

Who Was William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare

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William Shakespeare (c. 23 April 1564 – 23 April 1616) was an English playwright, poet and actor. He is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon" or simply "the Bard". His extant works, including collaborations, consist of some 39 plays, 154 sonnets, three long narrative poems and a few other verses, some of uncertain authorship. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright. Shakespeare remains arguably the most influential writer in the English language, and his works continue to be studied and reinterpreted.

Shakespeare was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. At the...

Religious views of William Shakespeare

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The religious views of William Shakespeare are the subject of an ongoing scholarly debate dating back more than 150 years. The general assumption about William Shakespeare's religious affiliation is that he was a conforming member of the established Church of England. However, many scholars have speculated about his personal religious beliefs, based on analysis of the historical record and of his published work, with claims that Shakespeare's family may have had Catholic sympathies and that he himself was a secret Catholic.

Life of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was an actor, playwright, poet, and theatre entrepreneur in London during the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean eras. He was baptised

William Shakespeare was an actor, playwright, poet, and theatre entrepreneur in London during the late Elizabethan and early Jacobean eras. He was baptised on 26 April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, England, in the Holy Trinity Church. At the age of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children. He died in his home town of Stratford on 23 April 1616, aged 52.

Though more is known about Shakespeare's life than those of most other Elizabethan and Jacobean writers, few personal biographical facts survive, which is unsurprising in the light of his social status as a commoner, the low esteem in which his profession was held, and the general lack of interest of the time in the personal lives of writers. Information about his life derives from public rather than private...

Sexuality of William Shakespeare

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The sexuality of William Shakespeare has been the subject of debate. It is known from public records that he married Anne Hathaway and had three children with her; scholars have examined their relationship through documents, and particularly through the bequests to her in his will. Some historians have speculated

Shakespeare had affairs with other women, based on contemporaries' written anecdotes of such affairs and sometimes on the "Dark Lady" figure in his sonnets. Some scholars have argued he was bisexual, based on analysis of the sonnets; many, including Sonnet 18, are love poems addressed to a man (the "Fair Youth"), and contain puns relating to homosexuality. Whereas, other scholars criticized this view stating that these passages are referring to intense platonic friendship, rather than...

Memorials to William Shakespeare

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William Shakespeare has been commemorated in a number of different statues and memorials around the world, notably his funerary monument in Stratford-upon-Avon (c. 1623); a statue in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, London, designed by William Kent and executed by Peter Scheemakers (1740); and a statue in New York's Central Park by John Quincy Adams Ward (1872).

Influence of William Shakespeare

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William Shakespeare's influence extends from theater and literatures to present-day movies, Western philosophy, and the English language itself. William Shakespeare is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the history of the English language, and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. He transformed European theatre by expanding expectations about what could be accomplished through innovation in characterization, plot, language and genre. Shakespeare's writings have also impacted many notable novelists and poets over the years, including Herman Melville, Charles Dickens, and Maya Angelou, and continue to influence new authors even today. Shakespeare is the most quoted writer in the history of the English-speaking world after the various writers of the Bible; many of his quotations and neologisms...

Portraits of Shakespeare

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No contemporary physical description of William Shakespeare is known to exist. The two portraits of him that are the most famous (both of which may be posthumous) are the engraving that appears on the title-page of the First Folio, published in 1623, and the sculpture that adorns his memorial in Stratford upon Avon, which dates from before 1623. Experts and critics have argued that several other paintings from the period may represent him, and more than 60 portraits purporting to be of Shakespeare were offered for sale to the National Portrait Gallery within four decades of its foundation in 1856, but in none of them has Shakespeare's identity been proven.

There is no concrete evidence that Shakespeare ever commissioned a portrait. However, it is thought that portraits of him did circulate...

Shakespeare's plays

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Shakespeare's plays are a canon of approximately 39 dramatic works written by the English playwright and poet William Shakespeare. The exact number of plays as well as their classifications as tragedy, history, comedy, or otherwise is a matter of scholarly debate. Shakespeare's plays are widely regarded as among the

greatest in the English language and are continually performed around the world. The plays have been translated into every major living language.

Many of his plays appeared in print as a series of quartos, but approximately half of them remained unpublished until 1623, when the posthumous First Folio was published. The traditional division of his plays into tragedies, comedies, and histories follows the categories used in the First Folio. However, modern criticism has labelled some...

List of William Shakespeare screen adaptations

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As of November 2023, the Internet Movie Database lists Shakespeare as having writing credit on 1,800 films, including those under production but not yet released. The earliest known production is King John from 1899.

List of works by William Shakespeare

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