sing for everyone. So, watch as she sort of switches so quickly between her inner and outer life. You know, she's singing for everyone, and then she'll sort of take a step back and she's only performing for us, and she's telling us what's going on in her mind. She's expressing all of her jealousy and anxiety in that moment and all of her most deeply held insecurities, because there is someone in the room who is good at all of the things that she's not so good at, and that's her self-proclaimed nemesis, Jane Fairfax. So, in this scene, we get an immediate juxtaposition between Jane and Emma, not only in their talents, but also in their temperaments.

### **Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer)**

*Singing*

Sweet sister Mary

Golden Hair

She walks in fields

Of proud red roses

Sweet sister Mary

Takes my hand

What is he saying to Jane Fairfax?

I wish I had some talent

Why is she leaning on him?

Is this a match?

I hate my voice

I wish I'd played a little better

It would hide my utter shame

### **Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer) and Frank Churchill (Devin DeSantis)**

Sweet sister Mary...

**SBT:** But she excels, nevertheless, in everything that she does, whether it's painting or language or singing or playing the piano. She's kind, she's modest, she's humble, and in many ways, she is the heroine we would expect from a Jane Austen novel, but nevertheless, we're in Emma's world.

The only real exception to this, to sort being inside Emma's headspace throughout the entire performance, is Harriet Smith's few moments when she turns to the audience to confess her own inner turmoil. So, you'll see this in her song, aptly titled, "Mr. Robert Martin."

She tells Emma of a very tempting offer of marriage, which Emma, of course, finds abhorrent.

**Harriet Smith (Ephie Aardema)**

Yes, but what shall I say? Oh, Miss Woodhouse, do advise me

**Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer)**

I cannot give you my opinion except to say that I would be, um, upset if you were to say yes. I say this to you as a friend but do not think that I would want to influence you.

**Harriet Smith (Ephie Aardema)**

So, you think that I should say "no"? I had no notion that he liked me so very much.

**Emma Woodhouse (Lora Lee Gayer)**

Not for the world could I advise you either way. You must be the best judge of your own happiness. If you are absolutely certain that you prefer Mr. Martin to every other person in the world; if you find him the most agreeable man you have ever met, or are likely to ever meet, then why should you hesitate?

**SBT:** While, in Austen's book, the connection between Harriet and Robert is kind of lost outside of the book's book-ending chapters, so to speak—in this musical, it really comes to the foreground, their relationship, and their fondness for one another, and this constantly reminds us of Emma's sort of wrong-headedness.

I mentioned the lights a little bit, and the way the light catches on the drapes that you'll see onstage. Donald Holder's lighting design gives us insight into Emma's sort of swells of emotion throughout the production through the use of light because he has a blank canvas to work on. But watch for the moments when it's actually Harriet whose emotions are sort of taking over the stage, when she's expressing her innermost desires and wants, to us, to the audience, and we see her sort of take over.

This is a departure from the book. We don't ever really get to see inside Harriet's mind in Austen's novel, but with Ephie Aardema as Harriet Smith, it actually becomes a most welcome deviation. You'll see this, too, in the Highbury ball whenever Harriet is snubbed by Mr. and Mrs. Elton. In this scene, Harriet will try to convince us, the audience, well she's trying to convince everyone onstage that she's having a great time, and yet, she shows us that she's actually deeply humiliated and consoling herself with an entire bottle of champagne.

**Harriet Smith (Ephie Aardema)**

*Singing*

LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA

Humiliation

I'm somewhat unbearably horrified standing alone

Humiliation

Still a delightful crowd,

Is that Moet and Chandon?

I'll drink the whole bottle

And vomit on somebody's gown

LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA

**SBT:** This is also one of the very few times that Lora Lee Gayer is offstage. It leaves room for some of the other characters to come forward. And you'll see this again in sort of a show-stopping ballad by Brad Standley, as Mr. Knightley, as he turns to the audience and confesses his feelings.

**Brad Standley (Mr. Knightley)**

*Singing*

Emma

My heart wants what it wants

And it haunts me constantly when I'm with you

Emma

My soul lies at your feet

I have been discreet, but now I'm overdue

And if I never hold you, if I never touch you

If I never have the chance to quite express what I'm most hopeful of

Then I will never

I will never know love

**SBT:** And shows us that he loves her for the arrogant, snobby, stubborn brat that she is, not necessarily despite those things, but because of them. I couldn't help but think of Colonel Brandon's ballad "The Wrong Side of Five and Thirty" when Sean Allan Krill sort of stops the whole show to tell us how he feels about Marianne, and so I do think that there are some resonances there.

In this moment when Mr. Knightley is sort of taking over the stage, it harkens back to Austen's novel when, it's in Volume 3, Chapter 5, when the point of view, even though we're still in that third person narrative, shifts to Mr. Knightley's point of view, and we see him angst over Emma's budding relationship with Frank Churchill.

What I think is most interesting about this ballad is it defies the restraint the we see from these characters throughout the entire production, and instead we see Mr. Knightley's—and we hear Mr. Knightley's—desire, which is sort of surprisingly sensual in a lot of ways, and not at all what we might expect from the sort of chastity of Austen's upper crust.

But this really brings me back to the question of “why do we like Emma?” How does she get us to like her? I think it's for all of the same reasons that Knightley loves her. We see her for who she is, who she can be, and she ultimately doesn't disappoint us. So, I've asked you to pay attention to those moments when you find yourself sort of resistant to Emma and then drawn into her charms. I sort of found myself flipping back and forth as I was reading the novel, and then I felt the same thing as I was watching this production.

And so, I think that, again, we don't have a musical here that's trying to recreate the novel, but it does give a sense of sort of capturing the experience of reading Austen's novel.

The last thing I want to sort of touch on before we go is why Austen? Why Austen at a Shakespeare theater? And I think it's because we see resonances between Austen and Shakespeare as authors and canonical figures. They both had mysterious personal lives, they both have a long history of scholars trying to find ways to read into their works and find connections to their personal life. For example, is Austen more Elinor from *Sense and Sensibility*, or is she more of a Lizzie Bennet, is she more of an Emma? And we don't know, we just don't have enough information.

Also, Shakespeare and Austen are both simultaneously popular and highbrow. We have ways in which to make these works that are hundreds of years old more accessible, whether it's through a film adaptation like *Clueless* or *10 Things I Hate About You* or a musical that you'll see downstairs, but then also we have whole departments in the academy that are dedicated to sort of diving into these works and sort of continuing to lift them up as paragons of English literature.

But I also think there's a kind of devotion, a similar kind of devotion, that we see between those who love Shakespeare and those who love Austen, whether it's through knowing every bit of their canon or even a pilgrimage to Stratford-upon-Avon or to Jane Austen's gravesite.

Ultimately, I think it comes from a fascination with both Shakespeare and Austen, that comes from a lasting desire to linger with them, whether it's with them as an author or with the characters that sort of spring from their mind. If we could hear one more soliloquy or listen to one more song or read one more page, and this desire to continue to help these characters live and last and to understand more and more of them. I've

seen *Emma* twice now, and at the end of each performance, I found myself really sad that it was over, that my time with these characters had ended, and it's in those moments of wanting to linger behind with both Shakespeare and Austen that I think that they have their power. So long after the story ends, we want to continue to know more and to be with them more. I hope you'll feel the same. Thank you.

**Sara B.T. Thiel:** That's all for this episode of ASIDES. Be sure to come back next week. CST Scholar-in-Residence Dr. Regina Buccola will share with us the histories of King Henry VIII's six wives.

**Regina Buccola:** Divorced, beheaded, died after childbirth. Divorced, beheaded, and finally: widowed!

**SBT:** Do you have a question about something you heard in this episode? Would you like to share one of your favorite CST memories with the ASIDES team? You can email us at [asides@chicagoshakes.com](mailto:asides@chicagoshakes.com) or leave a voicemail at 312-667-5631, and we'll respond in a future episode.

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Thanks for joining us!