MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING
ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL

by William Shakespeare
directed by Richard Rose
Apr 22 – May 31, 2015 in the Mainspace

Resource Guide

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Play Synopsis

The billionaire-business mogul Lord Tata, his right-hand man CFO Benedict, and his protégé, Darius, honour Mayor Ranjit of Brampton with a visit to his home. There, Darius confides in Benedict and Lord Tata that he is in love with Sita, Ranjit’s daughter. Lord Tata woos Sita and wins Ranjit’s approval on Darius’ behalf, and the two seem set for a very happy future. Meanwhile, Benedict spars with Thara, Ranjit’s niece: both of them look with contempt on Sita and Darius - who are in love - and vow that they will never marry. After Lord Tata’s success bringing Sita and Darius together, he convinces his friends to help in a ruse that will bring the contemptuous Benedict and Thara together in love. As they go about laying their trap for Benedict and Thara, Jovanni Tata, Lord Tata’s vengeful half-brother, and his underling, Dalal, lurk in the background, plotting against the marriage of Sita and Darius, and the happiness of Ranjit's whole household.

From the Cultural Consultant: Sharada Eswar

Brampton demonstrates the new vision of Canada and Richard’s adaptation of Much Ado About Nothing reflects this vision. With its swelling and diverse population Brampton becomes not just a setting for the play, but holds a mirror to the cultural fabric, the language, the ethnic makeup and the economy of the city. Two-thirds of the city’s population are members of visible minorities and Punjabis (both Hindus and Sikhs) constitute a significant number. They are affluent, have flourishing, thriving businesses, play an active role in the political landscape, have strong family values and continue to live as joint families. With a significantly younger face than most of Canada, most of them are multi-lingual speaking, Punjabi and Hindi as easily as English. All of this impacts the play, including the set design, the costumes, the music, the songs, the choreography, and we even have the matriarch of the house speaking Hindi.
• Carabram


http://www.carabram.org/

Brampton’s Carabram is a multicultural celebration that the city holds each summer. Volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds founded Carabram in 1982 because of their desire to celebrate cross-cultural relationships and diversity. The first event included pavilions from West Indian, Ukrainian, Scottish, and Italian communities. 45,000 visitors had visited 18 pavilions by 2003. Take a look at the website for more information on Carabram festivities and dates.

• A Walk Through Time - Downtown Heritage Walking Tour (Brampton):


http://www.brampton.ca/EN/Arts-Culture-Tourism/digital/Heritage-Walking-Tour-Book/index.html#?page=0

This comprehensive and extensive package was created in 2012. The package offers a self-guided tour of the city, looking at its “distinctive and vibrant built, natural, and cultural heritage” (p. 3). The package includes a message from the former mayor
(the new mayor was elected in 2015). It also includes sections that explain the history of the city of Brampton with a timeline, heritage plaques, the walking tour, and a map. This resource is useful for learning more about the history of Brampton, its geography, its architecture and its cultural heritage.

- **Demographic Overview**


  This document provides readers with a general overview of population trends, statistics, and social shifts in the city of Brampton. Please see one example graph below:


  - **City of Brampton Website**


    The city of Brampton’s website is easy to navigate and provides clear information about what is currently happening in the city and its upcoming events. There are also sections that provide information on the city’s economic development, growth management, corporate excellence, environmental stewardship, and community engagement. You can learn more about Brampton’s residents, businesses, city hall, arts, culture, and tourism. This website is relevant for Tarragon audiences because it provides information on current happenings in the city of Brampton as well as the Mayor’s vision for the future.
- **Office of the Mayor Release**

[http://www.brampton.ca/EN/City-Hall/Mayor-Office/Documents/Mayors%20of%20Canadas%20Big%20Cities.pdf](http://www.brampton.ca/EN/City-Hall/Mayor-Office/Documents/Mayors%20of%20Canadas%20Big%20Cities.pdf)

This document can be found on the city of Brampton’s website under the Mayor’s media release section. This document articulates the new Mayor’s vision for the future of Brampton and highlights some of the changes that are occurring as a result of the new Mayor’s mandate. The current Mayor, Linda Jeffrey, attended the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Big Cities Summit: *Canada’s Cities, Canada’s Future* to call on federal representatives to work with cities to help address Canada’s economic challenges. This document emphasizes the importance of an up and coming city, such as Brampton, and the ways cities of this kind can be utilized to aid Canada’s economy. A few specific goals outlined in the document include “a coordinated focus on cutting commute times, including hard targets, sustainable levels of infrastructure investment across all orders of government, and a long-term plan to make housing more affordable for all Canadians” (Media Release, February 5, 2015).

- **Office of the Mayor Release**

"Vision for the Future - “We Have All the Ingredients Necessary for Long Term Success”: Mayor Jeffrey." *Office of the Mayor.* Director of Communications, 10 Feb. 2015. Web. 28 Apr. 2015.  
[http://www.brampton.ca/EN/City-Hall/Mayor-Office/Documents/State%20of%20the%20City.pdf](http://www.brampton.ca/EN/City-Hall/Mayor-Office/Documents/State%20of%20the%20City.pdf)

This document can also be found on the city of Brampton’s website under the Mayor’s media release section. This document discusses Mayor Jeffrey’s plans for the economic future of the city. This media release was made after the Mayor gave a State of the City address hosted by the Brampton Board of Trade. Mayor Jeffrey comments on the need to, “restore faith in our local government” (Media Release, February 10, 2015). She is referring to the financial issues left behind by the previous Mayor, Susan Fennell. The Mayor outlines five key priorities which include: healthcare, attracting university opportunities, sustainable levels of infrastructure investment, fighting gridlock, and creating accountable, open, and transparent government.
Media Resources

- **Brampton’s Culture**


  This blog discusses the many facets of Brampton’s cultural identity. This resource looks at the effect of growth within Brampton from different viewpoints. It brings to light controversial questions about Brampton’s cultural identity.

- **Brampton Suffers Identity Crisis as Newcomers Swell City’s Population**


  This newspaper article looks at the population growth in Brampton. This resource discusses controversies regarding new construction projects in the city and the Punjabi community’s opposition to new townhouse development.

- **How Brampton Demonstrates the New Vision of Canada**


  This article discusses the immigrant population settling in Brampton’s diverse communities. It suggests the proximity to Pearson International Airport is significant. This resource reviews economic changes in industries and their social impact on the city of Brampton.
PHOTOGRAPHS:

- **Then and Now: Brampton's Transformation Over the Decades**


(1985) (Present Day)

VIDEO:

- **How Brampton Provides a Glimpse into Canada’s Future**


Artistic Resources

1. Set Design and Projections

“Ways In”: Things to look for as you watch the play.

These kinds of aerial projections feature in the lighting design. Keep an eye open for how these projections enhance the set.

http://www.flahertytours.ca/images/listings/Gallview%2059/aerial%2059%20gallview%20ln.jpg

https://encrypted-tbn3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcT8pdqOeFpP2_NBf8-4Qy-bb2t4U2PNld63xbKlbQTF4Z23mn1rNg
2. Classical Bharatanatyam Dance
http://novadance.ca/home.html

"Ways In": Things to look for as you watch the play.
As you watch the dance lesson in the first scene, what do you observe about the different women?

3. Modern Bollywood Dance

http://chandrakantha.com/articles/indian_music/nritya/bollywood.html

This website provides a detailed overview of the Bollywood dance commonly used in Indian films and is performed at the end of the play.
Academic Resources

- **Aaja Nach Lai [Come Dance]: Performing and Practicing Identity Among Punjabis in Canada:**


The author suggests that performances of giddha and bhangra are used as a means for expressing authentic qualities of cultural identity, important in diasporic contexts (Punjabis in Canada). This resource relates to Tarragon Theatre’s *Much Ado About Nothing* because it explores Punjabi cultural identity in the context of Brampton.

- **Suburban Constellations: Governance, Land and Infrastructure in the 21st Century by Roger Keil:**


Keil’s Abstract:

In a world of cities, suburbanization is the most visible and pervasive phenomenon. Global sprawl engulfs us but it does so in remarkably differentiated ways. While the single-family home subdivisions of North America remain the “classical case,” there are now many other forms of suburbanism around the globe. The high rise housing estates around many European and Canadian cities, the belts and wedges of squatter settlements in the global south, the burgeoning megacity peripheries between Istanbul and Shanghai and the technopoles and edge cities in all corners of the world are all part of a pervasive trend towards global suburbanisms. Suburban Constellations provides a first account of this global development. 22 of the most well-known global urban scholars analyze the multiple manifestations of suburbanization and suburbanism. They are joined by artistic and illustrative contributions. Overviews of suburbanization trends in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Australia and Asia complete Suburban Constellations.
Critical Questions: Discussion

Pre-Performance Questions:

1. The play is set in the suburb of Brampton. What do you know about this city?
2. What issues might be related to living in an expanding suburb? Have you personally encountered any of these issues? Can you give specific examples?
3. Think of a time when you may have falsely accused someone. How did it make you feel when you found out the truth? What did you do about it? Can you give specific examples?
4. Have you ever been falsely accused of something that you did not do? How did that make you feel? Was it made worse by having someone that you love and respect not believe you?
5. Have you ever experienced gossip that planted doubt in your mind about one of your friends? What did you do with the information? Can you give specific examples?
6. In general, do you think that adults and particularly parents are suspicious of youth? Why or why not? Can you give specific examples?
7. Are there ways in which you feel that you resist parental expectations for your life? In what ways? Can you give specific examples?
8. Do you feel your parents and teachers have certain expectations of you based on gender? Do you agree with these expectations? Why or why not?
9. What messages do we get from our society about courtship? Why is this view accurate or not?
10. Why might we be hesitant to break family tradition or culture?
11. What shifts have you noticed in societal views of what constitutes the idea of a family and sexual relationships?

Post-Performance Questions:

1. How did you see and understand the various attitudes to love presented in the play?
2. How does Sita’s courtship represent traditional gender roles?
3. How does Thara’s attitude about courtship rebel against these traditions? How was Thara resisting her parental expectations?
4. Why might Darius have trusted his friends more than his intended wife?
5. Why did the father distrust his own daughter so quickly? What might this say about his attitude towards women?
6. Have you ever seen a multi-lingual play before? What did the Hindi language add to the telling of the story?
7. How did the projections on the set contribute to the telling of the story?
8. The play begins with a classical dance lesson and ends with a Bollywood style dance. How do these contrasting dance styles support the themes of the play?
9. What might it mean for colonial people to put on plays written by the former colonizer?
10. Why might the play have been adapted in this way?