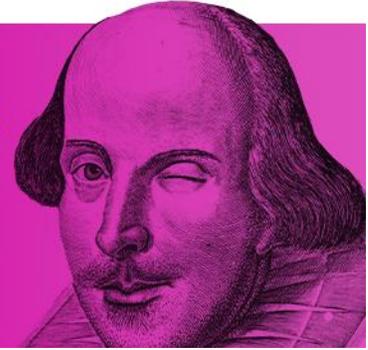


ASIDES



ASIDES 1.5: LOVE'S LABOR'S LOST

Date: May 19, 2020

Featuring: Rebecca L. Fall, Sara B.T. Thiel, Alex Goodrich, John Tufts, Nate Burger, Allen Gilmore, Laura Rook, Taylor Blim, Jennie Greenberry, David Lively, James Newcomb, Julian Hester, Steve Pringle, Maggie Portman, Keith Thomas (Composer), Regina Buccola

Rebecca L. Fall: *Love's Labor's Lost* is at the core a play about *language*—about language as a signifier of social status, about language as a way to differentiate men and women, about the ways that language may be used to channel, generate, or sometimes stifle desire.

My name is Rebecca Fall. I work at the Center for Renaissance Studies at the Newberry Library, and I research, write, and teach about Renaissance literature and history, including Shakespeare.

Sara B.T. Thiel: Hello! And welcome to ASIDES from Chicago Shakespeare Theater. I'm Sara B.T. Thiel, Public Humanities Manager at CST. Today's episode features Pre•Amble scholar Dr. Rebecca L. Fall who will introduce us to one of Shakespeare's wittiest, most florid and...in some ways...most challenging comedies: *Love's Labor's Lost*, directed by Marti Maraden in 2017.

What you'll hear today comes from our Pre•Amble program, pre-show talks that take place at CST before most weekend matinees. This talk was originally recorded on February 25, 2017.

Becky is a Program Manager in the Center for Renaissance Studies at the Newberry Library in Chicago. She holds a PhD from Northwestern's Department of English and she's finishing a book that traces the surprising social functions of nonsense writing and silly jokes in Renaissance England. I think you'll find that Becky's expertise in nonsense makes her the perfect person to help us understand *Love's Labor's Lost*.

I'll let Becky take it from here...

RF: When you walk into the theater this afternoon, you'll see an absolutely spectacular stage. It's really breathtakingly beautiful. I gasped when I saw it. You'll enter a lush world in which architectural design and nature seem to blend seamlessly. The thrust stage, the part coming out into the audience, is painted to look like the ground of a forest, a well-tended forest, or a park, so a natural area that's been designed by people. Green spring leaves will scatter across the floor. A staircase that looks like marble will lead upstage to a raised platform. And just to the side of those stairs, a huge, fantastic tree will reach all the way up to the theater's rafters. It's bursting with verdant springtime leaves, beautiful little lanterns hanging from the branches, and those lanterns and those steps offer sort of a reminder that while this looks like a dazzling natural environment, it's a splendid and carefully *cultivated* environment. The backdrop, as well, will be painted to match the tree, a dazzling wall of leaves and branches.

If you find that all this scenery looks familiar, it should: it draws direct inspiration from the eighteenth-century French painter Jean-Honoré Fragonard, famous for his Rococo landscapes and erotic canvases. Fragonard's most celebrated painting is a piece called *The Swing*, that you may recognize from dorm room posters, and it features a beautiful, buxom lady flying through the trees on a wooden swing while a man looks on below.

The juxtaposition in this set design between the bounteous natural world and human cultivation, so we have nature and design next to each other, drawing from a painting—so human artistic design—this is significant beyond just the mere artistic allusion that we've got going on, for the potential conflict between nature and cultivation is a major theme in this play. *Love's Labor's Lost* asks us: how much can we suppress nature—specifically, our natural impulses and desires—in the service of art, design, and cultivation?

The production itself begins with a wordless, extra-textual scene—by which I mean a scene that is not included in the original text of the play.

Bright, cheery music begins

Costard (Alex Goodrich)

Yoo hoo!!

Music continues to underscore

RF: A giggling pair of rustics—a young redheaded wench and a gangly country bumpkin—will scramble across the stage, playing a flirtatious game of tag. They are filled with life and lust and youthful vigor, just like those green springtime leaves on the stage. The rustics, significantly, don't speak, but their shrieks of delight say plenty.

It's intriguing that this production of *this* play begins this way—with a lower-class couple running across the stage, who manage to convey clearly their desire for each other without actually *saying* anything. It's intriguing because in exploring the limits of cultivation, *Love's Labor's Lost* is at the core a play about *language*—about language as a signifier of social status, about language as a way to differentiate men and women, about the ways that language may be used to channel, generate, or sometimes stifle desire, especially lustful desire. So, that wordless extra-textual scene at the beginning, featuring a lower-class couple who are perfectly able to express their desires for each other without any words (thank you very much) sets up a sharp, significant contrast with what's to come in the rest of the play, including the scene immediately following. And it'll make it just how clear this contrast really is.

Just after the country couple rushes off stage, four men will enter: the King of Navarre and his closest *male* companions, Longaville, Dumaine, and the one who is always going to be tardy, Berowne. They are sage. They are as sage and serious as the country couple was playful and earthy. So, the men will wear academic regalia and mortar boards on their heads—you know the kind of traditional robes that you see at a graduation. And they use a *lot* of words.

King of Navarre (John Tufts)

Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live register'd upon our brazen tombs
And then grace us in the disgrace of death;
When, spite of cormorant devouring Time,
The endeavor of this present breath may buy
That honour which shall bate his scythe's keen edge
And make us heirs of all eternity.
Therefore, brave conquerors—for so you are,
That war against your own affections
And the huge army of the world's desires—
Our late edict shall strongly stand in force:
Navarre shall be the wonder of the world.

RF: Before I discuss those words at any more length, I'm going to give you some background on the play, because *Love's Labor's Lost* is really not very well known in Shakespeare's canon. It's rarely assigned in college, let alone high school, and compared to Shakespeare's other plays, it doesn't get performed all that often, though we're seeing this change quite a lot.

The general consensus is that *Love's Labor's Lost* was probably written in 1594 or '95, though some scholars suggest that it was drafted as early as the 1580s. In either case, this puts the play pretty, or even very, early in Shakespeare's career. The first printing of the text hasn't survived, so the earliest print edition that we have dates to 1598, so all that is even pre-1600, so fairly early in the career.

The play is not really well known largely because audiences and scholars alike didn't like it very much for a long time. As far as we know, *Love's Labor's Lost* was never performed at all, or there's no record of it, between 1642 and 1839. This is extraordinary for a Shakespeare play—in particular one that was printed in the famous First Folio of Shakespeare's collected works, published in 1623, which sort of established the original canon of his plays.

One reason that *Love's Labor's* was so lost for so long is that it's a remarkably dense play, even for Shakespeare. There are a lot of topical jokes about French nobility that didn't really register with audiences after the sixteenth century. And the language is self-consciously, quite complicated. The use and abuse of language is really probably the play's central theme. As such, the text consistently draws attention to its own wordplay, and much of the plot centers on various characters working to distinguish themselves based on their mastery of rhetoric. Indeed, one of the main points of conflict in the plot is how different characters—specifically the male characters—privilege speaking eloquently and sounding smart over living well and being compassionate with other people in their communities.

So, the original text of the play opens on the King of Navarre and his three best friends. They are all young men, hardly out of adolescence, and they love learning, wit, and language. They love these things so much that they have decided that they want to form an all-male "Academe," or sort of school where they will just study, just themselves. They vow to spend three years in this "Academe" where they will eschew all sensual distractions: food, sleep, and above all, women. No woman will be allowed to enter within a mile of the court of Navarre. You'll see that this immediately becomes a problem.

Berowne, who's the most wily of these men, he'll be the one that scrambles in late in that first spoken scene. He's famous throughout the region for his sharp wit, and he has some misgivings about making what amounts to a very solemn vow to do this private study for three years.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

So much, dear liege, I have already sworn,
That is, to live and study here three years.
But there are other strict observances:
As, not to see a woman in that term,
Which I hope well is not enrolled there.
And one day in a week to touch no food
And but one meal on every day beside,
The which I hope is not enrolled there.
And then, to sleep but three hours in the night,
And not be seen to wink of all the day—
Which I hope well is not enrolled there.
O, these are barren tasks, too hard to keep,
Not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep!

RF: He worries that the vow will contradict the men's own natural, youthful desires, and he's not wrong, for this vow is motivated more by the afterlife than by anything else. The King of Navarre says right from the outset that they're doing it to be famous after they die. He says, "Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives, / Live registered upon our brazen tombs." He's saying that right at the beginning—he's talking about tombs and death. These are young, vigorous guys in the springtime. What, after all, is life without living? What does it mean to live for an afterlife instead of living for your life in the present?

All the men do take the vow. And naturally, they *immediately* encounter a roadblock to fulfilling their pledge because right after signing it, they learn that a delegation of ladies from the French court is arriving at Navarre to negotiate a financial dispute between Navarre and the King of France.

The Princess of France has come to negotiate this, and she has three ladies with her, Katherine, Maria, and Rosaline, and the dispute that they're negotiating is that France owes Navarre a tribute. He claims they've already sent half of the money, Navarre says we haven't received it, and so they're trying to negotiate the transfer of the territory of Aquitaine to sort of negotiate and fix up this dispute. This gets quite quickly forgotten,

though.

Before the ladies can even arrive, however, the men are distracted by Costard, a rustic buffoon, who has been accused of sleeping with Jaquenetta, a “country wench.” This is the couple who run across the stage in that first extra-textual scene. Costard has been accused by Don Adriano de Armado. He’s a bombastic Spaniard famous for his fantastical language, who has come to court to participate in the all-male “Academe.” It turns out, of course, that Armado is in love with Jaquenetta himself, and many hijinks ensue because of this love triangle.

Don Adriano de Amado (Allen Gilmore)

I do affect the very ground, which is base, where her shoe, which is baser, guided by her foot, which is basest, doth tread. I shall be forsworn, which is a great argument of falsehood, if I love. And how can that be true love which is falsely attempted? Love is a familiar; Love is a devil: there is no evil angel but Love. Yet was Samson so tempted, and he had an excellent strength; yet was Solomon so seduced, and he had a very good wit. Cupid's butt-shaft is too hard for Hercules' club; and therefore too much odds for a Spaniard's rapier. The first and second cause will not serve my turn; the passado he respects not, the duello he regards not: his disgrace is to be called boy; but his glory is to subdue men.

RF: Shortly, however, the Princess of France and her ladies arrive in Navarre. The King and his lords come out to meet the ladies in the park and in doing this, they’re already bending the rules of their vow quite significantly in that they’ve sworn to abjure the company of women entirely. Still, however much they’re bending it in that respect, in light of the pledge, they refuse to admit the women to court and make them camp in the park. This is not something you do with noble ladies when you’re a king. So right from the start we’re setting up something of a battle of the sexes—and a battle of courtesy.

Appropriately, then, it turns out that the ladies are themselves highly learned and very witty, so there are equal foes in this battle. They amuse themselves and each other by engaging in contests of wit and making double entendres. Attending them is an older gentleman named Boyet, who acts as a liaison between the French ladies and the lords of Navarre. He spars verbally with the ladies and eggs on their bawdy, flirtatious repartee. He is sort of the whetstone for their sharp wits.

As all this happens, you should look out for these ladies’ costumes because these are *spectacular* costumes. Feast your eyes on the details whenever you can, the lacing up the back and the tailoring on the bodices. They are fantastic, eighteenth-century-inspired pieces. As such, they speak directly to the French Enlightenment setting in

which this play has been located today. And they draw direct inspiration from the eighteenth-century French painter, Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, a female painter famous for her paintings of Marie Antoinette, other noble ladies, and women and children of a lot of different classes in this period.

The lords of Navarre naturally fall in love with the French ladies right away. The ladies are not only intelligent and charming, but they're very beautiful. But by paying any attention to the ladies at all, they're already really pushing the boundaries of their vow, and it's a vow that they just made five minutes ago, so the conflict comes up immediately.

Despite this vow, desire blossoms among the lords, and they proceed individually to moon at length over their beloved ladies. Initially, though, each one tries to hide his desire because of the vow. He doesn't want to get in trouble for breaking it, so they all write over-the-top love poetry in secret. And as you might expect in sort of a romantic comedy like this, there's a fantastic scene of quadruple eavesdropping, in which they all proceed to overhear each other talking about this and considering breaking the vow by wooing the ladies.

Do pay attention to this hilarious and delightful scene, because it shows a lot of the ways in which this production stages the play's glorification of *language*, the thematic glorification of language. Given this sort of radical proliferation of language in this scene, it is perhaps unsurprising that this is really a turning point for the play to explore where language can go from being useful to being kind of dangerous. It shows just how *powerful*—and *intoxicating*—language can be.

Because after all the men realize that they are all similarly afflicted with desire, they collectively decide to cast away their vow and woo the women. But they do have some misgivings. I mean, it's a big deal to break a formal vow like this, and so the lords agonize over whether or not to do it. Berowne, though, knows what he wants, so he takes charge.

What happens next exemplifies one of the play's most important thematic concerns: the power of language to obscure, persuade, and shift a listener's perspective—or even a listener's understanding of reality and logic. This theme crops up over and over again in the play.

You'll see it, for instance, in an early scene when Costard has been accused of and arrested for sleeping with Jaquenetta. He tries to avoid the charge by subtly shifting the terms of the accusation. He is accused of sleeping with “a lady, a wench, a virgin, a

maid, a damsel," and by shifting the terms of his accusation, he tries to shift blame away from himself.

King of Navarre (John Tufts)

Ay, the best for the worst. But, sirrah, what say you to this?

Costard (Alex Goodrich)

Sir, I confess the wench.

King of Navarre (John Tufts)

Did you hear the proclamation?

Costard (Alex Goodrich)

I do confess much of the hearing it but little of the marking of it.

King of Navarre (John Tufts)

It was proclaimed a year's imprisonment, to be taken with a wench.

Costard (Alex Goodrich)

I was taken with none, sir: I was taken with a damsel.

King of Navarre (John Tufts)

Well, it was proclaimed 'damsel.'

Costard (Alex Goodrich)

This was no damsel, neither, sir; she was a virgin.

King of Navarre (John Tufts)

It is so varied, too; for it was proclaimed 'virgin.'

Costard (Alex Goodrich)

If it were, I deny her virginity: I was taken with a maid.

King of Navarre (John Tufts)

This maid will not serve your turn, sir.

Costard (Alex Goodrich)

This maid will serve my turn, sir.

RF: But Costard, as a country bumpkin, doesn't have the verbal dexterity to do this quite so successfully, and the charge against him sticks. Other characters, though, are masters of the acrobatic form of rhetorical manipulation that today we call *spin*. One of these masters is Berowne.

As the lords sit dejectedly on the ground, agonizing over the conflict between their vows and their desires, Berowne takes over and launches into one of the most spectacular displays of verbal fireworks in a play that's about verbal fireworks. His object here is to convince the lords to abandon their vows and follow their desires, and he goes for it.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain and nourish all the world:
Else none at all in ought proves excellent.
Then fools you were these women to forswear,
Or keeping what is sworn, you will prove fools.
For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love,
Or for love's sake, a word that loves all men,
Or for men's sake, the authors of these women,
Or women's sake, by whom we men are men,
Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves,
Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths.
It is religion to be thus forsworn,
For charity itself fulfills the law,
And who can sever love from charity?

King of Navarre (John Tufts)

Saint Cupid, then! And, soldiers, to the field!

RF: Berowne's language in this scene is really kind of difficult to follow—as is much of the dense and quick-witted repartee in the play. But the staging shows just how powerful this dense language really is here. It makes it hard not to get swept up in what he's saying even when it doesn't seem fully comprehensible.

He accomplishes this by turning their very logic against them. He turns language inside out, redefining the terms of their prior beliefs until they suit his desires. He *spins*. And he literally spins, too, as he whirls around the stage, first talking to one lord and then

another lord and then another lord. He's this verbal acrobat who changes the very parameters of the logic that they've been using until they come out convinced of that it means the exact *opposite* of what they originally agreed was true.

But while this kind of dexterous language is amusing and seductive, the play also suggests that it has the potential to be destructive as well. Those who privilege wit and cleverness over the very *real* humans they are speaking to act, intentionally or not, like bullies. You'll see this in the end when Rosaline condemns Berowne for his "wounding" rhetoric. But it happens at a number of other plot points, too. As you watch today, look out for the different ways in which this CST production alludes to language's potential violence.

There's that *memento mori* early in that first speech when the men choose a life of intellectual asceticism over food, sleep, and love. It's an image that connects death and decay with the impulse to put language and cleverness above everything else. Another scene features Holofernes, a pedantic schoolmaster, and Sir Nathaniel, a curate, or a clergyman—both of whom are desperate to show off their learning and their mastery of rhetoric. Sir Nathaniel is, at one point, working very hard on a lovely charcoal drawing of a woman's face in profile. But as Holofernes gets sort of worked up about the proper pronunciation of specific words, watch what he does to the drawing. It's very unkind, and it's even kind of violent.

Words, language, and verbal wit—these things, the play suggests, can be remarkably destructive forces. Sticks and stones can break your bones, but words can hurt, too. The French ladies, though, are clever enough to resist the lords' seductive spin, even if they find it quite cute. So, they decide to have some fun with it, so when the lords come to entertain them dressed ridiculously as Russians...

The sounds of traditional Russian music and dancing plays as the four men of Navarre enter the stage to dance in disguise for the four French ladies.

RF: ...the ladies take revenge for the men's wounding spin. They disguise themselves as well, confusing the lords and spinning the spin back at them.

The result is that by means of a dramatic structure that pits men against women, the play manages to condemn the *misuse* of language while also celebrating wit and cleverness. You *can* be witty, it shows, without being cruel. And wit without cruelty is right, natural, and the way to go. It bonds communities, for it is the ladies here who really come out on top, both verbally and ethically. Teasing can be amusing, they show us, but it must be tempered with real feeling and compassion.

To do this right, it does require some sense of accountability, so watch for a scene when Rosaline and Katherine go a little too far with each other. The princess intervenes, forcing them to pay attention to the *real* effect that their words have on each other.

Rosaline (Laura Rook)

What's your dark meaning, mouse, of this light word?

Katherine (Taylor Blim)

A light condition in a beauty dark.

Rosaline (Laura Rook)

We need more light to find your meaning out.

Katherine (Taylor Blim)

You'll mar the light by taking it in snuff;
Therefore I'll darkly end the argument.

Rosaline (Laura Rook)

Look what you do, you do it still i' the dark.

Katherine (Taylor Blim)

So do not you, for you are a light wench.

Rosaline (Laura Rook)

Indeed I weigh not you, and therefore light.

Katherine (Taylor Blim)

You weigh me not? O, that's you care not for me.

Rosaline (Laura Rook)

Great reason; for 'past cure is still past care.'

Princess of France (Jennie Greenberry)

Well bandied both; a set of wit well play'd.

RF: And, as that scene suggests, this kind of recognition and accountability takes practice. And, as the rest of the production implies, men in general have some way to go in making that distinction and practicing this awareness.

At the end of the play, Don Armado, Holofernes, and Sir Nathaniel join with Costard and Armado's page to perform a pageant called *The Nine Worthies* for the nobles. They hope to impress the lords and ladies with their learning and wit, but of course—as plays-within-plays in Shakespeare often go—it's a disaster. Throughout the show, the lords heckle the performers in crueler and crueler ways while the ladies look on in concern. Watch the staging as this happens, watch the expressions on the ladies' faces, and compare that with what's going on with the lords. And take note that the French gentleman, Boyet, is, in this staging, sitting with the lords of Navarre

This is significant, because it shows that the problem in this play isn't a matter of French gentility being opposed to incivility in Navarre. Instead, we see *feminine* behavior and female community contrasted with *masculine* attitudes and male fraternity, and in this particular instance, the results are not very pretty.

Holofernes (David Lively)

Judas I am—

Dumaine (Julian Hester)

A Judas!

Holofernes (David Lively)

Not Iscariot, sir.

Judas I am, yclipped Maccabaeus.

Dumaine (Julian Hester)

Judas Maccabaeus clipt is plain Judas.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

A kissing traitor. How art thou proved Judas?

Holofernes (David Lively)

Judas I am—

Dumaine (Julian Hester)

The more shame for you, Judas.

Holofernes (David Lively)

What mean you, sir?

Boyet (James Newcomb)

To make Judas hang himself.

Holofernes (David Lively)

Begin, sir; you are my elder.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

Well followed: Judas was hanged on an elder.

Holofernes (David Lively)

I will not be put out of countenance.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

Because thou hast no face.

Holofernes (David Lively)

What is this?

Boyet (James Newcomb)

A cittern-head.

Dumaine (Julian Hester)

The head of a bodkin.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

A Death's face in a ring.

Longaville (Madison Neiderhauser)

The face of an old Roman coin, scarce seen.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

Saint George's half-cheek in a brooch.

And now forward; for we have put thee in countenance.

Holofernes (David Lively)

You have put me out of countenance.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

False; we have given thee faces.

Holofernes (David Lively)

But you have out-faced them all.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

An thou wert a lion, we would do so.

Boyet (James Newcomb)

Therefore, as he is an ass, let him go.

And so adieu, sweet Jude! Nay, why dost thou stay?

Dumaine (Julian Hester)

For the latter end of his name.

Berowne (Nate Burger)

For the ass to the Jude; give it him—Jude

ALL

ASS!

Berowne (Nate Burger)

Away!

Holofernes (David Lively)

This is not generous, not gentle, not humble.

Boyet (James Newcomb)

A light for Monsieur Jude-ass! It grows dark, he may stumble.

Princess of France (Jennie Greenberry)

Alas, poor Maccabaeus, how hath he been baited!

RF: The pageant itself is cut short just before it completely falls apart. And in that moment when it's cut short, everything changes. You'll see the light change: immediately, day starts to fade to night; the springtime quality of the lighting gives way to a colder winter palette. And silence comes over a play that has, up until now, been filled to bursting with chatter and words and wit.

This ending when everything changes is one reason that scholars and audiences struggled to make sense of the play for so long, and why it was condemned to relative obscurity for two centuries.

In many ways, *Love's Labor's Lost* looks like a quintessential Shakespearean comedy, in the tradition of *Much Ado About Nothing* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in that it involves multiple couples, a battle of the sexes, and a few extra buffoons thrown in for good measure. But it doesn't quite end like a comedy should.

The two *primary* hallmarks of comedy in the Renaissance—what absolutely *defines the genre*—are 1) it ends in marriage, and 2) there are no deaths. Think about this as the production wraps up tonight. Where does it all wind up in relation to those two essential factors? Because of that complicated ending, scholars have debated for a long time whether or not this actually even qualifies as a comedy. It certainly is funny, and for the most part, it's very light-hearted, but the play really tests the limits of the genre.

It's worth pointing out that the dense, difficult language in this play has often seemed alienating to audiences. It's hard to follow by ear, and it's easy to get lost in the puns on puns and find that some of the play's clever wit goes right over one's head. But here is how the play itself asks you to respond to that complexity and perplexity: don't worry about it. Just go with it. It's a difficult play on purpose, and you do not *have* to grasp all of it immediately to enjoy it.

Indeed, a number of scholars over the last few years have demonstrated that audiences in Shakespeare's time wouldn't have *expected* to go to a play and understand everything that they heard. We now think that we can't appreciate Shakespeare unless we get every line and understand every allusion and get every little piece of cleverness. But that's really a modern way of "doing" theater. Shakespeare's audiences were mixed: nobles watched alongside poets, who stood next to illiterate laborers. There are highbrow jokes that you'll appreciate if you're fluent in classical philosophy, but there are also plenty of fart and phallus jokes to enjoy otherwise. In all of these plays, and in particular *Love's Labor's Lost*, they ask you to take what you can get in the moment, savor it, and don't worry about the rest. The play is here to entertain on many different levels.

It's also here to remind you that everything has a season, even delight and entertainment. The play ends with a song. It's about the difference between spring and winter. Spring is lovely: it's fun and warm and green and filled with the calls of the cuckoo bird. But winter, where things are colder, and slower, and sadder, is not without

its own joy or beauty.`

The Ensemble makes the sounds of wind and a winter storm.

Ensemble

When all aloud the wind doth blow
And coughing drowns the parson's saw

Dull (Steve Pringle)

And birds sit brooding in the snow

Holofernes (David Lively)

And Marian's nose looks red and raw,

Ensemble

When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl.

Holofernes (David Lively)

Tu-whit,
Tu-who.

Ensemble

Tu-whit,
Tu-who.
A merry note.

Jacquenetta (Maggie Portman)

While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

RF: That's what *Love's Labor's Lost* ultimately teaches us. It reminds us not to be distracted by trying to be clever, or to force nature to bend to our own misguided desire for glory. It's about *learning*—but it's about *learning* to accept and invest in our communities without forcing them to fit our own assumptions about what they should be. It's ultimately about having compassion for ourselves, and the other people around us. Being clever is nice for a time, but it's not *real*, it's not natural, and it doesn't last. What

is real, and what is true, and what does last are kindness, and graciousness, and acceptance of what will come.

Thank you.

Sara B.T. Thiel: That's all for this episode of ASIDES. Be sure to come back next week. For our sixth episode, 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 or leave a voicemail at 312-667-5631, and we'll respond in a future episode.

Are you enjoying ASIDES? Make sure to subscribe and leave us a review. Your comments will help us shape future episodes and content.

ASIDES is presented by the John W. and Jeanne M. Rowe Inquiry and Exploration Series.

Please consider donating to Chicago Shakespeare's Brave New World Campaign. To join us in supporting audiences, artists, students, and our community, visit chicagoshakes.com/.

Thanks for joining us!