

Jayne Seagrave

Excerpts from *All the World's a Stage*

Excerpt from The Prologue

My other fascination with Bard has been with its unique approach to marketing and the way it has managed to sell itself to the population of Vancouver and visitors. Unlike other theatre companies who depend significantly upon government support and Canada Council for the Arts grants to operate and survive, Bard's primary source of income is through ticket sales, corporate and individual donors and selling to capacity crowds – a rarity in the theatre world in Vancouver and across the globe. Vancouverites believe in and love Bard. They were carefully, slowly courted to appreciate and support the company. In 2013 TripAdvisor listed Bard as the fourth best tourist attraction in Vancouver, while the Lonely Planet Travel Guides included Bard in a list of the top ten Shakespeare Festivals in the World. And all this has been achieved in the space of relatively few years.

Excerpt from ACT I

I recollect little about my (compulsory) Shakespeare education which the British education curriculum required all sixteen year olds to tackle during the 1970s. What I do remember during these studies was Shakespeare draws on a number of themes and one of these is 'fate'. Think about 'star crossed lovers' in Romeo and Juliet. I have always liked the idea of fate – 'that consequence yet hanging in the stars' guiding our lives. I like it because it denies personal responsibility. The fact there could be a God (or Gods) playing with my life stipulates when the wrong decision is made it is really not my fault. And likewise, when good things happen, this too is only the result of a higher being responding to my prayers. Of course this position is juxtaposed with the cliché 'you make your own luck.' This Act on Christopher Gaze has elements of both trains of thought. As I came to learn more about my Protagonist and the direction of his life there were elements of luck and fortune and fate, but also a strong personal drive which had nothing to do with chance and everything to do with his own attributes, the luck of birth and the family advantage this awarded, together with fortuitous relationships.

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Excerpt from The Epilogue

Arts communities and their extended families are the life blood of a community. When thinking what constitutes a city is it is not just physical buildings and supporting infra structure. It is walking, going to work, taking the kids to school, riding a bike, eating and drinking in bars and restaurants, taking part in or watching sports and having access to cultural institutions. Arts communities contribute to a vibrant livable city. This is what has been permanently created at Bard's new offices, it's second (but permanent) home – the BMO Theatre Centre. Here Bard is deeply embedded in the community. People can walk by the large windows and see a costume shop, the entrance to the foyer, the spacious bar, the kitchen area with actors socializing and attend matinee and evening performances at the Goldcorp Stage. The family is right in the midst of the apartments, coffee bars, cycling tracks and dog walkers. Bard is now not just the temporary summertime physical presence defined by iconic white tents by the ocean at Vanier Park. After twenty-eight years an off-season 'home sweet home' has at last been achieved.