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### "Taming of the Shrew(s)": Explorations of Gender and Power in Directing an Original Adaptation of William Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew

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**"Taming of the Shrew(s)":  
Explorations of Gender and Power in Directing an Original Adaptation of William  
Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew***

by

**Katharine A. Cognard-Black**

A Proposal Submitted to the Honors Council

For Honors in Theatre

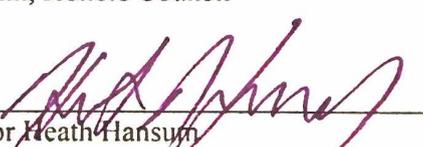
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## Table of Contents

I.	Introduction . . . . .	1
II.	The Plot and Text of <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> . . . . .	9
III.	A Brief Performance and Adaptation History of <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> . . . . .	25
IV.	Adapting and Directing the Play . . . . .	48
	1. The Overall Vision and Approach	
	2. Adapting Shakespeare’s Text	
	3. The Concept and Conceit	
	4. The Scenery, Space, and Props	
	5. The Costumes	
	6. The Process of Auditions and Callbacks	
	7. The Induction: A Framing Device	
	8. Devising the Transitions	
	9. Adapting in Rehearsal	
	10. Directing Each Version	
	11. Version One	
	12. Version Two	
	13. Version Three	
	14. Final Thoughts	
V.	Conclusion . . . . .	89
VI.	Works Cited . . . . .	93
VII.	Supplementary Materials . . . . .	98
	1. Production Recording	
	2. Original Script	
	3. Production Photos	
VIII.	Appendices . . . . .	206
	1. Initial Concept and Production Proposal	
	2. “Taming of the Shrew(s)” Audition Poster and Information Sheet	
	3. Audition Form	
	4. Callbacks Email	
	5. Plan for Callbacks	
	6. Cast List Versions One and Two (Post Recasting Katherine 2)	
	7. Costume List	
	8. Costume Renderings	
	9. Notes from the Dramaturg 1	
	10. Notes from the Dramaturg 2	
	11. Notes from the Dramaturg 3	
	12. Notes from the Dramaturg 4	
	13. Props and Set List	
	14. Actor’s Agreement	
	15. Rehearsal Calendar	
	16. Rehearsal Agenda	
	17. Example of Rehearsal report	

18. Director's Rehearsal notes
19. Production Poster
20. Article in the Bucknell Theatre & Dance Newsletter
21. Show Program
22. Director's Note

## Abstract

In Fall 2021, I directed my own adaptation of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, entitled "Taming of the Shrew(s)." This project served as both the creative portion of my honors thesis as well as a Senior Showcase within the Bucknell Department of Theatre & Dance. From a young age, I have been fascinated by the malleability of Shakespeare's plays, and having acted in and seen multiple productions of *The Taming of the Shrew*, my project began with a desire to take on the gendered complexities of this so-called "problem play." *The Taming of the Shrew* is problematic in its sexist depiction of courting and married life. The central premise revolves around a male, Petruchio, "taming" a female, Katherine, as one might tame a bird or an animal. In the play, Kate is shamed for being a purported "shrew," and it is on the grounds of her "shrewishness" that Petruchio feels entitled to tear her clothes, starve her, and deprive her of sleep. However, the play itself calls into question who the "real" shrew may be, with a secondary character named Curtis saying, "By this reck'ning, he is more shrew than she" (4.1.79).

Because I didn't understand how a text could seemingly be played for laughs at a wife's expense while also showcasing a fierce and brilliant woman, I decided to explore how the very same script could be performed in drastically different ways, especially if actors altered their intonation, movement, and/or interactions with each other. Thus, I adapted Shakespeare's text, cutting it down to a 25-minute script which would be performed three times, with three sets of actors playing Katherine and Petruchio, and with each version taking on a distinct interpretation of their power dynamics. I then cast, rehearsed, and devised additional parts of the script in collaboration with my actors,

particularly a series of interstitial sections where the three Katherines addressed the audience, taking on the blatant sexism within the text. Ultimately, my cast performed the “Taming of the Shrew(s)” three times from September 24<sup>th</sup>–26<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

In this thesis, then, I discuss my process of conceiving of, researching, and adapting Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* into the “Taming of the Shrew(s),” and I also detail my directorial decisions. In Section I, I introduce my project and examine the overall cultural perception of Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew*. In Section II, I analyze how the original text of *The Taming of the Shrew* supports the three distinct interpretations I directed in the “Taming of the Shrew(s).” In Section III, I explore the performance history of *The Taming of the Shrew* from the Renaissance to the present day, touching on previous performances and adaptations that influenced my project. In Section IV, I talk about the process of adapting Shakespeare’s script, including how my adaptation occurred both on the page and also through the rehearsal process, creating moments of theatre in collaboration with my actors. In this section, I also discuss the technical choices I made for the costumes, props, and the set of my production. In Section V, I offer a conclusion about why the “Taming of the Shrew(s)” strives to ask questions about gender and power rather than answer them. Finally, my Supplementary Materials include a recording of the “Taming of the Shrew(s)” performance, my adapted script, and production photos, while my Appendix provides artifacts from the production, including samples of my notes, props and costume sheets, and production posters.

## Artist's Statement

### I. Introduction

William Shakespeare's First Folio divides his plays into three main categories: comedies, histories, and tragedies. How is it possible to differentiate among these classifications? To paraphrase from the 2006 film *Stranger than Fiction*, which explores how conventional narratives are structured, "at the end of the tragedies everybody dies, and at the end of the comedies everyone gets hitched" (Forster). Arguably, the conclusion of histories often feature both narrative elements. While some characters get hitched, some die.

While I acknowledge that death and marriage represent a rather reductive benchmark, that benchmark nevertheless showcases one of the primary differences between comedies and tragedies: comedies are stories about love, and tragedies are stories about treachery and death. The endings of the plays serve to color the rest of the earlier plot. If a character makes a seemingly villainous choice early on in a comedy, by the end of the story that character's actions were just a part of the wacky, lighthearted hijinks that lead the protagonists to their happy ending. For example, whether it's the actions of Duke Frederick exiling and threatening to kill his niece Rosalind in *As You Like It* or Egeus threatening to kill his daughter Hermia if she does not marry the man of his choosing in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, those threats are both resolved at the end of their respective plays. Both Fredrick and Egeus come to see the error of their ways, and by the end their earlier actions hardly matter among the festivities of the final

wedding scenes. In tragedies, actions that will later lead to someone's deaths are not as lighthearted or easily forgivable. In *Othello*, when Iago lies to Othello to convince him to kill his wife, Desdemona, or Lady Macbeth convinces her husband to murder his way to the throne, those actions cannot be forgotten, and at the ends of those plays the audience comes to hate those who have put in motion the tragic deaths that occur by the final scenes.

The distinction between tragedies and comedies, then, becomes the distinction between whether characters will be held accountable for their actions. For this reason, classifying Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* as either a comedy or a tragedy is fundamental to understanding how to interpret the events of the play and the actions the protagonists Katherine and Petruchio take. In Shakespeare's First Folio, *Taming* is listed among the comedies, and for this reason, it seems as though the decision would be fairly simple, yet *Taming* doesn't seem to follow the traditional expectations and rules of a comedy.

*Taming of the Shrew* is set in Padua, Italy. It is the story of an outspoken woman, Katherine, so outspoken, indeed, that she is widely regarded as a "shrew." The *Oxford English Dictionary* points to this common understanding of the word by showing that as early as 1386, in Geoffrey Chaucer's "Merchant's Tale," no less, the word "shrew" was applied to a woman "given to railing or scolding or other perverse or malignant behaviour; frequently a scolding or turbulent wife" ("Shrew"). In contrast, Katherine's younger sister Bianca is mild mannered, sweet, and obedient. Their father Baptista makes a proclamation that no man can marry Bianca until first Katherine is married. This

inspires all of Bianca's suitors to try to find a man to whom Katherine can be married off. Unfortunately, no man in Padua wants to marry Katherine because of her wild reputation, until Petruchio, a traveler in search of his fortunes, comes to town. Petruchio is a brash man who is violent toward his servants and single minded in his search for money. Petruchio hears about the large dowry offered to the man who takes Katherine for a bride and is immediately intrigued. After a brief period of courting, Petruchio resolves to marry Katherine, against her protestations, and he takes on the challenge of "taming" her.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines taming as, "[t]o bring (a wild animal) under the control or into the service of man; to reclaim from the wild state, to domesticate" or "[t]o overcome the wildness or fierceness of (a man, animal, or thing); to subdue, subjugate, curb; to render gentle, tractable, or docile" ("Tame"). Petruchio sets out to tame his new wife in the same way one would tame an animal. In his speech in Act IV, Scene i, Petruchio even likens the process to a master training a hawk. He starves her and denies her free access to food until her only source of food is directly from him. He deprives her of sleep. He completely takes away her freedoms and will not allow her to go anywhere unless she first bends to his will. He offers her fine clothes only to tear them up in front of her, thus stripping away her dignity. In modern parlance, Petruchio gaslights Katherine, making her doubt her own sanity until she is reliant on him for everything. He does this to assert his control over her.

Katherine and Petruchio later travel to Baptista's house for Bianca's wedding. The wedding feast is attended by Baptista, Bianca, Lucentio, the man who has managed to marry Bianca, as well as one of her rejected suitors, Hortensio, and his new bride, a

widow. After dinner, the women draw offstage and the men are left chatting at the table. Unaware of Petruchio's taming of Katherine, the men remark that she is stubborn and shrewish, and, with this, Petruchio disagrees. Hortensio, Lucentio, and Petruchio all wager on the obedience of their wives and plan to call each wife back to the table to see who comes when she is called. Neither Bianca nor the Widow come when called, but Katherine does, and she then delivers a lengthy monologue about women's duties to their husbands.

I contend that *The Taming of the Shrew* is not purely a comedy, even though it is listed as such in most collections of Shakespeare's works. The two protagonists, Katherine and Petruchio, marry by Act III, disrupting the supposed truism that everyone should get married at the *end* of a comedy (as happens in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and other Shakespearean comedies). In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Shakespeare presents his audience with a rarely explored slice of *married* life, and a problematic slice at that, in which an audience sees a woman be subdued, subjugated, and curbed. Katherine is a woman who at the start of the play refuses to acquiesce to the desires of the men in her life, in particular her father. It is for this reason that she is seen as a woman in need of "taming" by the men of Padua, by Petruchio, and by her father. The play's original plot revolves around sexist ideas of romance and marital roles that women should be obedient and controllable. The play also contains scenes of what would today be called domestic violence. For these reasons, *Taming* is a problematic comedy for modern audiences, particularly in the era of the #MeToo movement. This play has been viewed as problematic since the second-wave

feminist movement of the 1960s, as I will discuss in my performance history, but it is even more so today. The #MeToo era is indicative of larger shifts in third-wave-feminism, and #MeToo represents the current cultural reckoning with the unacceptable behavior that men perpetrate against women. From calling out unwanted sexual advances, to domestic violence, to toxic and manipulative relationships, #MeToo represents the push for women to end their silence and give voice to their own agency when they are victimized. Furthermore, with the current onslaught of bans on women's reproductive freedoms, women feel more and more pressure to push back on the repeated attempts of men, governments, and institutions to control women. For all of these reasons, the cultural climate is such that putting on a play that makes light of a woman being "tamed" and controlled raises serious questions about whether producing *Taming* is acceptable. Yet, as Jonathan Miller says in his book *Subsequent Performances*, Shakespeare's plays are forever open to interpretation. The popularity of his plays nearly 500 years after their creation is in part because of their adaptability.

As someone who has seen *Taming* many times growing up, and as someone who participated in an all-female production of the play in ninth grade, the central question that drove my senior directorial project was: Is *The Taming of the Shrew* still worth performing? Of course, *Taming* can be performed, but *should* it be? How can *Taming* be interpreted in new ways? How can directors intervene in the text to present *Taming* in new ways? How might these interventions change the play's meaning and genre designation? Is *Taming* really a comedy, or is it in actuality a tragedy, or perhaps a complicated hybrid of both genres, a comi-tragedy?

In an attempt to answer this constellation of questions, I decided to employ a Practice-as-Research (PaR) approach. In his book, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*, Robin Nelson describes how “PaR involves a research project in which practice is a key method of inquiry and where, in respect of the arts, a practice (creative writing, dance, musical score/performance, theatre/performance, visual exhibition, film or other cultural practice) is submitted as substantial evidence of a research inquiry” (9). To explore my questions about *Taming* through a Practice-as-Research approach, I proposed a Senior Showcase with Bucknell’s Department of Theatre and Dance. Specifically, I proposed to adapt and direct an original meditation on William Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew*. This production would feature a twenty-five-minute reduced script of the play that I planned to present three times, with three different sets of actors playing the two leads, Katherine and Petruchio, with each rendition using three radically different interpretations. I also decided to place the three versions of Katherine not only as protagonists in the show but also as narrational forces to help the audience understand the full context and complexity of Shakespeare’s original text. In-between the three versions of Shakespeare’s text, I worked with the actors playing Katherine to devise a new induction, a new conclusion, and in-between moments which featured the actors playing Katherine as they addressed the question of whether *Taming* is a play that is suitable for production in the current era.

I believe the text of the play itself allows for this inquiry into how *Taming* can be performed in the 2021. Although directors have traditionally interpreted William Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* as a story about Petruchio taming an assertive

and wild woman, Katherine, for my project I decided to rethink this interpretation by adapting and directing a script wherein three different women play Katherine in order to portray her as neither just weak nor just strong, but rather complex and multi-dimensional. In fact, my argument is that Shakespeare actually poses complex questions about gender and power within male-female relationships, rather than coming to a clear “answer” about how men and women “should” behave within heteronormative marriage structures. By editing together and condensing several scenes from Shakespeare’s original text, I presented my edited, re-formed play three times back-to-back. Each presentation featured different actors playing out three different approaches to their own Katherine and Petruchio. This parallel structure created three different interpretations of male-female relationships that are both similar to, yet quite different from, those in sixteenth-century England.

I titled my edited and adapted script “Taming of the Shrew(s)” in order to draw attention to the fact that the production performs multiple versions of the play and also to asks the question, who is the real “shrew” of the play? Is Katherine really a shrew simply because she is outspoken? Or is Petruchio the shrewish one because of his tendency toward violence? Or, perhaps, are there multiple shrews of the play? I then took my adapted script and directed it as a ninety-minute performance in Fall 2021. My version of the play explored the complex gender dynamics and *possibilities* in Shakespeare’s text by considering how audiences might understand the exact same words within Shakespeare’s text in radically distinct ways, depending on a director’s and their actors’ vision and interpretation of those words. By changing the power dynamics, intonations, and

blocking in each version, I was able to dramatically shift the tone of each presentation and thus investigate the different potential Petruchio/Katherine relationships and the gender dynamics in the play.

My work with the actors was deeply collaborative. In addition to creating a shorted version of the script, I was able to work with them to add the kinds of transitional moments described above—moments led by the three Katherines of my show. I crafted these moments of transition with these three actors, and I believe they allowed the character of Katherine to take a central role in my version of “Shrew(s),” becoming the driving narrational force of the play, a narrational force that allowed for a meta-commentary as the production unfolded.

## II. The Plot and Text of *The Taming of the Shrew*

My journey to *The Taming of the Shrew* started at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). The RSC in Stratford-upon-Avon in England has produced *The Taming of the Shrew* at least 18 times since 1960. Founded in 1961, the RSC performs Shakespeare's works in his hometown. The RSC is associated with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, which owns properties associated with Shakespeare, including his birthplace, as well as an extensive archive which contains, among other artifacts, many copies of Shakespeare's First Folio. The RSC is the company that launched many well-known Shakespearian actors. Actors who have performed there include Sir Ian McKellen, Dame Judy Dench, and David Tennant, to name just a few of the many RSC actors to go on to cinematic fame. By the RSC's own description, "Wherever you experience the RSC, you experience work made in Shakespeare's home town," where "over 1 million visitors come to see [plays] at our Stratford-upon-Avon theatres each year" (Royal Shakespeare Company). Needless to say, they are a hub for Shakespearean creation and innovation.

Although *Taming* has significant production history with the RSC, it is a complicated play to produce, especially after the 1960s, in the wake of the second wave of feminism and the movement for Women's Rights, which raised awareness and encouraged rebelling against sexual harassment, sexual assault, and domestic violence against women in both England and the United States. Encyclopedia Britannica describes the cultural shift from first-wave to second-wave feminism: "While the first-wave feminism of the 19th and early 20th centuries focused on women's legal rights, especially

the right to vote . . . the second-wave feminism of the women's rights movement touched on every area of women's experience—including politics, work, the family, and sexuality" (Burkett). As a result of this growing awareness of the prevalence of sexual assault, especially of women, and with the current fourth wave of feminism that encompasses the #MeToo movement—*Taming* is becoming an increasingly difficult play for any director to re-imagine, much less stage. Over the decades, cultural perception of this text has shifted from "A Wittie and Pleasant Comedie," as the play was marketed in Shakespeare's first quarto published in 1631, to a play that begets uncertainty, even retaliation, for contemporary directors who decide to direct the show. As Fiona Mountford puts it in her "Go London" article regarding Justin Audibert's 2019 RSC production of *Taming*: "[Audibert's] third outing there [as an RSC director] is a more demanding ask. In a moment of greater awareness of gender inequality, *Shrew*, with its portrayal of a husband's complete subjugation of a wife, is becoming more and more unstageable" (Mountford). At one level, the seemingly unstageable quality of *Taming* stems from Shakespeare's text itself, especially in a straightforward reading, where the gender dynamics are presented in clearly sexist ways, for instance, having a husband call a wife a trained hawk, who must "stoop" to him rather than "bate and beat" and "not be obedient" (4.1.191-196). Thus, in any production of the show audiences paying attention to how a director chooses to portray the subjugation and mistreatment of a woman is particularly important.

Taking into consideration the text itself—the words and the images they present—I asked myself what a "straightforward" or "surface" reading of this play

might be. Boiling the text down, I decided that Shakespeare's plot conveys the story of a woman, Katherine, whose father, Baptista, sells his elder daughter in marriage to a gold-digging suitor, Petruchio, without her consent and against her will. Baptista's problematic daughter, Katherine, has a reputation far and wide for her hot temper, one unbecoming the ideal woman of her day. Because Petruchio promises to take care of her, insinuating that no one else will, Baptista is glad to be rid of her. Then, once the two are married, Petruchio "tames" his wife, perhaps with private abuse, but certainly by denying Katherine sleep, food, and clothing until, deliriously, she begins to submit to his every demand, her life hinging on his whims and his words. At the end of the play, she delivers an iconic monologue on the benefits of being a gentle and obedient wife, saying: "Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper, / Thy head, thy sovereign" (5.1.162-163). It is in this way that she demonstrates to her family and the larger community that she had been wholly and completely tamed.

A plot of this description is untenable for the sensibilities of many contemporary audiences, not only because it seems to insist that women are the property of men, but also because it implies that women of strong feelings, actions, and self-determination are a problem that men must fix. In short, this play, if produced adhering only to this "surface" reading of the plot can be deeply disturbing, with its potential to enact misogyny and thereby advocating for misogyny in the name of perpetuating patriarchy. As such, this text can become one that privileges toxic masculinity through the guise of comedy, played for laughs to men, not unlike the stereotypical boys' locker room talk where men make fun of women's inferiority or

talk about them as sexual objects. When taken in this style, the play becomes a vile tutorial in which Petruchio teaches the men in the audience how to beat down any headstrong woman they might marry, date, or otherwise encounter.

Such a reading is supported by the words of Katherine's final speech, where she has apparently been tamed and subdued:

Such duty as the subject owes the prince,  
 Even such a woman oweth to her husband;  
 And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,  
 And not obedient to his honest will,  
 What is she but a foul contending rebel,  
 And graceless traitor to her loving lord? (5.1.171-176)

This reading is also supported by Petruchio himself when he details the nature of his taming in his aside to the audience, specifically the men in the audience, recounting his master plan to tame Katherine:

This is a way to kill a wife with kindness.  
 And thus, I'll curb her mad and headstrong humor.  
 He that knows better how to tame a shrew,  
 Now let him speak; 'tis charity to shew." (4.1.208-211)

In considering the words and concepts used by Katherine in this final speech—with diction and imagery such as “duty,” and with the wife called a “subject” ruled by a “prince,” constructed as someone who should always be “obedient” to that “prince”—Katherine suggests that the characteristics of a woman construed as “peevisish,” “sullen,” “froward,” and “sour” make her seem not only as an outcast in society but also a potential traitor to the state, what Katherine describes as a “foul, contending rebel” (5.2.175). Katherine implies with her language that headstrong women are no longer merely individuals but rather traitors; she then become a representation of enemies to the country itself, which communicates to the audience just how unacceptable it is for both the women of the play and the women in the audience to have minds, desires, or individual personalities of their own. Petruchio’s diction reflects the same concept. Petruchio says he wishes to “kill” and “curb” aspects of Katherine’s personality, and he constructs her as “mad” and “headstrong” in her “humor” (referring here to the “humour” theory of Renaissance science). In examining Petruchio’s dictional choices, it is obvious that Petruchio and the patriarchal society he represents reduce Katherine’s desire for autonomy and agency to a clinical ailment, or hysteria—an illness worthy of being institutionalized. Thus, Petruchio’s words effectively are a threat that the state itself may take away a woman’s agency completely.

Moreover, when *Taming* was first staged it would have been played, as many of Shakespeare’s plays originally were, to the “groundlings” in theatres like the famous Globe Theatre. The groundlings were the poor, uneducated, bear-baiting audience

standing directly in front of the stage, closer to the actors than the wealthier patrons sitting in seats on the periphery of the stage. This direct audience-actor relationship allowed for Shakespeare's characters to have moments in which they would break what is now called "the fourth wall," by speaking directly to the audience members standing before them through asides cast as soliloquies. Such asides allow the characters to reveal their inner thoughts directly to the audience. When in Act IV, Scene 1 Petruchio speaks to the groundlings about his motives and methodology for taming his rebel wife, his speech confirms two concepts. First, the speech confirms that, at least on the surface, *Taming* is a "man's play," i.e., a play for men, by a man. Petruchio's use of the pronouns "he" and "him" in his speech to make clear the intended recipients of his speech. Second, the speech confirms that Petruchio also plays into what might now be called "bro humor," i.e., humor where the butt of the joke is a woman. This device creates intimacy between Petruchio and the men in the audience while simultaneously othering the women in the audience. Petruchio asks the men standing before him: "He that knows better how to tame a shrew, / Now let him speak" (4.1.210-211). Upon hearing no reply when he asks the men among the groundlings to come up with a better way to deal with their shrewish wives, Petruchio says, "'tis charity to shew," as though he is not only a master over women but also a master tamer, a master of masculinity (4.1.211).

Turning from the Renaissance interpretation of *Taming* to its interpretation in the last 50 years, there are critics from the early twentieth century all the way to today who see this play as misogynistic, claiming that it should no longer be performed because of

how it portrays, and perhaps celebrates, men “owning” and subjugating women. In 1995, Louise Doughty of the *Mail on Sunday* described *Taming* as, “Shakespeare’s breathtakingly misogynist tale of a woman who is starved and terrorized into submission by a husband who has married her for her money” (Doughty). The *Oxford English Dictionary* points to this common understanding of the word misogyny by showing that, as early as 1656, in Thomas Blount’s *Glossographia*, misogyny referred to “the hate or contempt of women.” Doughty argues that the play perpetrates misogyny by showing a man’s prejudice towards his wife. The dramatization of Petruchio “starving” and “terrorizing” Katherine shows his hatred and contempt of her.

With so much misogyny within the text itself, I return to my earlier question: How can directors intervene on the text to present *Taming* in new ways? Is a successful intervention possible? On the surface, *Taming* appears to be a play that should be avoided for countless moral reasons. It appears that the dramatization of a “starved” and “terrorized” is too much for modern audiences and that *Taming* is a play destined to end the careers of modern-day directors, given its offensive portrayal of gender roles and outright promotion of violence against women. For example, in 1991 Nick Curtis of *The Evening Standard* said, “It is unlikely that any director today could present Shakespeare’s comedy about a woman’s subjugation without destroying the text or causing huge offence” (Curtis).

One possible answer to the critique from Curtis and all other critics who argue that *Taming* can’t be performed without causing huge offense is for audience members and readers of *The Taming of the Shrew* to avoid the assumptions of the conventional

interpretation. Like many of Shakespeare's plays, *Taming* can be read straight, but it can also be read "slant," as Emily Dickenson says in her poem, *Tell all the truth but tell it slant*. To read and tell a story slant means to tell the truth indirectly rather than beating an audience over the head with an obvious truth. Indeed, I believe that Shakespeare wrote *Taming* in such a way to provide actors and directors with creative options for staging *Taming* through the play's action, the overall tone a director and actors choose to adopt, and especially through the intonation and body language an actor adopts in the production.

For instance, a director could argue that Katherine's words, even within the text itself, allow for wit and strength, as demonstrated in Act II, Scene i, the scene where she and Petruchio meet for the first time. Here, Katherine verbally matches Petruchio's wordplay and wit, demonstrating that she is not only a "shrewish" woman but a "shrewd" one—a woman of intelligence, quick repartee, and appreciation for someone who can match her word-for-word, a man worthy of her verbal and intellectual strengths. For example, when Katherine responds to Petruchio's lewd comments and he threatens to strike her:

*Pet.*       What, with my tongue in your tail?

Nay, come again, good Kate. I am a gentleman—

*Kath.*       That I'll try.

*She strikes him.*

*Pet.*       I swear I'll cuff you if you strike again.

*Kath.* So, may you lose your arms.  
 If you strike me, you are no gentleman,  
 And if no gentleman, why then no arms. (2.1.231-237)

She is able to prove her intellectual strengths by using her quick wordplay to talk him out of possibly striking her. She uses “arms” to refer both to Petruchio’s literal arms but also his families crest or “coat of arms.” Here, Katherine implies that hitting her would make him less of a man both because hitting her would be ungentlemanly and because if he were not a gentleman he would have no coat of arms, simultaneously riffing that he would have no “arms” with which to hit her. With this interpretation of the “wooing scene,” the play might become a comment on the treatment and objectification of women, especially women who were not interested in conforming to the typically feminine tropes of a patriarchal structure in marriage. Such an interpretation is bolstered, perhaps, by the other strong women of Shakespeare’s comedies, women such as Rosalind in *As You Like It* or Helena in *All’s Well that Ends Well*. Could *The Taming of the Shrew* be a *critique* of Renaissance marital practices, and could Shakespeare actually be a proto-feminist?

Other directors might believe that *Taming* is a means of exploring the workings of gender under patriarchy, rather than a strict critique of systemic sexism. One interpretation could cast Katherine as insightful and aware of the games of starvation and sleep deprivation that Petruchio “plays” upon her, thus allowing her to take control of the very situation that appears to denigrate her. In such an approach, Katherine

could “play” Petruchio in the very same moment that he attempts to “play” her. In this reading of the text, Katherine could cunningly engineer her engagement to Petruchio as her means to escape a domineering father who gives preference to her pliable and traditional sister, Bianca. Therefore, this Katherine would strategically use Petruchio as a ticket to a more independent life. She would realize that, in feigning to be “tamed,” she would actually control the reins of their relationship, allowing Petruchio to believe he has the power all while manipulating him to get what she wants. This would allow her to live a relatively independent life within the constraints placed by the gender order. For example, consider the lines of Act IV, Scene v, when Katherine relents to Petruchio demanding that the sun is in fact the moon: “And the moon changes even as your mind. / What you will have it named, even that it is, / And so it shall be so for Katherine” (4.5.32-27). To this, Petruchio responds, “Well, forward, forward.” In this moment, by giving in to Petruchio’s demand that the sun is the moon, she is able to immediately get what she wants—to continue on to her father’s house.

As with the figure of the strong woman across many Shakespearean comedies, there is also precedence for this second interpretation in Shakespearean characters who lack authoritative power but who are much more perceptive and more complex, and who often function to give the audience insight into the play’s true meaning, characters such as the fools Feste and Touchstone from *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. Thus, characters without overt, cultural power, like Katherine, are often more canny, more knowledgeable, and more aware than the characters asserting power over them. For example, the servant Tranio in *Taming of the Shrew* is more adroit than his master,

Lucentio, creating clever tricks to preserve both of their identities in the subplot where Lucentio courts Bianca. For example, when Lucentio's true father comes to town and threatens Lucentio's false identity, Tranio thinks on his feet, quickly deciding to frame the old man as crazy, saying, "Call forth an officer / carry this mad knave to the jail" (5.1.93-94).

Another way to direct *Taming of the Shrew* for a contemporary audience could involve Katherine and Petruchio forming a partnership against the rest of the characters. In this third reading, neither Katherine nor Petruchio would be the "master" in the relationship. In fact, textually speaking, Shakespeare ensures that Petruchio and Katherine are perfectly matched. In the wooing scene, each character builds upon the diction and image patterns of the other in a delightful and equal repartee:

*Kath.* Mov'd! in good time! Let him that mov'd you hither

Remove you hence. I knew you at the first

You were a moveable.

*Pet.* Why, what's a moveable?

*Kath.* A Join'd-stool.

*Pet.* Thou hast hit it; come sit on me. (2.1.203-206)

Given such wordplay, a director could craft a version of the show where Petruchio and Katherine actually fall in love during their first encounter in Act II. In this reading, Katherine and Petruchio could enter into a conspiracy, *pretend* to the outside world to

be shrew and master, but privately enjoy one another as equals. Certainly, a director could achieve such an interpretation with clever staging, as when a director decides when to bring secondary characters into what might otherwise be the private moments between the central couple. There is perhaps yet another possibility for showing a well-matched Katherine and Petruchio onstage—a reading in which Katherine and Petruchio both attempt to tame and trick each other. In this reading, both Katherine and Petruchio would see through the game the other is playing and thus understanding the other. They would be able truly to come together as an equal twosome by the resolution of the plot, perhaps falling in love with someone they didn't intend to, and appreciating finally being matched with an equal partner.

Just as with every Shakespeare play, directors have options when it comes to staging *Taming*, depending on the message a director may wish to convey. In *This is Shakespeare*, Emma Smith states, “Shakespeare’s plays do not answer questions; they are not definitive about characters, themes, and concepts. Rather, they raise questions that are subject to interpretation of every new century, every director, every reader, and every sensibility” (4). Smith’s point seems especially true in relation to *The Taming of the Shrew*, given the complexity associated with the relationship between Petruchio and Katherine. When Shakespeare first introduces Katherine and Petruchio, and then as their relationship changes throughout the play, there is little pre-conceived understanding of what their relationship entails and where it will go; the difficult dynamics of gender and sexuality that define their wooing and marriage are not definitive. Furthermore, although theatre artists and audience members who are now living through the contemporary

#MeToo movement bring an understanding of power and gender to bear on this play, *Taming* itself, and the message it conveys, is a mystery waiting to be explored. Just as there are critics and scholars who urge directors and theatres not to produce *Taming* any longer, there are others scholars and directors that defend this play as one of Shakespeare's proto-feminist masterpieces. For example, in her article *Affective Resistance: Performing Passivity and Playing A-Part in The Taming of the Shrew* published in *Shakespeare Quarterly* Holly Crocker said, "The stage history of *Taming of the Shrew* speaks to the near impossibility of representing submissive femininity.... [R]esponses to and interpretations of Katherine 's altered behavior reveal that her final speech is more transgressive than transformative" (142-143). Furthermore, Katherine is a woman with a strong tongue and a quick wit who speaks her mind and who eloquently delivers the longest monologue in the play. It could be argued that the mere fact that Shakespeare creates a character like Katherine is proof that Shakespeare was not interested in perpetuating the patriarchy as much as he was interested is in asking questions about such social hierarches based on gender.

Indeed, I believe that Shakespeare's characterization of Katherine unfolds relative to the overall political and philosophical needs of the play, which are complicated. Katherine both plays into the sexist tropes of a weak woman who is "tamed" while simultaneously being a strong force with which Petruchio must reckon. If her final monologue is read "slant," then it further complicates whether she is truly playing a weak woman in any sense, but rather a savvy, cunning woman who has figured out how to turn Petruchio's game to her favor. The character of Katherine is multifaceted and, just as

characters like Shylock and Othello both affirm and simultaneously undermine stereotypes of Jewish and Black men, Katherine can be read both to affirm and undermine stereotypes of shrewish women.

Such complications, even contradictions, within Shakespearean characters are not just a phenomenon within this particular play. Shakespeare constructs strong female characters across many of his works, especially within his comedies, even though audiences in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England might have seen the words “strong female” as an oxymoron. Indeed, the plots of many of his comedic plays actually need the strength of a central female character to “undo” the chaos created by the idiocy of male characters around them. These characters help to resolve issues of gender and power that are inherent in Shakespeare’s comedic structures. Characters such as Rosalind, Viola, Helena, Mistress Ford, Mistress Page, and Beatrice have the ability to determine each play’s ultimate meaning as they outwit their male counterparts.

Take, for example, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, where the central characters, Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, are middle-aged women who trick and humiliate their unwanted suitor, Sir John Falstaff, while simultaneously teaching a lesson to their jealous, authoritative husbands. Or *Much Ado About Nothing*, in which it is Beatrice who steers Benedick away from going along with the other men in the play who have disgraced and slandered her cousin Hero. Or, finally, in *As You Like It*, when Rosalind dresses as a boy, she does so in part to educate her crush Orlando on the ways of love. She also cross-dresses because she wishes to experience the freedoms of masculinity. In the end, though, she comes to see how men are limited in their powers and worldview,

and Rosalind ultimately becomes the play's hero, helping to negotiate a happy ending for all of the couples, even the dysfunctional ones, making clear that love and gender roles are what the audiences makes of them, or, in other words, they are "as you like it."

Simply the fact that Shakespeare created female characters with wit and intelligence as well as the ability to use language purposefully and powerfully indicates that these women are multi-dimensional women, insightful about humanity, and able to negotiate identities beyond their socially proscribed roles of subservience and deference. Even more, one could be argued that these women are actually the creators and agents of these comic plots. Shakespeare invests these women with the power of an author—someone who tries to teach others how to recognize oppression and how to feel empathy for everyone, including those of other genders, sexualities, races, or class levels.

When examining *The Taming of the Shrew* and its portrayal and performance of gender, it is crucial to keep in mind Shakespeare's collaboration with a younger playwright named John Fletcher in writing a sequel called *The Tamer Tamed*. In this second play, Petruchio remarries after Katherine's death. His new wife, a character named Maria, treats him to the same kind of oppressive practices that he forced upon his first wife. Not only does Maria have the upper hand in this sequel, but she also teaches Petruchio to recognize how demeaning it is to be treated as inferior just because one is a man or a woman.

Therefore, yet another question I considered while developing this project was, does the strength of Shakespeare's female characters, as the protagonists of many of his comedic plays, muddy the problematic waters in which *Taming* and Katherine might be

understood? How can a play with such an intelligent woman be misogynist at its core? Katherine's final monologue complicated this question for me even further because an unquestionable fact is that the speech is the longest in the play. This is a centrally important speech in which Katherine seemingly gives up her power and talks at length about her deference to her husband. In addition to its length, it's also full of errors that the Katherine who earlier sparred with Petruchio would not make. In this monologue, Katherine ostensibly commends her husband because he "commits his body / To painful labor both by sea and land, / To watch the night in storms, the day in cold, / Whilst thou li'st warm at home, secure and safe," yet both she and Petruchio know that his money and fortunes come from her dowry and not his hard work. What's more, she knows that he hasn't fed her, or let her sleep, and so she is neither "secure" or "safe" (5.1.164-167).

Thus, if Katherine's final monologue contains assertions that are factually untrue, it is even harder to believe her other claims, especially those articulating acquiescence: "Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper, / Thy head, thy sovereign, [and] one that cares for thee." Could it be, then, that Katherine really meant the opposite, that her monologue is *not* her honest opinion about the obedience of a wife or the protective duties of a husband? If so, then how can this show simply be played for laughs? Such a reversal of her supposed adherence to strict gender roles, then, becomes much more serious. In fact, any show that depicts a man starving, gaslighting, and depriving a woman of sleep really isn't a comedy anyway, is it?

It was with these contradictions in mind that I turned to the performance history of the play.

### III. A Brief Performance and Adaptation History of *The Taming of the Shrew*

To fully appreciate contemporary adaptations of *Taming of the Shrew*—including my own—it is important to first consider how audiences may have understood the play during the Renaissance. Then from these beginnings I will trace how the play has evolved to the present day. According to the program from Gregory Doran’s 2003 production of *Taming of the Shrew* at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre (RST), “*The Taming of the Shrew* probably dates from 1592, making it one of Shakespeare’s earliest works” (11). The first known mention of *Taming* in print appeared in 1594 from a publisher named Peter Short, who entered the title of the play into a publication register as “a booke intituled A plesant Conceyted historie called the Tayminge of a Shrowe” (Aspinall 5). From here, *Shrew* was circulated as a “bad quarto” (meaning an unauthorized copy of the play probably copied down by someone who saw it live), but the only version that is complete (and the one that I adapted for my project) comes from the 1623 publication of Shakespeare’s complete works, commonly known as the First Folio.

In Shakespeare’s time, cultural perceptions of marriage were more limited and limiting than they are now. As wives, women were expected to be docile and obedient to their husbands. To step outside of the docile and obedient marital role was potentially to become “shrewish.” A wedding was not really a ritual of two people declaring their love in front of their friends and family, as we think of it today. Rather, a marriage was a religious, political, and especially a financial venture, as described in the playbill for Bill Alexander’s 1992 RSC production of *The Taming of the Shrew*:

[I]n the Renaissance, marriage was a complicated commercial transaction, the marriage contract a complex legal document precisely specifying the lands, goods and property which each partner brought to marriage, and their subsequent rights to the capital and income accumulated by the ‘merger’ the marriage effected. Marriage involved the movement of property, and the wedding ritual dramatized the transfers which took place. Though women had rights in property, the trading of goods at marriage was not symmetrical. The bride’s parents provided the trousseau and the dowry, which were transferred to the administration of the groom. (“Marital” 12)

In a marriage contract, a Renaissance wife was, in essence, part of the transfer of property from one man, her father, to another, her husband, and so there were very strict conceptions of what a “good wife” should be, namely chaste, obedient, passive, domesticated, and mostly silent—like an object. A husband owned the dowry that came from gaining a wife, and he was considered his wife’s “owner,” too, so much so that, legally speaking, a Renaissance husband had the right to beat a wayward wife with a switch, as long it was no wider than his thumb, which is where we get the phrase “the rule of thumb” (“Marital” 12).

In the Renaissance, then, Shakespeare’s reference to a “shrew” would have been collectively understood as a reference to an unruly wife. In her article “To Kill a Wife with Kindness: Contextualizing Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew*,” literary historian Kristen Gragg states, “the play derives its plot and title from the popular folkloric tradition of shrew-taming. A ‘shrew,’ also referred to as a ‘scold,’ was a recognizable

female stock figure in many works of early modern comedic balladry, literature, and drama” (38). Yet this figure wasn’t just one of folklore. Renaissance women living in the real world who were perceived as “shrewish” could be publicly shamed with devices such as the “scold’s bridle,” which was a mechanical device, fit over a woman’s head, that depressed her tongue with an iron gag that made it impossible for her to speak (“Scold’s”). Women who were too vocal or forceful might also be publicly tied to a chair, called a “cucking” or “ducking” stool, and submerged into a lake or river (“Ducking”).

In this way, the original community watching Shakespeare’s *Taming* would have been familiar with both the folkloric stories but also the actual, dangerous stakes of a married woman speaking her mind. In this world, a “shrew” was the antithesis of a “good wife.” Rather than chaste, obedient, and mostly silent, she was “[a] derogatory caricature of womanhood [who] often had three defining characteristics: an unruly attitude, a loquacious and quarrelsome tongue, and a volatile temper” (Gragg 38). As Gragg notes, a Renaissance audience would have been familiar with the tradition of “shrew taming,” both in literature and out in the world, and they would have seen a shrewish wife on the stage as contradicting the legal rights of ownership and mastery granted to her husband through their marriage contract. Renaissance audiences of *The Taming of the Shrew*, then, would have been quite familiar with the play’s basic material and perhaps even in favor of Katherine’s “taming.” It is also possible, however, that early theatergoers would have understood Shakespeare’s use of “severely misogynist oral and folk tales” as a means “to interrogate and redefine early modern English marriage rites and rituals,” a tantalizing layer of potential satire which may account for the early stage popularity, since the

publication of two quartos in 1596 and again in 1607 “attest to an eager acceptance” of the play (Aspinall 19).

For these complex reasons, both the enjoyment of and the backlash to *Taming*—and also the practice of adapting of the play—are nearly as old as the text itself. The first type of adaptation came only twenty years after Shakespeare’s original was performed, and it was by another playwright, John Fletcher, who wrote a sequel called *The Woman’s Prize, or The Tamer Tamed* in 1611. This play begins after Katherine has died and Petruchio remarries another woman, Maria, who in turn tames *him*. Both *Taming* and *The Tamer Tamed* were performed in front of Charles I and his court in 1633, and both were celebrated (“Stage History”). In fact, another possible meaning for the word “Shrew” in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is “[a] wicked, evil-disposed, or malignant man. . . ; a rascal, villain,” which is an even older definition, c1250, than the one linking the meaning of “shrew” just to a scolding wife (“Shrew”).

After that *The Tamer Tamed*, from the English Restoration, the full texts of both *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tamer Tamed* “slip into almost complete obscurity for the next 250 years,” well into the nineteenth century (Aspinall 20). The literary critic David George explains that, instead of staging the whole text of *Taming*, during this lengthy period, “the play set off four general kinds of adaptations: first, counterattacks; second, Katherine’s retaliation and reconciliation with Petruchio; third, swashbuckling, slapstick, and farc[ical versions]; fourth, romantic metadrama.” George further explains that “[t]hese shifting emphases derive from cultural changes as Western society devolved from aristocratic to more democratic” (13). Over the course of this “democratization” of

*Taming*, either severely cut or completely rewritten versions abounded. For instance, *The Tamer Tamed* was followed by a Restoration version in 1667 called *Sauny the Scot*, which copies Shakespeare's plot with a "coarser" Petruchio and Katherine, now named "Peg." The plot of *Sauny* is much more convoluted than the original, and Peg tricks Petruchio into thinking she is dead only to spring out of her coffin, where she finally "submits to her husband" (14). *Sauny* was popular for almost 100 years, with the last performance of this loose adaptation in 1763 (14).

After that production, the eighteenth-century actor/entrepreneur David Garrick, a man who almost single-handedly turned Stratford-upon-Avon into a tourist destination and Shakespeare himself into a national commodity, took on the push for a less misogynist version of *Taming*. Garrick created a "three-act farcical" adaptation called *Catharine and Petruchio* (Aspinall 24). This version "concentrated on the taming plot to the exclusion of all else," and yet made the idea of "taming" another person much less harsh and violent than Shakespeare's original by having Catharine tell the audience that she will only marry Petruchio in order to "get her revenge on him by taming him in her own way" ("Stage History"). Indeed, Garrick's Catharine is more spirited than Shakespeare's own heroine, aiming to tame Petruchio by means of marriage. To quote David George, "Following the demand for politeness and the burgeoning proto-feminism in the 18th [century], David Garrick . . . staged his three-act moral afterpiece *Catharine and Petruchio*, the only version of *The Shrew* [that was] acted [in England] until 1844 . . . [.] [In Garrick's version,] just four scenes survived: the wooing, the wedding, the dinner, and the tailor episode, plus Katherine's final speech, a sincere submission" (14-15).

It was not until 1844 that Shakespeare's uncut text, including the opening called the "Induction" (usually omitted from modern performances), returned to the British stage ("Stage History"). Between 1844 and 1905, the play went through many interpretations—from a "whip-cracking" Petruchio in the 1844 version to "a farcical romp, in which . . . Petruchio leapt athletically about the stage terrorizing his . . . wife," in 1889, to a pseudo-feminist version in 1912 where the actress who played Katherine was "a votes-for-women activist, Violet Vanbrugh" to a 1904 "psychological realism" version where Petruchio show[s] some affection for his bride-to-be" and mainly relie[s] on violence toward the servants), [via] farce and slapstick" to an American 1905 version that "offered whip-cracking horseplay and Katherine's gradual submission" (George 15-17).

Obviously, these productions of *Taming* meandered across all sorts of readings of the "battle of the sexes" presented within Shakespeare's text, trying to make this problem play "work." Productions ranged from farcical or slapstick renditions with "whip cracking" Petruchios to productions that conveyed a kinder hero, as well as versions portraying Katherine "softening her vixenish temper" to productions that construct her as childishly shrewish (George 16).

I claim that these multiple versions using the whole of Shakespeare's original text began to consider questions of the interpretive options the play has to offer when it comes to portraying gender roles within a marriage, whether presented as a comedy, (as a farce, or a slapstick) or a tragedy, or as something in-between. In these ways the directors, actors, and audiences of *Taming* began to wrestle with how it might be possible to do

*Taming* as a way of reflecting their own culture's beliefs about femininity and masculinity, about marriage, and about the roles of men and women in society.

In fact, the re-establishment of Shakespeare's full play in the nineteenth century prompted a strong backlash to performing it, especially as suffragettes in England and America became more vocal and visible. In "*From Farce to Metadrama: A Stage History of The Taming of the Shrew, 1594–1893*," Tori Haring-Smith says, "The Victorian ideal of the Womanly Woman faded as suffragettes . . . came to the fore . . . [and] twentieth-century audiences looked on as both the tamer and the shrew were educated" (95). In addition, by the end of the nineteenth century, the "New Woman" became a cultural icon. As David George explains, "The advent of the 'New Woman' . . . equalized tamer and tamed, each learning to understand and respect the other, so that farce and a battle of wits were the only way to temper this social trend" (17). The New Woman was a strong, educated female who was often indifferent to marriage, capable of working a professional job, interested in sexual freedom, and desirous of wearing clothes that would give her mobility, such as bloomers, so that she could ride a bike and do other exercises (Buzwell).

From this period forward, then, directors, audiences, and theater critics increasingly wondered whether *Taming* was just too "bad" to stage. As critic Peter Berek claims in "Text, Gender, and Genre," "*The Taming of the Shrew* is morally bad: its patriarchal chauvinism is unalloyed with ambiguity, and its final (and most celebrated) speech unpleasantly proclaims some Renaissance commonplaces that make even our own century look good" (91). Against those critics who have called for a moratorium on

productions of *Taming*, though, there are other critics who have suggested that Shakespeare's play is a commentary on such misogyny—substituting slapstick, comedic versions valorizing Katherine's shrewishness and Petruchio's humiliation of her as “an occasion for celebration” by a “variety of interpretations that try to exonerate Shakespeare's characters, or Shakespeare himself, from at least the worst excesses of sexual chauvinism” (Berek 91).

Then, in 1935, two American actors named Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne—who were actually married at the time—decided to up “the farcical ante with endless sideshows, and attraction plus antagonism between Petruchio and Katherine” (George 17). It was this Lunt-Fontanne version that inspired the creation of what influential critics have called the first “modern” adaptation from 1948: *Kiss Me, Kate*, the musical, written by Bella and Samuel Spewack, with music by Cole Porter. This American musical presents a “play within a play” that is centered around a group of actors putting on a production of *Taming* where the lead actors are romantically connected, just like Lunt and Fontanne had been. The play reveals the dynamics of the actors both on and offstage, creating a juxtaposition between the more liberal and progressive relationship “backstage” versus the more traditional and misogynistic one being fed to the audience “frontstage.”

In his book *Shakespeare in a Divided America*, Shakespearean scholar James Shapiro explains the cultural backdrop of the historical moment:

[In *Kiss Me, Kate*,] competing narratives about marriage, women's independence, and domesticity are held up to each other, with the front-stage Shakespearean world standing in for old-fashioned values while the backstage world depicts more modern and liberal ones. *Kiss Me, Kate* offered, then, rival visions of the choices women faced in postwar America—one in which women are urged to capitulate and their obedience to men is the norm, and one in which independence and unconventionality hold sway. (156-160)

This adaptation of *Shrew* allowed for a meta-commentary on the misogyny and patriarchal values of the original text, while also allowing space for actors to turn the show on its head and “reclaim” it. *Kiss Me, Kate* was a wildly popular adaptation of Shakespeare, first adapted for film in 1953 and still performed to this day.

Since the middle of the twentieth century, there have been hundreds of performances of *The Taming of the Shrew* across the globe, as well as film adaptations, such as *Deliver Us from Eva*, a 2003 romantic dark comedy starring L.L. Cool J and Gabrielle Union, or the South Korean romantic comedy *Frivolous Wife*. However, the four productions that inspired my honors project are as follows: 1) the 1974 American Conservatory Theatre (ACT) production directed by William Ball and starring Marc Singer and Fredi Olster as Petruchio and Katherine, which aired on PBS; 2) the 2003 Royal Shakespeare Company production directed by Gregory Doran, with Alexandra Gilbreath as Katherine and Jasper Britton as Petruchio; 3) the 2008 Conall Morrison production, also produced by the RSC, featuring Michelle Gomez as Katherine and

Stephen Boxer as Petruchio (as well as Christopher Sly); and, finally 4) a production I saw live at the RST in 2019, directed by Justin Audibert, with a male actor, Joseph Arkley, as Katherine, and a female actor, Claire Price, as Petruchia.

These four productions have inspired, fascinated, and sometimes horrified me because they offer completely distinct interpretations of the exact same text. Not one of them is an adaptation; they all draw their words directly from Shakespeare's original text. Even so, they are notably different. The 1976 production employs a concept inspired by *commedia dell'arte*—a comedic form originating in Italy based on character types and incorporating elements of *carnival*. The 2003 production depicts Katherine and Petruchio as a “pair of misfits” who “become fellow-conspirators who manage to outwit the system” (Taylor). The 2008 RSC production does the opposite by creating an “ugly male fantasy” in which Petruchio “fulfils his wildest, sadistic dreams” against Katherine (Billington). The 2019 production turns the patriarchy into a matriarchy, with all of the language staying the same but male characters becoming female ones and vice-versa. Not only was each of these four productions unique, but each of them says something different about gender politics and gender justice in the modern day in England and America.

In considering this more recent performance history of *Taming*, I contend that Shakespeare's text offers three primary ways of interpreting the deeply gendered relationship between Katherine and Petruchio. Each of these interpretations provides distinct and sometimes contradictory ideas about who might be the “shrew” and who is “tamed” within the play.

In 2019, I saw a production of *Taming* at the Royal Shakespeare Company's Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, directed by Justin Audibert. I was supremely excited for this production as I had high hopes that it would address the troubled issue of gender in Shakespeare's text. My excitement stemmed from how Audibert chose to complicate an already difficult play by asking the question, what happens when what has been considered a "man's play" becomes a "woman's play"? Audibert chose to swap the genders of the two leads in *Taming*, thereby turning a patriarchal society into a matriarchal one. Characters such as Petruchio, Tranio, and Hortensio became Petruchia, Trania, and Hortensia, while a character such as Bianca became Bianco. Audibert also decided to keep Renaissance costume for his production, and although he turned Katherine into a male character dressed in masculine clothing, he decided (in an intriguing choice) to keep the name "Katherine." In an interview for *The Evening Standard*, the director described part of his concept for the show in these terms: "The conceit is that it's a world where women are the dominant gender. It's a matriarchal society" (Mountford). The consequences of what Audibert is saying here merit further examination. When directing a play, directors will typically determine a "spine," a "concept," and a "conceit" for their show. The "spine" is one line from the text that sums up the experience a director wants to leave the audience with when the house lights come on and the show is over. The "concept" is a more detailed expansion of the spine, and the "conceit" is how—through the technical use of set, costumes, lighting, and casting—the director achieves their idea. So, though Audibert states that his production's concept is to swap genders, his "spine" (what he wants to leave the audience with) remains unclear,

although one aspect of the conceit he decided to use to make his point was the reverse-gender casting.

To better understand this particular part of Audibert's conceit—the decision to swap male-identified actors for female-identified actors—it's important to note the RSC productions of *Taming* (Doran's from 2003 and Morrison's from 2008) were the most recent. No matter what conceit-based choices Audibert decided on, he must first have determined what kind of *Taming* he wanted to direct and the message he wanted to leave with the audience.

The RSC's 2008 production directed by Conall Morrison was a much harsher version of the play. The RSC's website summarizes Morrison's production in this way: "The skilled comic acting of Michelle Gomez and Stephen Boxer had audiences roaring with laughter, despite Katherine's frequent beatings and begging for food with real desperation. Her final speech of submission was delivered in a submissive and robotic way, leaving no doubt that the play's misogyny is no longer palatable to modern audiences" ("Conall"). This version exemplifies a gritty and graphic version of *The Taming of the Shrew*; Petruchio takes the "taming" of Katherine seriously. Although the description above suggests comedic moments where the audience laughed, the overall tone of this performance was dark and involved demeaning Katherine. The premise of this interpretation took a character from the seldom-performed Induction—a poor drunk named Christopher Sly who is tricked by a Lord into thinking that he is also, in reality, a Lord—and made Sly into the actor playing Petruchio. At first, the attempt to convince Sly to play Petruchio is all in good fun; the troop of actors can see he's falling-down

drunk, as he's just come out of a strip club. As Sly becomes more and more invested in *becoming* Petruchio, his treatment of Katherine becomes more and more abusive. In fact, the "taming" scenes became scenes of domestic violence, in which Katherine is truly starved, her clothing torn, and Petruchio not only hits her but also rapes her at center stage. As Michael Billington, a reviewer for London's *Guardian* newspaper stated, "Morrison's point is clear: the play is an ugly male fantasy . . . . Everything about this Petruchio is brutal, from the way he slams his servant's head against a door to his wedding, sporting antler's horns and bloodied bridal gown" (Billington). Katherine plays her final monologue in a "submissive and robotic way," which implies that this Katherine was broken; she no longer had the will to be a free woman, to do and say as she pleased. Rather, in Morrison's directorial vision, Katherine realized that in order to avoid Petruchio's abuse, she had to become Petruchio's property and accord him primacy. The RSC's blurb on the production concludes that, when the abuse of Katherine is portrayed as "real," such a version of *Taming* puts on display the unpalatability of such an interpretation: "the play's misogyny is no longer palatable to modern audiences" ("Conall").

The second notable RSC production of *Taming* prior to Audibert's was Gregory Doran's 2003 staging—a revival that was the opposite of Morrison's version. The RSC's website describes the production as: "The attention of Alexandra Gilbreath's Katherina was quickly caught by Jasper Britton's Petruchio when she realized that he would listen to her, engage with her, make her laugh and praise her. The sincerity and warmth with which this Katherina imbued her final speech were rewarded by her husband's emptying

out his winnings in a shower of gold, showing that their love was true wealth” (“In Focus”). Within Doran’s vision, Katherine and Petruchio find mutual camaraderie, and the actors—Gilbreath and Britton—create a credible humanity between them. In the play’s iconic wooing scene, these two started on either sides of the stage, their hair unkempt and their clothes mussed—a couple of mutual misfits both mourning their broken relationships with their respective fathers. However, as they came to know each other during the scene, and began to appreciate that they were well matched in terms of wit and a sense of fun, they wound up tickling each other and playing footsie on the stage, eventually making it clear that they decide to be in cahoots against everyone else in the play who sees them as “lesser”— a gold-digging man and a shrewish wife. As Michael Billington stated in his review for *The Guardian*, “I have never seen the ‘wooing’ scene more breathtakingly played: instead of barbaric knockabout, we see a damaged couple finding mutual support” (Billington). This production showcases how Shakespeare’s use of clever language can support an interpretation of *Taming* as a true love match.

When Audibert decided to swap the genders of all of his characters in his 2019 RSC production, it seems that he decided to subvert the deeply misogynist language and plot points by turning a patriarchy into a matriarchy, while also attempting to make the final relationship between Petruchia and her male Katherine seem authentic—no small feat. Yet I believe that it’s an *American* production from *before* the twenty-first century that may have had the most impact on Audibert’s decision to swap the characters’ genders: the 1976 *commedia dell’arte*-inspired production from the American

Conservatory Theater, directed by William Ball and Kirk Browning. This production highlights the “middle ground” of interpretation. It is neither a horror story nor a love story, but something in-between. Beginning with the wooing scene, the actor’s lead the audience to believe that both Katherine and Petruchio find one another attractive, and though they both try to out-charm and out-trick one another, the play ultimately ends on a positive note.

At one level, Justin Audibert attempts to achieve something similar to the 1976 *commedia dell’arte* production. Audibert produces a *Taming* that is neither a complete tragedy nor a complete comedy nor simply a love story. However, Audibert also has the extra challenge of swapping the genders. I believe that this production works as a combination of both the dark and light elements in *Taming*. My interpretation of the show is that Ball and Browning sought to create a *Taming* that was playful in an attempt to rectify the possible sexism of the show, not by disregarding that sexism, nor by making the piece a warning against misogyny, but rather by playing *with* these elements. They did this by turning their production into a spectacle of physical comedy and making this spectacle all the more obvious by introducing over-the-top costumes and intricate choreography, and by having actors sitting and standing on the stage watching all of the action as it unfolded, just as the audience was watching the play, too. By directing both Katherine and Petruchio as shrews in their own right, the directors achieved this “playfulness.” Ball and Browning cast Petruchio as a young, muscular, and agile man. He was conventionally attractive, often didn’t wear a shirt, and sported an exaggerated codpiece over his tight tights, all while commanding a rambunctious charm. Katherine,

on the other hand, moved like a jungle cat; she was swift and graceful, and yet she also darted scornful glances, looking as though she was ready to pounce. Indeed, she did pounce sometimes, leaping upon Petruchio's back and pulling his hair or straddling him when she'd knocked him down. In the beginning of the play, before Katherine and Petruchio even meet, the audience saw them treat other characters with stylized physical violence in the *commedia dell'arte* style. Petruchio knocked around Grumio, his servant, all while punning on the word "knock," and Katherine literally tied up and threatened her sister, Bianca. Because of the clowning style *commedia dell'arte* employs, and the obviousness of this production being a play-within-a-play, Katherine and Petruchio still maintained themselves as lovable, roguish characters, something that is integral in this interpretation.

Similarly, Audibert's production set up his male Katherine and Petruchia with a command of the same sexual energy and charm as the Katherine and Petruchio of the 1976 version; both characters were likeable in their own right. Petruchia was played as bright and vibrant and energetic, a self-made shrew, manifested in her chaotic energy rather than in direct violence. In the first scene, when the audience sees her arrive in Padua, she spoke her lines while taking off of her travel gear haphazardly, even throwing her shoes over her shoulder and onto the backstage area. When she left the scene, the stage looked as though a tornado had blown through, and, like a helpless parent of a messy child, Grumio was left to pick up the clutter. The male version of Katherine, on the other hand, was equally chaotic. In a fit of childish rage, he also chucked one of his shoes onto the backstage area. During the audience's first interaction with him, he came on

stage carelessly eating a big drumstick right out of a modern-day Renaissance festival, and like Petruchia, he left a trail of garbage behind him.

Thus, in both the 1976 and 2019 productions of this play, the directors made the choice to imply that, even though Katherine is the character referred to as a “shrew” within the text, Katherine is not the only one with a hot temper and headstrong nature. This choice leads audience members to the expectation in the 2019 production of a narrative in which both Katherine and Petruchia are well-matched, and perhaps even equals.

Then the play moves into the wooing scene where the male Katherine and Petruchia meet each other for the first time, after Baptista has promised his son Katherine’s hand in marriage. Petruchia begins the scene with an aside to the audience, where she details her plan to trick Katherine by essentially “killing him” with kindness, responding to his every negative word with positivity. In the 1976 production, there is a moment before either of them speaks where both Katherine and Petruchio look each other up-and-down, obviously flirtatiously checking one another out. Katherine even takes a moment to smile slyly to the audience as she stands behind Petruchio, implying that she finds him attractive. This moment is almost exactly mirrored in the 2019 version, when, as the male Katherine descended a staircase to the couple’s meeting place, Petruchia looks out at the audience and gives a similar sly smile, once again priming the audience for a playful and highly stylized wooing scene, with many moments of flirtation and delight.

In the 1976 production, that flirtation and delight is exactly what the audience sees. The show continues its theme of slapstick comedy and pseudo-violence along the lines of *The Three Stooges*. This *commedia dell'arte* style of highly choreographed pseudo-violence is mixed with the flirtatious nature of the characters' lines, allowing Katherine and Petruchio to engage in a push-and-pull tension, but never truly hurting one another, either their bodies or their feelings. For example, with the following dialogue:

Pet. Thou hast hit it. Come, sit on me.

Kath. Asses are made to bear, and so are you. (2.1.210)

Petruchio and Katherine can verbally riff with one another. When Petruchio insinuates that Katherine might “sit” on him (a patriarchal move), Katherine flips that idea of bearing weight, likening him to a donkey transporting goods. This wordplay is clever because she is calling him an animal, but the line is, of course, doubly intelligent because she is also calling him an ass. Yet what makes this short textual moment truly brilliant is that the text lends itself to an interpretation of their mutual sexual attraction as well. Petruchio's line (“Come, sit on me”) may be read as an overzealous and inappropriate come-on from Petruchio communicating his attraction to her, and also his belief that Katherine must be attracted to him. Of course, while this statement may also be read as a command in an abusive conceit (as with the 2008 production) where Katherine might be physically forced to sit on Petruchio against her will, in both 1976 and in 2019, the scene

was played much more sweetly, a moment of teasing with the possibility for some physical intimacy in which Katherine and Petruchio sit close together.

As such, this moment is brilliant for a third and final reason: while it hints at the sexual or romantic nature of the dynamic between these two characters, it also allows a place for physicality. Thus, in the 1976 production of the play, in the actors' rugged push-pull dynamic, Katherine is swept onto Petruchio's knee, almost like a choreographed dance move, and then she springs right back up to spar with him. This action makes sense when the two continue their already established comedic pseudo-violence. Katherine hits Petruchio as specified in Shakespeare's own stage direction ("She strikes him") with an over-exaggerated stage slap. When he replies, in turn, "I swear I'll cuff you if you strike again," it makes sense that Katherine looks at the audience, shrugs, and with a comedic wind-up and a clear fake-hitting sound from a musician on stage, she bonks him again (2.1.234). After this moment, the two actors roll on top of one another and pull on each other's hair, so that when Katherine's father, Baptista, re-enters the stage and Petruchio explains that they are in love, the tone through the characters' actions continues to make sense. As Katherine tries to "fight back," Petruchio tosses Katherine back and forth in his arms and even holds her momentarily over his head, like figure-skaters in a dance round.

However, the similarities between Audibert's 2019 RSC production and the 1976 production come to an end here, despite the fact that Audibert is also interested in a play that depicts in-betweenness when it comes to male and female relationships. For instance, the result of the 2019 wooing scene creates confusion rather than sexual chemistry. The male Katherine who had been so aggressive with his garish drumstick-eating and his

shoe-throwing is moved in a matter of moments from being overly aggressive to passivity and finally to silence, this time when Baptista comes back on stage to see how the wooing has gone. Petruchia says that they'll be married on Sunday, and after the male Katherine responds, "I'll see thee hanged on Sunday first," there is a long period of time when he falls completely silent (2.1.316). This silence in itself speaks volumes. In the 1976 production, Katherine's lack of speech is compensated by her exaggerated expressions to the audience; her comedic body becomes her language as Petruchio "dances" with her through their choreography. However, in the 2019 production, the audience is left with no real understanding of the male Katherine's silence. Katherine simply take his seat on a piano bench and does nothing but remain quiet as Petruchia dictates his fate along with Katherine's father. To me, this shift was a jarring and unexplained transition, and tonally altered the play from chaotic and brash and electric to cold and quiet.

Even though it wasn't completely credible, Audibert made the decision to shift his tone from something excessive to something more interior and reserved in order for his production—in performance at the height of the #MeToo movement in England and the United States—to try to speak to his central concept. His production asked, what if England lived under a matriarchy? However, the answers Audibert offers to this question are, at least to me, more confusing than complicated.

On one hand, this production was fairly brutal to the male Katherine; throughout the taming scenes, Katherine seemed to be truly starved and sleep-deprived in a way that was all too serious and not played for laughs. He was dressed in a ragged nightgown that

was purposefully revealing, showing off his very thin and hairy legs. The director chose to make him look starved and weak, and with his short-cropped hair and dirt-smudged face, he was anything but bombastic, sexy, or comedic. Audibert's version of Katherine was a Katherine with his heart cut out; there was no feistiness, no shrewishness, but rather a broken man. Additionally, the actor playing Katherine delivered his lines either robotically or, on occasion, breaking into a desperate anger. Despite his gender identity, to viewers it was clear that he was in no way in control of this situation. This depiction of a female breaking down the will of a male was unsettling enough to some members of the audience that, after the intermission, they didn't come back to watch the rest of the show.

On the other hand, though, the male version of Katherine became a kind of "mentor" to the men (and women) in the audience who stayed after intermission. While a female subjugated a male in this version of the show, apparently this choice was because Audibert wanted this male to be able to deliver the final monologue about subservience of wives to husbands as both a satire and as a commentary on sexism and sexual harassment in modern-day Britain. When Audibert's male Katherine delivered the lines "Thy [wife] is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper, / Thy head, thy sovereign," he was re-dressed in clean, good clothes, and once again had his drumstick, eating heartily (5.2.62-63). Furthermore, this male Katherine was seated on the floor with the rest of the men, and all of the pain the audience seemed to see in the previous "taming" scenes was now erased.

What, then, does this choice mean—to have a man deliver these lines about obedience and subservience within marriage instead of a woman? Since the actor's did not present Petruchio's monologue as that of a broken man, I believe Audibert's

directorial desire was an attempt to rouse the male members of his audience. The male Katherine delivered this monologue—in which Shakespeare includes a final image of “placing your hands below your [wife’s] foot”—in a clear, measured, and serious tone, without a hint of irony or sadness (5.2.93). Audibert even directed him to stand up, open his arms, and address the watching audience rather than the stage audience attending this feast. The male Katherine looked out at the audience and told them in so many words to “respect their wives” as well as love them. Moreover, by breaking the imaginary fourth wall of the stage for the only time in the whole production at this very moment, I believe Audibert signified that this monologue was the most important moment of his production, as the male Katherine gives it to the men of our own world, not the men of the play.

While I find this approach to *Taming* intriguing, I don’t think Audibert’s directorial decisions were ultimately successful because the ending stole power from the production’s women as well as from the women in the audience. Audibert’s ending made the point that men will only listen to the plights of women if a testament about those plights comes out of another man’s mouth. Thus, the audience was made aware that we, the audience, were still in a patriarchy rather than a matriarchy, and a man called Katherine just told us to be nicer to women. The witnesses in the audience, then, were left with a play that didn’t actually work with a complex concept of gender, or with an intriguing and layered dynamic between Katherine and Petruchia. Rather, we were shown a man who had suffered in the world of the play as women do every day, although, ironically, at the hands of a female villain in the form of this woman named Petruchia. For she must be a “villain” in having her husband sit at her feet on a pillow like a dog.

Audibert's production actually villainized women in an attempt to make clear the aggressions of men in the flesh-and-blood world beyond the theater. In an interview about his production, Audibert described what he anticipated would be the effect on his audience: "Representation-wise it's going to be f\*\*\*ing great, seeing all these powerful women really embodying these front-footed characters" (Mountford). However, I'd say that these women weren't "front-footed" as much as they were stereotypically sexist within the bounds of the performance, but then shown to be the *victims* of sexism, at least as soon as they took off their costumes and walked into the street next to the theatre.

While Audibert's production of *Taming* demonstrated a mélange of possibilities and wanted to make an intricate commentary on gender and power for the modern day, the production failed to do so because, while Audibert had an idea of *how* to say what he wanted, he had no real idea of *what* he wanted to say. Without a clear concept or spine, his serio-comedy fell flat on its face.

#### **IV. Adapting and Directing the Play**

##### *The Overall Vision and Approach*

“Taming of the Shrew(s)” was a play whose many adaptations were everchanging throughout the process of mounting the production. The script as it stands now represents my initial adaptation choices, the moments created collaboratively through the process of devising, and the changes I made to the text to better serve the production in the weeks before opening.

This project was unlike my experience with other productions because we were able to take full liberty with Shakespeare’s text without violating copyright, and because this project at its foundation was deeply collaborative. Also, as the director, I had to be flexible with the many challenges that occurred during the production while still making the difficult decisions to help make the final project the best it could be. Therefore, the adaptation and direction of this play are two halves of the same whole. I could not have created this piece without directing this piece.

For this reason, I will talk about my adaptive work in three sections: 1) the initial cutting and shaping of Shakespeare’s text; 2) the conception and creation of the framing device, the moments of narration, and the transitional moments; and 3) the further adaptation through the rehearsal process.

##### *Adapting Shakespeare’s Text*

I began by reducing Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew* to a text that would take about twenty-five minutes to read out loud. I did this project with the aid of Dr. Roger Cognard, who served as a dramaturg at Nebraska Wesleyan University for its twenty

Shakespeare plays since 1999, and who, as an English Professor, taught Shakespeare for thirty-seven years. He reviewed my work and provided feedback on my ideas.

I knew that the key to adapting *Taming of the Shrew* was to give the audience enough information to understand the relevant plot points of Shakespeare's play without going so far as to include scenes that bored them by the third rendition. I knew that striking this balance was crucial to keeping the audience engaged. Since my passion for this project came from exploring Petruchio and Katherine's relationship, my adaptation was in service to that relationship. I emphasized their principal scenes to explore their dynamic, including their first meeting (the "wooing scene"), their arrival at Petruchio's house after the wedding (including Petruchio's first soliloquy to the audience), Petruchio's process of taming Katherine, Petruchio's gaslighting of Katherine on their way to her father's house, and finally, the feast scene, in which Katherine delivers her final and problematic monologue.

After deciding these scenes were necessary anchor points of the Katherine and Petruchio relationship—and therefore necessary for demonstrating the specific differences in each rendition's interpretation of their relationship—I was left with a script that didn't quite make sense. There were references to characters and plot points unknown to an audience viewing *Taming* for the first time; and because the script was primarily Katherine and Petruchio's dialogue, it was unclear who they were, independent of their meeting one another. My initial script omitted major plot points, like the fact that Katherine and Petruchio marry. In short, to an audience, scenes with only *pivotal* moments between Katherine and Petruchio would be confusing at best.

For example, if the audience didn't understand that the people in the community where Katherine grew up, her father included, see her as a wild "devilish spirit," then the wager the men make in the final scene (that their wives will come when they are called) makes less sense (2.1.27). Baptista comments that Petruchio has the "veriest shrew of all" (5.2.66), and the other men agree; and it is on that supposition that they assume that Katherine will never come when called—and their money is safe. This scene in each version is the key moment when Katherine shocks everyone at the feast by coming when called. In the first version, she comes because she has concluded that if she goes along with what Petruchio says, she can ultimately control their dynamic, playing him as he plays her, and her monologue is a performance with sardonic undertones. In the second iteration, she comes because she has been brutalized at the hands of Petruchio and does his bidding as an act of self-preservation. Her final monologue is the speech of a truly broken woman forcing her family and everyone at the feast to confront the horrible situation into which they have pushed her. In the third version, she comes because Katherine and Petruchio have planned this moment from their very first meeting as a form of retribution for a family that so judged Katherine, and her final monologue is a speech of victory for her and Petruchio—a grand show to make fun of the people at the feast. If the intention in version three is not crystal clear, then the play as a whole does not make sense. Petruchio's show of "taming" Katherine in front of other characters to perpetuate the perception of Katherine as shrewish for this final moment of payoff becomes muddled, and their whole relationship of connection and the concept that they are in cahoots from the beginning is obscured.

For this reason, there were many key moments outside the Petruchio-and-Katherine relationship that I needed to include in the script as a sort of narrational glue that gave context to plot points, characters, and settings that would have otherwise been missing. These moments included scenes like 1) Katherine's father Baptista declaring that no one can marry his younger daughter Bianca until someone marries Katherine; 2) an introduction of Katherine and Bianca in a moment of conflict; 3) a brief introduction of Bianca's suitors, Hortensio and Lucentio, so their presence at the final feast makes sense; 4) the discussion of Katherine and Petruchio's marriage between Grumio and Tranio; and 5) Petruchio's servants discussing their master and mistress coming home to Petruchio's house.

With this complex list of scenes and characters, I had a difficult problem. It was always my intent to have a cast of only the six actors playing the three versions of Katherine and Petruchio. I had this intention because, as I mentioned above, the Katherine and Petruchio relationship is what this whole play is based upon—and I knew the more actors I had, the more complicated the production would become and the more diluted the central relationship would become. After all, this project was to be a production of “Taming of the Shrew(s),” not just a reduced *Taming of the Shrew*. Simply put, the question facing me was: how can I keep this adaptation under twenty-five minutes and add all the necessary narrational glue without having more than six cast members and cutting any unnecessary plot lines that distract from the central plot and relationship?

My solution had to be creative and intentional, beginning with my double-casting of the production. In any moment when actors were not playing Katherine or Petruchio, they would need to step in as all the other background characters, filling in the world of the play. Each character would wear a single defining costume piece to denote who they were at any given time. To make this character breakdown all work, I had to condense characters from Shakespeare's original *Taming*. Gremio and Hortensio, Bianca's two suitors, simply became Hortensio. Lucentio and his servant Tranio became just Lucentio, cutting the entire plotline in *Taming* where Tranio disguises himself as Lucentio and Lucentio disguises himself as a tutor to sneak into Baptista's house to see Bianca. This choice meant, for example, that while I kept Shakespeare's lines of text the same, "The discussion of Katherine and Petruchio's marriage between Grumio and Tranio," as discussed above, became a discussion of Katherine and Petruchio's marriage between Hortensio and Lucentio. I also wove in other lines, such as Hortensio's "I will be married to a wealthy widow," from Shakespeare's original, creating context that would later be important when Hortensio arrives at the feast married to a wealthy widow, who provokes Katherine to anger (4.2.37).

I began by deciding which characters were absolutely necessary by working backward from the feast scene, where the three couples—Katherine and Petruchio, Hortensio and Widow, Lucentio and Bianca—are all needed on stage at the same time to have the final wager make sense. When all of the condensing and redistributing was done, I was left with a script with eight background characters: Bianca, Baptista, Hortensio, Lucentio, Grumio, Curtis, Vincentio, and Widow. Each actor had a character

track, so there was never a moment in which any actor's different characters were needed onstage at the same time. Each Petruchio played Petruchio, Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, and Vincentio by the end of the show, while each Katherine played Katherine, Bianca, Curtis, Baptista, and Widow by the end of the show. In this way, a cast of six was able to play a show with ten characters, as represented by the character tracks below:

<p>KATHERINE ONE Act 1: Katherine Act 2: Bianca/Curtis Act 3: Baptista/Widow</p>	<p>KATHERINE TWO Act 1: Baptista/Widow Act 2: Katherine Act 3: Bianca/Curtis</p>	<p>KATHERINE THREE Act 1: Bianca/Curtis Act 2: Baptista/Widow Act 3: Katherine</p>
<p>PETRUCHIO ONE Act 1: Petruchio Act 2: Hortensio/Grumio Act 3: Lucentio/Vincentio</p>	<p>PETRUCHIO TWO Act 1: Lucentio/Vincentio Act 2: Petruchio Act 3: Hortensio/Grumio</p>	<p>PETRUCHIO THREE Act 1: Hortensio/Grumio Act 2: Lucentio/Vincentio Act 3: Petruchio</p>

The only snag was Biondello. In the final feast scene, all six actors are needed on stage to play the three couples involved in the wager that ends the play. This meant that there was no one to play the servant who the men send to call each of their wives as the wager plays out. To solve this problem, I decided that this moment without a Biondello could either become a comedic gag moment (where the actors bring someone from the audience on stage and give script), or—if that idea didn't work—I could step in and take Biondello's three lines.

With all of these decisions made, I went about evaluating every line, making sure I had only what was absolutely necessary: the meat of my show; the anchor moments between Katherine and Petruchio; and the barest narrational glue to make the Katherine

and Petruchio scenes hang together. I evaluated each sentence, and I did make cuts, even to some of Katherine and Petruchio's lines. For instance, I cut a section from Petruchio's monologue to the audience:

My falcon now is sharp and passing empty,  
 And, till she stoop, she must not be full-gorged,  
 For then she never looks upon her lure.  
 Another way I have to man my haggard,  
 To make her come and know her keeper's call.  
 That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites  
 That bate and beat and will not be obedient (4.1.190-196)

I cut this section because the rest of Petruchio's monologue already communicates the same sentiment; and the falconry metaphor, while fascinating, might have left some audience members who were unfamiliar with the practices of Renaissance falconry in the dark. With each scene precisely decided upon, each character selected, and each line evaluated, I was ready to send the script to my actors.

### *The Concept and Conceit*

As I mentioned above, the adaptation process and directorial process were intertwined, neither being able to happen without the other; so, before I discuss the rest of the adaptive processes, it's necessary to understand the sequence of constructing this production as a director, and the conceptual and conceit choices I made along the way.

I will begin with the “spine” of my production. The “spine” of a play or scene is the core idea with which the director would like to work. It will influence the choices the director makes, both in terms of the story she wants to tell and the technical choices she makes. My spine was as follows:

People and relationships are complex and changeable, and all of these things are simultaneously true: there is unlikely joy and companionship that flourishes from the delight of sparring with a well-matched individual in a battle of wits; quiet yet biting resilience and strength that grows from being owned, beaten, isolated, and deprived; and—from similar roots of familial neglect—a love connection that can be found in unexpected places and ways.

I built the concept for my show, incorporating the three versions, three sets of lead actors, and three drastically different interpretations, on this idea of complexity and changeability, and my fascination with how the exact same text could play in such wildly different ways. The technical and design choices (i.e., my conceit) that I made for this play were all in service to this concept, and the spine focused on preserving a minimal aesthetic that feels out of space and time. My intent was that this approach would allow the audience to focus fully on the central relationships between the Katherines and Petruchios without feeling rooted to any one era specifically, enjoying Shakespeare’s language as a tale that reflects the human dynamic in many places and times in human history. Love, betrayal, violence, and wit are not confined to any one historical period.

*The Scenery, Space, and Props*

My intent was to focus on Shakespeare's language and how that language can give rise to distinct relationship possibilities between the two major characters, rather than to display the grandeur of elaborate scenery, which could take the audience's eye away from the human and humanizing interaction of two dynamic, witty, sometimes insecure, sometimes brutal, but always intriguing characters. For this reason, I had a very minimal scenic design that included being six wooden chairs, a costume rack, and a coat rack. I made this choice to evoke a simple-looking stage that allowed the audience to immerse themselves into the life the actors brought to each version. (I will discuss these technical decisions more in my second section on adaptation, as my scenic choices are deeply linked to the framing device I used for my production.)

I also used the atmosphere of the space itself in my adaptation. I decided to stage my play in Bucknell Hall, both for its intimacy and church-like qualities. I also believed Bucknell Hall would parallel spaces like Shakespeare's intimate Globe Theatre in London. The Globe allows for standing audience members or "groundlings" to virtually surround the actors and, sometimes, even become part of the action of the play (often actors at the Globe spoke directly to the groundlings and even declaimed directly to the audience). Bucknell Hall would provide my audience an intimate relationship with the actors and all three of my interpretations. I decided to use the piano on the Bucknell Hall stage as a set piece, incorporating both the piano and its bench into my scenes. Though my props were minimalistic, the piano brought beauty to the stage. I also used the piano to create intimacy between Katherine and Petruchio in the third rendition. Moreover, I

wanted this space to feel interactive. I did this by utilizing the features of the space. The lights in Bucknell Hall never fully dimmed into darkness and so the audience was never truly separated from the actors. The stage was only about a foot off the ground, creating only a slight separation. The actors walked through the center aisle in audience amid their scene transitions. My intent was that these devices would make the audience feel like a part of the show. As characters spoke directly to the audience, my hope was that my audience was able to see their own lives, their own uncertainties, their own complex and sometimes difficult or even devastating and very human relationships up close and personal.

As with the scenery, my envisioning of the props was that simple pieces wouldn't feel rooted in any one era, but rather could represent multiple time periods and places, in essence helping to set the piece outside any real time or space. For this reason, I chose simple metal plates; a basic, braided white rope; and other, similar items to be only those props that were absolutely necessary.

### *The Costumes*

To enhance this creative approach to *The Taming of the Shrew*, I planned to have simple, modern costuming with distinctive pieces to distinguish one character from another. I decided to conceive of this approach as "Modern Renaissance," pulling from the silhouettes and styles of the Renaissance with modern clothing pieces. This approach allowed me to remain in an out-of-space-and-time setting while still evoking both the era when the play was written as well as the real time in which my audience would see the performance. I worked with color as my main tool to create distinctions between each

iteration of Katherine, as well as to illustrate different permutations in the relationship between each Katherine and Petruchio.

Because I was working with a small cast to keep the audience's focus on the fraught and ever-changing dynamic between Katherine and Petruchio, I intended to work mainly on their costumes in my renderings (Appendix 8). For the background characters, I wanted the costumes to be focused on dramatic outerwear so they could be slipped quickly over clothing as characters stepped into other roles, like those of Bianca or the Widow or Vincentio.

### *The Process of Auditions and Callbacks*

Since my production took place in the Fall of 2021, I had the advantage of being able to cast my actors at the end of the Spring 2021 semester. I held the auditions over Zoom and consisted of each actor presenting a Shakespearean monologue (or reading the Katherine or Petruchio monologue I provided). During this initial round of auditions, I focused my attention primarily on how the actors worked with the Shakespearean language, on whether they had taken the time to look up words they didn't know, and whether they had the capability to not only speak the lines, but understand them.

I was lucky to have a very talented and dedicated pool of actors who auditioned, and I brought many of them back for callbacks. The callback process focused on gauging the different chemistries between actors, and on determining who was best suited to play each rendition of Katherine. My initial vision for the play required only one male actor to play all three versions of Petruchio. However, while watching callbacks I struggled with the fact that, while I had a plethora of talented actors auditioning for Petruchio, I didn't

see one man who could play equally well a comedic lead, a romantic lead, and a villain. At this moment, after my first round of auditions, that I did what every director must do, especially amid a pandemic. I adapted my initial plan.

I decided that, though my initial proposal centered three Katherines and one Petruchio, I would instead look for three Katherines and three Petruchios. This decision turned out to be one of my best as it provided clear differences between each rendition and actually prevented the production from centering Petruchio, as my initial plan might have. Instead, the production came to center each version of Katherine; with three of them carrying the narrative force, each individual Katherine had to battle her own Petruchio—and then find strength in processing her experience together with those of the other two.

During the callbacks, then, my primary mission was to decide which of the men and women paired well and could best represent each rendition. For this exercise, I broke down the scene in which Katherine and Petruchio meet into three different sections and tasked each pair to present the first section like a comedy, the second like a tragedy, and the third like a love story. This exercise allowed me to see the range of the actors, their creativity in working together on the fly, and the versions they most brought to life through their acting.

In my casting of version one, I was drawn to a Petruchio who would never present as a true threat to Katherine; an actor whose talent could portray his Petruchio with a nervous and endearing edge, especially when paired with a woman who had a bold physical presence and whose capability with movement suited her to the physical comedy

of the first version. In casting version two, I chose a Petruchio who had a great command of the language and whose physicality was bold and assertive. He was able to walk the line between a character who could play angry, and yet one who was still in control. My version-two Katherine was able to use her natural silence to her advantage. Her Katherine had a dignified stage presence, and she was able to convey the war in Katherine's head between her dignity and her struggle to survive with an abusive Petruchio. The casting of my third Katherine and Petruchio hinged on both of their abilities with subtlety. The Petruchio I cast was able to play the saddened man Petruchio is at the beginning of version three, as well as the goofball he turns into when he is around Katherine. My Katherine, on the other hand, was able to switch back and forth between being haughty, and being genuinely in love. While I called back many people it was clear that these six, especially based on their individual talents and chemistry, were the perfect group to work with in this process. I gave them the summer to memorize their lines.

#### *The Induction: A Framing Device*

Now that I had a text and a cast to use for each version, I turned my attention to combining my three versions of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* into a single piece of theatre: "Taming of the Shrew(s)." In order to tackle this task, I decided that the production needed a framing device. I wanted moments of narration that would begin and end the show and help the audience to understand what the cast and I were trying to achieve.

I had already decided that the scenery for my show would be exceedingly minimalistic, with six wooden chairs as our only movable furniture. And because the

production was about how Katherine and Petruchio interact, creating a whole new world for each version would not have served the play. Scene transitions would need to be quick to keep the audience engaged. In even larger measure, because the actors shift through all the characters in the production, it would be clear that this production was not trying to suspend audience disbelief or imagine that the world of this show was “real.” Instead, I wanted them to allow themselves to become engrossed in each version, regardless of the fact that they were seeing the same essential “plot” three different times. For this reason, I wanted not only a minimalistic set, but I also wanted my costume rack and costume changes visible onstage, along with only simple and necessary props. This conceit choice allowed the production to cut out the background noise of extraneous props and set pieces and to highlight the text between Katherine and Petruchio.

For all of these reasons, I decided to frame the entire show as a company of actors coming together to rehearse a production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. This metatheatrical device allowed the characters to provide meta-commentary. Consequently, the female actors not only played Katherine, but also provided comment to the audience about their experience of playing her. This framing device also allowed the minimalistic scenery and costume rack to become a part of a “rehearsal room,” making the three versions function as a whole play. This approach inspired me to create prompt books for each of the background characters, with their names printed clearly on the front, making the double-casting and character tracks even more clear for the audience. With all of these decisions made, I set out to create a beginning to the production that explained this concept to the audience. For inspiration, I turned to Shakespeare’s original text.

Shakespeare’s play begins with an “induction” scene (often cut in production) in which a poor beggar, Christopher Sly, is dressed as a rich man and presented with the play that becomes *The Taming of the Shrew*. This plot device makes the entirety of *Shrew*, in essence, a play within a play. As a nod to this induction scene, I decided to include an induction scene of my own which would help contextualize Shakespeare’s play for the audience and explain its basic plot points. Because my script was honed down to just the key scenes between Katherine and Petruchio, I wanted to make sure an audience unfamiliar with Shakespeare’s original play would have a sense of the setting for, and background of, the main characters. For this reason, I began the play with a rundown of what happens in the show, with these speeches:

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

I think we can do that. *To the cast.* Right guys? Well, let’s see: in 1564, William Shakespeare, the greatest dramatist in all of history (*she winks*) was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, and in his play, *The Taming of the Shrew*, the play’s—

PETRUCHIO TWO

Hero, Petruchio—

KATHERINE THREE

Don’t you mean the play’s shrew?

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Whoever he is, comes to Padua in search of riches and he finds what he is looking for in—

KATHERINE ONE

The play's hero, Katherine.

PETRUCHIO ONE

Uh, The play's shrew.

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Well, whether hero or shrew, her father Baptista has declared that no one can marry her younger sister Bianca until Katherine herself first be married. And has offered a tremendous dowry to the man brave enough to woo her for his wife. And so rather than live a wealthy but woeful existence, Petruchio—

PETRUCHIO THREE

Decides to change the world to fit his means—

PETRUCHIO TWO

And tame his wild wife—

DIRECTOR KATHERINE

In...

ALL

*The Taming of the Shrew!*

In addition to its contextual overview, the induction serves another purpose. “Taming of the Shrew(s)” evolved beyond the original idea for this project (of simply one script presented three times) and became a performance text in and of itself. It became a play that asks the audience both to see the variability of the text, and also to wrestle with how

they believe Shakespeare’s play can—or should— be performed. To achieve this goal, the show is framed as a company of actors coming together to perform *Taming of the Shrew*, yes; but the company is unsure how to perform *Taming*, the company follows the instincts of the three women on stage when each actor explains her interpretation of the text and then “shows” the others by playing her interpretation out in each version. This production then became not just *The Taming of the Shrew*, but “Taming of the Shrew(s),” a play in which, like Shakespeare’s, the entire story line is framed as a play within a play. The beginning of our production therefore was the hypothesis of our project, helping the audience to understand why we’re presenting more than one version of the same script: the “company of actors” has a chance to wrestle with the central question of the text, i.e., How can we—or perhaps how should we— perform *The Taming of the Shrew*?

KATHERINE ONE

“*Shrew* as a play “may be untamable”...there may not be a way to subvert the inherent sexism of the text.”—The Brooklyn Rail.

KATHERINE TWO

Well, I did some reading on the way over here, and in *The Guardian*, it says that “Katherine is rescued by... P... Pe”—What was his name?

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Petruchio.

KATHERINE THREE

“Petruchio: if she didn’t marry him... she would go from shrew to witch and end her days as a madwoman....” That is not a woman being crushed.

### KATHERINE THREE

How can we perform *The Taming of the Shrew*? Are the relationship norms it promotes unhealthy?

Thus, my overall framing device, with its minimalistic set and explanatory induction, firmly created the world of our show. The audience was able to suspend their disbelief when the set is merely wooden chairs and a piano, because it is just a rehearsal room. The rack of costumes to the side of the stage also makes sense, bringing front and center a bit of the world that is traditionally backstage. With this framing device in mind, my cast and I were able to dive headfirst into the rest of our play.

#### *Devising the Transitions*

I took a theatre class in the practice of “Devising” with Anjalee Hutchinson during my sophomore year. In this course, I studied a collaborative, improvisational process in which a script and performance originate via active, group-made creation. In explaining this process, Moises Kaufman states:

The creation of a majority of contemporary plays – at least in the United States – most often begins with a playwright sitting in a room alone and creating a text.... The role of all the other theatre artists in this model (the director, the actors, the designer) is to *interpret* the text that the author wrote and to breathe life into it onstage. This method is very well suited for some forms of theatre, like realism

and naturalism, but not so for others, whereas *devised theatre* is used to describe creative processes in which a script is developed through improvisation and collaborative group work.... If we want to explore how the *theatre – not just text* – is able to tell a story, it behooves us to create that story in the rehearsal room using all the elements of stage. (Kaufman et al. 19-20)

With this process in mind, I had three goals for the transitional moments in between each version: 1) I wanted to show the audience the clear transition from one Katherine taking the stage to the next; 2) I wanted to allow the actors time to change the set and costumes as necessary; 3) I wanted the Katherines, as “actors,” to be able to comment on the version that they were about the play out, and on why they believe that it’s an important way to play *Taming*.

Because this approach centers on the concept of actors discussing how to perform a production of *Taming*, it only made sense that these moments should be created together between the actors and myself. As Kaufman states, we would explore how “theatre...is able to tell a story” (20). To this end, I had some rehearsals with the actors playing Katherine, where we used improvisation to create the moments in between each version. As noted in *Moment Work*, I Created these moments by working with both “form” and “content.” Form is the manner in which one creates theatre; for example, shadow work, voiceover work, lighting effects, and a quick or slow tempo are all forms that theatre creators could work with. Content, on the other hand, is the subject that the moment of theatre is about.

Because the actors and I had a limited rehearsal time, I took a streamlined approach to the devising technique, using it as a focused tool to create the production rather than leading my actors through a full devising process. To lead my actors through this process, I was very specific in which forms and content I gave to my actors so that we could begin creating immediately. I assigned a form to each Katherine, and a prompt for her to begin thinking about content. I also opened up the use of what devising calls “found text,” to take the pressure off the actors and do less of the “playwright sitting in a room alone and creating a text” (Kaufman et al 19). I allowed my actors to use any combination of 1) text from any Shakespeare play; 2) text from any of the articles critiquing *Taming of the Shrew* (with proper citation of course); and 3) statistics from any reputable source (with proper citation). I also allowed them to add text of their own creation. One can see my form and content prompts in the table below:

<b>KATHERINE</b>	<b>FORM</b>	<b>CONTENT PROMPT</b>
<b>KATHERINE ONE</b>	Synchronized Speech; when multiple people speak the same lines at the same time.	How can <i>Taming of the Shrew</i> be performed? Can it be performed?
<b>KATHERINE TWO</b>	Levels; actors on higher and lower levels displaying shifts in power dynamics.	How is domestic violence forgotten and erased?
<b>KATHERINE THREE</b>	Echoing; actors repeating the same lines over and over again.	Where do people find unexpected moments of connection?

The process of devising allows actors to become creators, and with these prompts my actors each had time to create what we call a “moment” and bring it to the group. A theatrical moment is as simple as an actor tying a shoe or as complex as a fully-fledged performance of a musical number. Actors bring these moments into the space and can

enlist the help of any other actors to put the moment before the whole cast. Those moments and ideas then become part of the collective property of the cast, and anyone can add to, or build on, or use aspects of moments presented. As the director, it is then my job to edit and refine the moments brought to fit the transitions needed for the show.

The result of this process was three transitional moments:

***INDUCTION:***

KATHERINE TWO

“The course of true love never did run smooth.”

KATHERINE ONE

“Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,/ Should be so—

ALL

tyrannous—

KATHERINE ONE

and—

ALL

rough in proof.”

KATHERINE TWO

“His unkindness may defeat my life,/ But never taint my love.”

KATHERINE THREE

“Love goes by haps; some Cupid kills with arrows,—

ALL

some with traps.”

KATHERINE ONE

“Cupid is a knavish lad, thus to make—

ALL

females mad.”

KATHERINE THREE

“She’s beautiful,—

KATHERINE TWO

and therefore to be wooed;

KATHERINE ONE

She is woman, and—

ALL

therefore to be won.”

KATHERINE THREE

“I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.”

ALL

“Men’s vows are women’s traitors.”

***TRANSITION ONE:***

KATHERINE TWO

Nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States.

KATHERINE THREE

“The invitation to strike the hunted animal as an instruction for rape belongs to the same imagery as wooing a woman like a soldier.”

KATHERINE ONE

“I myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.”

KATHERINE TWO

Women between the ages of 18 and 24 are most commonly abused by an intimate partner.

KATHERINE THREE

“‘Winning love’ is a common courtship trope, provided she is loved—on a higher position than the man—provided he is hopelessly in love.”

KATHERINE ONE

“And kiss me Kate, we will be married o’ Sunday.”

KATHERINE TWO

Studies suggest that there is a relationship between intimate partner violence and depression.

KATHERINE THREE

“A woman has to be treated like a battlefield on which there can be only winners and losers after brutal combat.”

KATHERINE ONE

“The lady doth protest too much, methinks.”

KATHERINE THREE

“We must try to determine the different ways of not saying things...”

KATHERINE ONE

“...which type of discourse or which form of discretion is authorized in particular situations...”

ALL

“...there is not one silence...”

KATHERINE TWO

“...but many.”

***TRANSITION TWO:***

KATHERINE ONE

“If men could be contented to be what they are, there were no *fear* in marriage.”

KATHERINE THREE

“The course of true love never did run smooth.”

KATHERINE TWO

“We cannot fight for love, as men may do;

We shou’d be woo’d, and were not made to woo.”

KATHERINE THREE

“But where there is true friendship, there needs none.”

KATHERINE ONE

“Love, which teacheth me that thou and I am one.”

KATHERINE TWO

“Say, thou art mine; and ever,  
My love as it begins shall so persevere.”

KATHERINE THREE

“By Heaven, I love thee better than myself.”

*KATHERINE THREE picks up her costume and begins to get dressed with the help of the other women. She begins to speak, and each time she does the other women echo what she says in different intonations, sometimes repeating her words as a statement or as a question. They repeat each phrase until she says another one.*

KATHERINE THREE

I do love nothing. *Women echo.* I do love nothing in the world. *Women echo.* I do love nothing in the world so well as you. *Women echo.* I do love nothing in the world so well as you; is not that strange? *Women echo.* Is not that strange? *Once she is in her costume she thanks the other women.*

Version Three is the “love story,” as inspired by the RSC’s 2003 production of *Taming of the Shrew* directed by Gregory Doran. The script ends with the same Petruchio line each version does: “Why, there’s a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate” (5.2.196). In our final version, this line is followed by a very sweet kiss, and Katherine and Petruchio walk offstage hand-in-hand. This final beat is a feel-good moment, and it was very tempting to end the show right there. However, as I came to realize, although this final moment is the

perfect ending for Version Three, it was not an ending to the whole of “Taming of the Shrew(s)”—and ending on a sweet note wouldn’t do justice to the other two versions that the audience would have experienced.

For this reason, I decided to add one final moment to the end of the production. I created it in a more traditional fashion, as the primary script writer for the moment; however, this creation was still a collaborative project. The idea for my final moment was born from my interest in Katherine’s final monologue—a monologue that can make or break a performance of *Taming*, either selling or undermining its intended message. In “Shrew(s),” we see a sarcastic rendition from Katherine One, a broken woman in Katherine Two, and a woman completely in cahoots with Petruchio in Katherine Three. However, in each rendition of this monologue, we still see a woman verbalizing the same nominally sexist words. In an effort to reclaim this moment for my Katherines, I wanted to give them an opportunity to present the monologue together, and change its meaning in a more profound way by actually changing the text rather than simply overlaying a different interpretation onto the same text. To create this moment, I was inspired by the art form of “found poems,” which, according to The Poetry Foundation, is a “prose text or texts reshaped by a poet ... fragments of found poetry may appear within an original poem as well” (“Found Poem”). I was inspired by the idea of finding the reclamation for Katherine’s final monologue, within the monologue itself. I wanted to reshape Shakespeare’s original text rather than simply commenting on it.

I sat down with my actors playing Katherine, and together we each spent time creating found poems from Katherine’s final monologue. Once we each had one, I edited

them together, creating one cohesive poem. I then assigned each woman text from the monologue to say on her own, as well as the lines of the found poem which the women all said together. Once they performed a streamlined version of the final monologue, they performed it again—but only with the lines they spoke together. This moment then created a hidden poem within Shakespeare’s text and allowed all the Katherines to come together at the end of the show, using the same form of synchronized speech that they used in the induction moment. The result reads as follows:

Katherine One    Katherine Two    Katherine Three    All

KATHERINE

**A woman** moved **is** like a fountain troubled,  
 Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of **beauty**,  
 And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
 Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.  
 Thy husband is thy lord, thy **life**, thy keeper,  
**Thy head**, thy sovereign, **one that cares** for thee,  
 And for thy maintenance **commits** his **body**  
**To painful labor** both by sea and land,  
 To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
 Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe,  
 And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
 But love, fair looks, and true obedience—

**Too little payment for** so great a debt.

Such duty as the subject owes the prince,

Even **such a woman** oweth to her husband.

My mind hath been as big as one of yours,

My heart as great, my reason haply more,

**To bandy word for word and frown for frown;**

**But now I see our lances** are but straws,

**Our strength** as weak, our weakness past compare,

**That seeming to be most which we indeed** least are.

KATHERINES

**A woman is beauty, life, thy head, one that cares, commits body to painful labor. Too little payment for such a woman, to bandy word for word and frown for frown. I see our lances, our strength, That seeming to be most which we indeed . . .**

**are.** The KATHERINES all take a breath together.

*Adapting in Rehearsal*

Throughout the process of rehearsal there I made five notable adaptation changes that. The first was the addition of the character that has come to be known as “Director Katharine,” as inspired by my role in the process. In each transitional moment, there was an interesting discussion of the subsequent scene, like Katherine Two’s quoting of statistics about domestic violence and abuse with her line, “women between the ages of

18 and 24 are most commonly abused by an intimate partner.” However, the framing device of the acting company seemed to lose its specificity in the transitional moments. For this reason, I extended that device with the use of Director Katharine, providing the Katherines with an avenue to discuss the experience of the previous version while introducing the next. Director Katharine would repeatedly ask the question, “What is this play, a comedy or a tragedy?” After each Katherine argued for the version she believed in she followed with the line, “Let me show you,” propelling the next rendition of the production. For example, from Transition Two:

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

*Clapping solemnly and rising. House lights come up.* How was that?

KATHERINE TWO

Rough.

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Yeah, it was. So *Taming of the Shrew* is a tragedy then?

KATHERINE THREE

I don't know. I mean, I think you're right. We need to address the sexism that is inherent to the text, and you did it beautifully, but I just think there's more to the story that you might not be considering. Rather than just tragedy or comedy, it could be something in between. Like what if Petruchio and Katherine really fall in love?

KATHERINE ONE

Hmm?

KATHERINE THREE

Yeah! Right at the beginning, what if they actually have a connection?

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Huh?

KATHERINE THREE

Ooh! What if right at the beginning they plan the bet at the end of the play as a way to get back at all the people who doubted them? *She notices the quizzical looks on the other Katherines' faces.* Here, just let me show you.

This change made the whole show feel more cohesive; it allowed the transitional moments to help lead the audience to know what interpretational variations to be looking for, and spot the differences more clearly. The second addition on that note was the official decision for Director Katharine to play Biondello, for both comedic and logistical reasons (as explained in the section on adapting the text).

The third addition was to have background characters provide even more context for the audience about setting and character. This decision included characters in the first version holding up their scripts and introducing themselves. This addition also included actors announcing settings, such as “Petruccio’s house” and “The feast at Baptista’s house to celebrate the marriage of Lucentio and Bianca.” This addition also included making temporal shifts clear; for example, after Petruccio ends scene one with “We will be married on Sunday,” an actor offstage loudly announces “Sunday!” and begins to “Ding-dong,” mimicking the sound of church bells. This addition was necessary to make

the condensed version of the script and double-casting as clear as possible for the audience.

The fourth addition was in response to our discovery that the production as a whole was running much longer than the expected ninety minutes. I realized that even though my cutting of the script was very selective about which moments of dialogue between background characters were kept, it still, by the third version, felt very repetitive. In order to reduce that repetitiveness, I decided to cut some of the superfluous lines from Version Two. I also framed the third version as a “speed-run.” Therefore, many moments between background characters became a modern paraphrased version of Shakespeare’s text. For example, Hortensio and Lucentio’s discussing the wedding shifts from:

LUCENTIO

Signior Hortensio, came you from the church?

HORTENSIO

As willingly as e’er I came from school.

Why, he’s a devil, a devil, a very fiend.

I’ll tell you, Sir Lucentio, when the priest

Should ask if Katherine should be his wife,

“Ay, by gog’s wouns!” quoth he, and swore so loud

That, all amazed, the priest let fall the book,

And as he stooped again to take it up,

This mad-brained bridegroom took him such a cuff

That down fell priest and book, and book and priest.

Such a mad marriage never was before!

And so farewell, Signior Lucentio.

Kindness in women, not their beauteous looks,

Shall win my love. And so I take my leave.

I will be married to a wealthy widow!

LUCENTIO

And I in plainness do confess to thee

I burn, I pine, I perish, Hortensio,

If I achieve not the young Bianca.

Farewell—for the love I bear Bianca!

to the following:

LUCENTIO

Were you at the wedding?

HORTENSIO

Yeah.

LUCENTIO

Did it suck?

HORTENSIO

Yeah.

This change added comedy to the third version, while also sparing the audience the same explanation of context and narrational glue that they were already aware of. Changes such as this also cut our running time by fifteen minutes.

The last change was to give more clarity to the final moment. I wanted our audience to leave with a clear understanding of the play's central idea—which, as I said in my discussion of the play's "spine," was that "people and relationships are complex and changeable, and all of these statements are simultaneously true: there is unlikely joy and companionship that flourishes from the delight of sparring with a well-matched individual in a battle of wits; quiet yet biting resilience and strength that grows from being owned, beaten, isolated, and deprived; and—from similar roots of familial neglect—a love connection that can be found in unexpected places and ways.

The key part of that spine is that all the renditions are "simultaneously true." There is no one single way to perform *Taming of the Shrew*; rather, in order to perform this play, it is important to give voice to multiple options. The production that myself and my actors put on did not aim to provide answers, but rather about inspiring conversation. For that reason, I added some text to the final moment of found poetry by integrating the Director Katharine character back into the mix, having her ask her repeated question one final time right before the Katherines perform their monologue and poem:

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

*Clapping.* Excellent, you guys, really excellent. So, have we decided? What is *Taming of the Shrew*? A comedy, a tragedy, a bit of both?

KATHERINE ONE

Well, I don't think it's just a comedy.

KATHERINE TWO

And I don't think it's just a tragedy.

KATHERINE THREE

And I don't think it's just a bit of both.

KATHERINE ONE

Women have lived all of these stories. They have been shrewish and strong.

KATHERINE TWO

They have been beaten and resilient.

KATHERINE THREE

They have loved and been loved.

KATHERINE ONE

A woman—

KATHERINE TWO

A woman—

KATHERINE THREE

A woman—

ALL

A woman—

The result was a self-contained short play that I hoped would be compelling to a modern audience, even one unfamiliar with the original *Taming*.

### *Directing Each Version*

After I created the script, my intent was to explore possibilities inherent in the power dynamics between each Katherine and her Petruchio through my role as a director. Specifically, having studied the written text, having seen recent professional productions, and having examined the performance history of this play, I offer three ways to interpret the gendered and problematic power dynamics between Katherine and Petruchio, each distinct but also contradictory, which compels the joint questions: Who exactly is the “shrew?” Who exactly is “tamed”?

#### *Version One*

The first interpretation, which I call “battle of the sexes,” is the most common within the stage history of *Taming*. I think this approach is well reflected in the 1976 production by the San Francisco American Conservatory Theatre directed by William Ball—a *commedia dell'arte* interpretation of the play (mentioned above in my stage history). In this version of my production, Katherine and Petruchio are so-called “shrews,” for both are hot-tempered and violent, though their violence is highly stylized. In their relationship, they “tame” one another, for they are evenly matched intellectually, and they outwit one another through language as well as through their choreographed staging. When Petruchio first tries to tame Katherine, their “wooing scene” is filled with a back-and-forth of wit and physical comedy that demonstrates two ideas: that their interest in each other is mutual from the start, and that Katherine quickly comes to understand Petruchio’s game, using it to her advantage. Katherine then is able to out-

smart Petruchio, playing him as he tried to play her. In the final act in this version, after her highly sarcastic monologue, Katherine turns to the audience and gives them a knowing wink, which suggests that even in her “powerlessness” as a “tamed” wife, she is actually running the show; she manipulates Petruchio even as he believes he is manipulating her. In this way, Katherine is the more powerful “shrew”—a savvy schemer who will ultimately rule the roost.

When directing this version, I found it crucial to figure out the exact moment in which Katherine realizes that she can take the power from Petruchio, as well as the moment in which Katherine feigns acceptance of Petruchio’s will: she appears to put him in the driver’s seat, but, as this rendition makes clear, Petruchio has no idea how to steer the car. This moment was in the “sun/moon” scene, when Katherine says, “Then God be blest, it is the blessèd sun./But sun it is not, when you say it is not,/And the moon changes even as your mind./What you will have it named, even that it is,/And so it shall be so for Katherine” (4.5.21-25).

As I directed this version, I was most attentive to the physicality and the physical comedy of my actors. For this version to be perceived as comedic, the violence had to be big and showy, and both Katherine and Petruchio have to strike one another roughly the same amount of times. One actor pulls the other’s hair, only to have his own finger bitten a second later. The violence of this piece, as inspired by the 1976 *commedia dell’arte* performance, revolves around the punches not actually hurting, in the same way that in cartoons the results of even the most violent actions disappear in a matter of seconds. Fight choreographer Samantha Norton assisted me in choreographing this physical

comedy and violence. She helped me keep the play lighter tonally, allowing for a comedy in which Katherine is actually in power.

### *Version Two*

The second interpretation involves sadistic brutality, as inspired by the 2008 performance directed by Conall Morrison for the Royal Shakespeare Company (also mentioned above in my stage history). In this version, my goal was to highlight the problematic dynamic of “taming” this show portrays, and offer representation for victims of domestic violence and manipulation without glorifying the violence of the piece. The actors and I worked on staging violence with fight choreographer Samantha Norton. In this version, Petruchio only hits Katherine once—but when he does, the hit cannot be “walked off,” as in the first version. Rather, the audience watches Katherine apply bruise makeup onstage after the moment when Petruchio strikes her. I asked Petruchio in this version not to constantly yell or rage, but rather to have a more subtle and insidious approach. This Petruchio is able to speak well and appear almost charming in front of the other men. His manipulative nature is more able to control Katherine, rather than his physical domination, which is only one tool for his assertion of power.

In the beginning, Katherine has no intention of marrying; and when she realizes her father has consented to her marrying this violent and creepy stranger, she feels unescapably trapped. Throughout the show, Petruchio breaks her will. He starves her and keeps her awake, and the toll this takes on her is clear; he even persuades her, in her desperation, to thank him when he does give her food. But most devastatingly, he destroys her dignity, forcing her not only to surrender her control of her food and sleep to

him, but also the control of her mind. He is able to gaslight her into saying words that she knows to be untrue, and she submits with the very same “sun/moon” language we witnessed in version one: “Then God be blest, it is the blessed sun./But sun it is not, when you say it is not,/And the moon changes even as your mind./What you will have it named, even that it is,/And so it shall be so for Katherine” (4.5.21-25). By the end of the second version, Katherine is a broken woman, and her final monologue is that of a broken woman speaking out of self-preservation. Her speech forces the father and sister who pushed her into the marriage—as well as the community that allowed Katherine’s abuse—to see the result of their actions and face the shame of what they have done.

### *Version Three*

I call the third interpretation a “meeting of true minds,” which is inspired by the RSC production I mentioned above, directed by Gregory Doran in 2003. Here, Katherine and Petruchio’s relationship is a true love story, during which everyone misunderstands the two characters. The pair find solace and companionship in one another as fellow “shrews.”

In this version, my Petruchio and Katherine have an almost instant connection in the wooing scene, each delighting in finding another person who is able to keep pace with their wit and banter. Petruchio at the start of the play is consumed by his financial situation. His father has died recently, leaving all of his money to his first-born son, as was customary. This death meant that Petruchio, who was not first-born, had class status, but no money. At the start of this version, Katherine is at her wit’s end with her family. Katherine has been presented with suitor after suitor, all of whom had absolutely no

appeal to her; none would have lasted more than a few minutes in her bitter company. Her father and sister both demean her for being a self-possessed woman.

When directing this version, I focused mainly on how to create moments of connection between Katherine and Petruchio right from their first meeting. Petruchio's line, "But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom"—given before as sarcastic or predatorial—became the line in which Petruchio first sees Katherine (2.1.95). Petruchio delivers the line with shock, in awe of the beautiful woman in front of him. Petruchio fumbles his lines early on, making Katherine laugh, and he laughs in turn at the silliness of the moment. They play-fight with their words, teasing one another, tickling one another, even arm wrestling.

In this version, finding extra-textual ways to show the connection between Katherine and Petruchio was crucial. Thus, for example, I created a moment when Katherine starts plonking on the piano as Petruchio talks, trying to annoy him; but the moment grows into her trying to play the classic song, "Heart and Soul." As they play, Katherine realizes that Petruchio clearly knows how to play piano and moreover he plays piano well, and he tries to one-up her. He then teaches her how to play the song, and the two have a tender moment playing the duet together. By the end of the scene, the two are clearly a team, and Petruchio offers his necklace to her. His line, "Thou must be married to no man but me," is a proposal rather than a command (2.1.290).

The rest of the production builds upon this moment, and my actors and I worked to frame the rest of the "taming" as a plot between Katherine and Petruchio to manipulate a wager in the final scene between Petruchio and the other men; the loving pair will take

revenge on Katherine's father, her sister, and even the town for their mistreatment of Katherine. In this third version, all of the "taming" scenes happen only in front of Petruchio's servants or other characters in the town; when Petruchio and Katherine are alone onstage, they are goofy and sweet with one another. After Petruchio wins the wager, and the two win their money (for which we used chocolate gold coins), Katherine and Petruchio exchange a knowing glance, decide that all they really need is each another, and throw the coins into the audience. In this way, we were able to create a true love story out of Shakespeare's text.

### *Final Thoughts*

With these three interpretations in mind, I intended to play three different actors of Katherine against three different actors of Petruchio to demonstrate the variability of Shakespeare's original text and its potential to serve as a contemporary commentary on feminism, male-female relationships, and domestic abuse. My actors and I explored fraught issues of gender and power by using the layered, deep, and complex nature of *Taming of the Shrew* to ask questions such as: What makes a woman? What makes a man? What makes a marriage? What do "femininity" and "masculinity" mean today? Why do we live within a society that both excuses and fights against rape culture and sexual harassment? Is it possible for men and women caught within contemporary gender roles to forge relationships built on respect and love? "Taming of the Shrew(s)" did not answer these questions about gender and power, but I hope that the production might serve as a conduit for dialogue about femininity and masculinity, the social role of marriage, and the still-present patriarchal structures of modern Western society.

## V. Conclusion

In my mind, the most dangerous interpretation of *The Taming of the Shrew* is not the abusive version, as directed by Morrison in 2008. Of course, there is an important line to walk when directing an abuse narrative—not over-sensationalizing the abuse while still shining a light on it is indeed possible. To me, the most difficult interpretation is the seemingly lighthearted comedy version of *Taming*. While Shakespeare’s text can and has been played as a comedy, it cannot simply be played for laughs without adding any other elements, given the deeply problematic taming scenes in which an audience watches a woman be starved, sleep-deprived, gaslighted, and possibly physically abused. When Petruchio says, “She ate no meat today, nor none shall eat. / Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not,” these lines cannot simply be played off as a joke (4.1.197-198). His threat to starve her and deprive her of sleep will never in itself be funny.

If the play is to be interpreted as a nuanced comedy, it needs to be more complex than just “pleasant” and “wittie.” There needs to be other elements at play: either Katherine must figure out Petruchio’s game of “taming” and use it to her advantage, or Katherine and Petruchio must have an authentic pact between the two of them that no other character knows about. If neither of these other elements are present, then Shakespeare’s own text makes it clear that Katherine’s final speech shows that she submits to Petruchio’s will by the end. Even if this submissive speech is still interpreted in a comedic way, at its heart, the show will continue to be an abuse narrative—or, rather, a story of abuse being played for laughs. Thus, this straight-up comedic interpretation is

the most damning version of *Taming* because it serves to reinforce the normalizing of abusive and manipulative relationships rather than mounting a critique of them.

After attending the Audibert rendition in 2019, and rendition with so much squandered potential, I knew that I wanted to produce my own version of *Taming*. Moreover, in order to tackle the complicated dynamics of gender, power, and justice within the show, I also knew that I couldn't simply switch the genders of my characters as Audibert had done. Instead, I had to give my audience options, to see the possibilities and the limitations of the text. In other words, I realized that I couldn't produce just a single interpretation of Shakespeare's words. Rather, I needed to figure out how to convey multiple interpretations of the same text.

My desire to create my own adapted version of this play, then, has been motivated by questions about gender and power and my deep interest in creating a dialogue about the nuances and complexities within Shakespeare's language relative to his male and female characters. While I wanted to use my version of *Taming* to make people laugh as well as make them cry, more than anything, I wanted it to make people question—to look inwards and examine their own beliefs and preconceptions and understandings about the gender politics in *The Taming of the Shrew* as well as the gender politics in the present socio-political moment. In fact, since the moment I took on this project, I have believed that there is no better time to direct this play than in 2021. By rendering *Taming* in three distinct ways—and thus turning my script from the original into a “Taming of the Shrew(s)” —I wanted to ask my audience to open beyond themselves into thinking about what other people have to say about gender and power, especially people who are

oppressed. Drama is art, after all—and art is intended to raise people’s visions toward a larger and broader humanity. Especially at this moment in time, we call upon art to take us from the insufficiencies of ourselves and to re-imagine and explore possibilities beyond ourselves. Shakespeare’s language, his ability to open things up rather than close them down, and his ability to ask questions rather than provide answers became my inspiration to create a play with a potential for offering new and diverse perspectives. As Emma Smith suggests:

The ambiguity over whether Katherine is tamed at the end of *The Taming of the Shrew* is intrinsic to the play—it isn’t a problem...of history. Rather..., the play’s own structure and ambiguities...mean that the question was [and is] always present.... A flick through the modern production history of *The Taming of the Shrew* is exemplary: the suffragettes, the post-war reiteration of gender conservatism, and second-wave feminism have all found the play hospitable and relevant to their concerns.... If *The Taming of the Shrew*’s Katherine looks vulnerable, or ballsy, or beautiful, that makes a difference to our interpretation of this most ambiguous of plays, and if her imposed husband Petruchio is attractive, or boorish, or nervous, that too has an impact. (Smith 2)

This opportunity to adapt, devise, and direct “Taming of the Shrew(s)” at Bucknell University has been the culminating step of my exploration with Shakespeare dramatically, and *Taming* specifically. Having studied *Taming* in the past as a play that represents gender oppression, but also functions as a potentially proto-feminist text, directing my own version of the play has allowed me to unpack the complex intersections

between gender and power that the play offers—whether Katherine is “vulnerable, or ballsy, or beautiful” and whether Petruchio is “attractive, or boorish, or nervous.” In addition, developing and directing my specific concept of an adapted *Taming*, I hope that I have conveyed how the characters of Katherine and Petruchio have the potential to teach modern-day audiences something meaningful about gender politics in the age of #MeToo, making this play once again relevant to our societal concerns.

Finally, as Smith states, “Shakespeare’s plays are incomplete, woven of what’s said and what’s unsaid, with holes in-between” (Smith 2). In having the possibility to direct three versions of parts of *Taming*, I hope I filled in some of the holes—not by myself but with my audience’s participation. Rather than telling my audience what to think about Katherine or Petruchio, I hope I led my audience to consider options, ideas, reversals, rejections, and connections—to come to their own conclusions and to ask their own questions about whether *Taming* is a play that “should” or “shouldn’t” be performed and discussed in our modern moment. For that concept is what I see as the significance of Shakespeare and of live theatre more generally: opening rather than closing possibilities. In contemporary America, the idea of how men and women connect or disconnect, have equity, or sustain inequity, are privileged, or are oppressed is at the forefront of how people perceive and think about the world around them. My intent is that my “Taming of the Shrew(s)” will continue to open up these kinds of questions, allowing for ongoing speculation and dialogue.

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**Supplementary Materials: Production Recording**

For the recording of “Taming of the Shrew(s)” please follow this link:

<https://youtu.be/W9avRBjjXTQ>

## Supplementary Materials: Original Script

### *The Taming of the Shrew(s)*

By William Shakespeare

Adapted by Katharine Cognard-Black

#### Characters in the Play

BAPTISTA, father to Katherina and Bianca

KATHERINE, Baptista's elder daughter

BIANCA, Baptista's younger daughter

PETRUCHIO, suitor to Katherina

HORTENSIO, suitor to Bianca

LUCENTIO, in love with Bianca

VINCENTIO, Lucentio's father

GRUMIO, servant to Petruchio

CURTIS, servant to Petruchio

BIONDELLO, servant to Lucentio

WIDOW, a woman later married to Hortensio

#### A Note on Characters and Casting

KATHERINE ONE Act 1: Katherine Act 2: Bianca/Curtis Act 3: Baptista/Widow	KATHERINE TWO Act 1: Baptista/Widow Act 2: Katherine Act 3: Bianca/Curtis	KATHERINE THREE Act 1: Bianca/Curtis Act 2: Baptista/Widow Act 3: Katherine
PETRUCHIO ONE Act 1: Petruchio Act 2: Hortensio/Grumio Act 3: Lucentio/Vincentio	PETRUCHIO TWO Act 1: Lucentio/Vincentio Act 2: Petruchio Act 3: Hortensio/Grumio	PETRUCHIO THREE Act 1: Hortensio/Grumio Act 2: Lucentio/Vincentio Act 3: Petruchio

This show is written for a cast of seven. Each player plays Katherine or Petruchio once; in the acts in which they are not Katherine or Petruchio they play background characters. For this reason the character list is in part represented as “character tracks,” as can be seen below. All actors who are not Katherine or Petruchio carry with them a script with their character's name on it and have a single distinctive costume piece to distinguish them. In scene transitions they are represented with the number of their act following their name. For example, rather than KATHERINE, the character is listed as KATHERINE ONE.

DIRECTOR (KATHARINE COGNARD-BLACK)

Acts 1-3: The Director/Biondello

## **THE INDUCTION**

*We open on a minimalistic set: there are six wooden chairs, three on each side of the stage, as well as a piano SR. There should be a space that is considered “offstage” that is still visible to the audience where there is a rack holding the costumes of each character. The house lights remain on. All actors enter save for KATHERINE TWO and DIRECTOR KATHARINE, who both wait among the audience. The actors enter in plain black clothes and begin chatting with one another and doing vocal exercises. KATHERINE ONE and PETRUCHIO ONE get into their costumes on stage over their black clothes. KATHERINE TWO then enters from the audience, asking members of the audience if they “know where rehearsal is?” or “if I’m in the right place?” etc. as she goes. She reaches the stage and addresses the cast.*

KATHERINE TWO

Hi, um, I’m looking for Katharine?

KATHERINE ONE/KATHERINE THREE

Yes?

KATHERINE TWO

Oh, no, uh, director Katharine?

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

*Coming up to the stage in a hurry.* Oh, yes, hi, uh [insert the name of the actor playing Katherine Two], right? We talked on the phone? *Katherine Two nods.* Great. All right, everyone, let’s welcome [insert the name of the actor playing Katherine Two] who has so graciously agreed to step in to this project. *To Katherine Two:* So, any questions before we get going?

KATHERINE TWO

Well, I’m pretty new to this show, so maybe you could tell me just, like, what *Taming of the Shrew* is?

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

I think we can do that. *To the cast:* Right, guys? Well, let's see, in 1564, William Shakespeare, the greatest dramatist in all of history *she winks* was born in Stratford upon Avon, and in his play, *The Taming of the Shrew*, the play's--

PETRUCHIO TWO

Hero, Petruchio--

KATHERINE THREE

Don't you mean the play's shrew?

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Whoever he is, comes to Padua in search of riches, and he finds what he is looking for in--

KATHERINE ONE

The play's hero, Katherine.

PETRUCHIO ONE

Uh, the play's shrew.

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Well, whether hero or shrew, her father Baptista has declared that no one can marry her younger sister, Bianca, until Katherine herself first be married. And has offered a tremendous dowry to the man brave enough to woo her for his wife. And so rather than live a wealthy but woeful existence, Petruchio--

PETRUCHIO THREE

Decides to change the world to fit his means--

PETRUCHIO TWO

And tame his wild wife--

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

In...

ALL

*The Taming of the Shrew!*

KATHERINE TWO

So... he tames her... that's rough. So is this a comedy or a tragedy?

THREE ACTORS

THREE ACTORS

Comedy.

Tragedy.

KATHERINE TWO

I'm confused.

KATHERINE ONE

“‘*Shrew*’ as a play may be untamable...there may not be a way to subvert the inherent sexism of the text.”--*The Brooklyn Rail*

KATHERINE TWO

Well, I did some reading on the way over here, and in the *Guardian* it says that

“Katherine is rescued by... P... Pe.” What was his name?

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Petruchio.

KATHERINE THREE

“Petruchio: if she didn't marry him,... she would go from shrew to witch and end her days as a madwoman...” That is not a woman being crushed.

KATHERINE THREE

How can we perform *The Taming of the Shrew*? Are the relationship norms it promotes unhealthy?

*DIRECTOR KATHARINE and ALL PETRUCHIOS meander off, leaving only the KATHERINES.*

KATHERINE TWO

“The course of true love never did run smooth.”

KATHERINE ONE

“Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,/ Should be so--

ALL

tyrannous--

KATHERINE ONE

and--

ALL

rough in proof.”

KATHERINE TWO

“His unkindness may defeat my life,/ But never taint my love.”

KATHERINE THREE

“Love goes by haps; some Cupid kills with arrows,--

ALL

some with traps.”

KATHERINE ONE

“Cupid is a knavish lad, thus to make--

ALL

females mad.”

KATHERINE THREE

“She’s beautiful,--

KATHERINE TWO

and therefore to be wooed;

KATHERINE ONE

She is woman, and --

ALL

therefore to be won.”

KATHERINE THREE

“I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.”

ALL

“Men’s vows are women’s traitors.”

KATHERINE ONE

Okay, sure, but I still think it's mostly a comedy. I mean, it's even listed in the First Folio of Shakespeare's works as a comedy.

*The other KATHERINES look quizzical.*

KATHERINE ONE

Just... let me show you.

*The other KATHERINES exit off stage. Black Out.*

**ACT ONE****SCENE 1: BAPTISTA'S house.**

*Stage lights come up. To the side of the stage, next to the costume rack, BIANCA finishes putting her costume on.*

BIANCA (*offstage*)

*She holds up a script with the name BIANCA labeled on the front.*

I am Katherine's sister Bianca.

BAPTISTA (*offstage*)

*She holds up a script with the name BAPTISTA labeled on the front.*

And I her father, Baptista.

*Enter KATHERINE, and BIANCA with her hands tied.*

BIANCA

Good sister, wrong me not, nor wrong yourself,  
 To make a bondmaid and a slave of me.  
 That I disdain. But for these other goods—  
 Unbind my hands, I'll pull them off myself,  
 Yea, all my raiment to my petticoat,  
 Or what you will command me will I do,  
 So well I know my duty to my elders.

KATHERINE

Of all thy suitors here I charge thee tell  
 Whom thou lov'st best. See thou dissemble not.

BIANCA

Believe me, sister, of all the men alive

I never yet beheld that special face  
Which I could fancy more than any other.

KATHERINE

Minion, thou liest.

*Enter BAPTISTA.*

BAPTISTA

Why, how now, dame, whence grows this insolence?—  
Bianca, stand aside.—Poor girl, she weeps!

*He unties her hands.*

*(To BIANCA.)*

Go ply thy needle; meddle not with her.

*(To KATHERINE.)*

For shame, thou hilding of a devilish spirit!  
Why dost thou wrong her that did ne'er wrong thee?  
What, in my sight?—Bianca, get thee in.

*BIANCA exits.*

KATHERINE

What, will you not suffer me? Nay, now I see  
She is your treasure, she must have a husband,  
I must dance barefoot on her wedding day  
And, for your love to her, lead apes in hell.  
Talk not to me. I will go sit and weep  
Till I can find occasion of revenge.

*KATHERINE exits.*

BAPTISTA

Was ever gentleman thus grieved as I?

But who comes here?

*Enter HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO.*

LUCENTIO

*Holding up a script with LUCENTIO printed on it.*

I am Lucentio, faithful suitor to Bianca.

HORTENSIO

*Holding up a script with HORTENSIO printed on it.*

And I Hortensio, another suitor to Bianca.

*HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO rush in talking indistinguishably about how much they love and want to marry Bianca.*

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, importune me no farther,  
 For how I firmly am resolved you know:  
 That is, not to bestow my younger daughter  
 Before I have a husband for the elder.  
 If one of you will have my Katherina—  
 For shame, a hilding of a devilish spirit—  
 Leave shall you have to court her at your leisure.

PETRUCHIO

Why, that is nothing; for I tell you, father,  
 I am as peremptory as she proud-minded.  
 Signior Baptista, my business asketh haste,  
 And every day I cannot come to woo.

BAPTISTA

Signior Petruccio, will you go with us,

Or shall I send my daughter Kate to you?

PETRUCHIO

I'll attend her here—

*ALL but PETRUCHIO exit quickly.*

And woo her with some spirit when she comes!  
 Say that she rail, why then I'll tell her plain  
 She sings as sweetly as a nightingale.  
 Say that she frown, I'll say she looks as clear  
 As morning roses newly washed with dew.  
 Say she be mute and will not speak a word,  
 Then I'll commend her volubility  
 And say she uttereth piercing eloquence.  
 If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks  
 As though she bid me stay by her a week.  
 If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day  
 When I shall ask the banns, and when be married.  
 But here she comes—and now, Petruchio, speak.

*Enter KATHERINA.*

Good morrow, Kate, for that's your name, I hear.

KATHERINE

Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing.  
 They call me Katherine that do talk of me.

PETRUCHIO

You lie, in faith, for you are called plain Kate,  
 And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst.

But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom,  
 Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate  
 (For dainties are all Kates)—and therefore, Kate,  
 Take this of me, Kate of my consolation:  
 Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,  
 Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded  
 (Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs),  
 Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

KATHERINE

“Moved,” in good time! Let him that moved you hither  
 Remove you hence. I knew you at the first  
 You were a movable.

PETRUCHIO

Why, what’s a movable?

KATHERINE

A joint stool.

PETRUCHIO

Thou hast hit it. Come, sit on me.

KATHERINE

Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO

Women are made to bear, and so are you.

KATHERINE

No such jade as you, if me you mean.

PETRUCHIO

Alas, good Kate, I will not burden thee,  
 For knowing thee to be but young and light—

KATHERINE

Too light for such a swain as you to catch,

And yet as heavy as my weight should be.

PETRUCHIO

“Should be”—should buzz!

KATHERINE

Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO

O slow-winged turtle, shall a buzzard take thee?

KATHERINE

Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO

Come, come, you wasp! I' faith, you are too angry.

KATHERINE

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

PETRUCHIO

My remedy is then to pluck it out.

KATHERINE

Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.

PETRUCHIO

Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting?

In his tail.

KATHERINE

In his tongue.

PETRUCHIO

Whose tongue?

KATHERINE

Yours, if you talk of tales, and so farewell.

PETRUCHIO What, with my tongue in your tail? Nay, come again,

Good Kate. I am a gentleman—

KATHERINE

That I'll try. *She strikes him.*

PETRUCHIO

I swear I'll cuff you if you strike again.

KATHERINE

So may you lose your arms.

If you strike me, you are no gentleman,

And if no gentleman, why then no arms.

PETRUCHIO

A herald, Kate? O, put me in thy books.

KATHERINE

What is your crest? A coxcomb?

PETRUCHIO

A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.

KATHERINE

No cock of mine. You crow too like a craven.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, come, Kate, come. You must not look so sour.

KATHERINE

It is my fashion when I see a crab.

PETRUCHIO

Why, here's no crab, and therefore look not sour.

KATHERINE There is, there is.

PETRUCHIO

Then show it me.

KATHERINE

Had I a glass, I would.

PETRUCHIO

What, you mean my face?

KATHERINE

Well aimed of such a young one.

PETRUCHIO

Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.

KATHERINE

Yet you are withered.

PETRUCHIO ‘

‘Tis with cares.

KATHERINE

I care not.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, hear you, Kate—in sooth, you ‘scape not so.

KATHERINE

I chafe you if I tarry. Let me go.

PETRUCHIO

No, not a whit. I find you passing gentle.

’Twas told me you were rough, and coy, and sullen,

And now I find report a very liar.

For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing

courteous,

But slow in speech, yet sweet as springtime flowers.

Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?

O sland’rous world! Kate like the hazel twig

Is straight, and slender, and as brown in hue

As hazelnuts, and sweeter than the kernels.

O, let me see thee walk! Thou dost not halt.

KATHERINE

Go, fool, and whom thou keep’st command.

PETRUCHIO

Did ever Dian so become a grove

As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?  
 O, be thou Dian and let her be Kate,  
 And then let Kate be chaste and Dian sportful.

KATHERINE

Where did you study all this goodly speech?

PETRUCHIO

It is extempore, from my mother wit.

KATHERINE

A witty mother, witless else her son.

PETRUCHIO

Am I not wise?

KATHERINE

Yes, keep you warm.

PETRUCHIO

Marry, so I mean, sweet Katherine, in thy bed.  
 And therefore, setting all this chat aside,  
 Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented  
 That you shall be my wife, your dowry 'greed on,  
 And, will you, nill you, I will marry you.  
 Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn,  
 For by this light, whereby I see thy beauty,  
 Thy beauty that doth make me like thee well,  
 Thou must be married to no man but me.  
 For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,  
 And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate  
 Conformable as other household Kates.

*Enter BAPTISTA, LUCENTIO, and HORTENSIO.*

Here comes your father. Never make denial.

I must and will have Katherine to my wife.

BAPTISTA

Now, Signior Petruchio, how speed you with my daughter?

PETRUCHIO

How but well, sir? How but well?

It were impossible I should speed amiss.

BAPTISTA

Why, how now, daughter Katherine? In your  
dumps?

KATHERINE

Call you me daughter? Now I promise you  
You have showed a tender fatherly regard,  
To wish me wed to one half lunatic,  
A madcap ruffian and a swearing Jack,  
That thinks with oaths to face the matter out.

PETRUCHIO

Father, 'tis thus: yourself and all the world  
That talked of her have talked amiss of her.  
If she be curst, it is for policy,  
And to conclude, we have 'greed so well together  
That upon Sunday is the wedding day.

KATHERINE

I'll see thee hanged on Sunday first.

HORTENSIO

Hark, Petruchio, she says she'll see thee hanged first.

LUCENTIO

Is this your speeding? Nay, then goodnight our part.

PETRUCHIO

Be patient, gentlemen. I choose her for myself.  
 If she and I be pleased, what's that to you?  
 'Tis bargained 'twixt us twain, being alone,  
 That she shall still be curst in company.  
 I tell you, 'tis incredible to believe  
 How much she loves me. O, the kindest Kate!  
 She hung about my neck, and kiss on kiss  
 She vied so fast, protesting oath on oath,  
 That in a twink she won me to her love.  
 O, you are novices! 'Tis a world to see  
 How tame, when men and women are alone,  
 A meacock wretch can make the curstest shrew.—  
 Give me thy hand, Kate. I will unto Venice  
 To buy apparel 'gainst the wedding day.—  
 Provide the feast, father, and bid the guests.  
 I will be sure my Katherine shall be fine.

BAPTISTA

I know not what to say, but give me your hands.  
 God send you joy, Petruchio. 'Tis a match.

HORTENSIO/LUCENTIO

Amen, say we. We will be witnesses.

PETRUCHIO

Father, and wife, and gentlemen, adieu.

*BAPTISTA, LUCENTIO, and HORTENSIO exit.*

I will to Venice. Sunday comes apace.  
 We will have rings, and things, and fine array,  
 And kiss me, Kate. We will be married o' Sunday.

*PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE exit on opposite sides of the stage.*

**SCENE 2: a street.**

*Enter HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO.*

KATHERINE THREE (*offstage*)

Sunday! *She says "ding-dong," mimicking a church bell.*

LUCENTIO,

Signior Hortensio, came you from the church?

HORTENSIO

As willingly as e'er I came from school.

Why, he's a devil, a devil, a very fiend.

I'll tell you, Sir Lucentio, when the priest

Should ask if Katherine should be his wife,

"Ay, by gog's wouns!" quoth he, and swore so loud

That, all amazed, the priest let fall the book,

And as he stooped again to take it up,

This mad-brained bridegroom took him such a cuff

That down fell priest and book, and book and priest.

Such a mad marriage never was before!

And so farewell, Signior Lucentio.

Kindness in women, not their beauteous looks,

Shall win my love. And so I take my leave.

I will be married to a wealthy widow!

LUCENTIO

And I in plainness do confess to thee

I burn, I pine, I perish, Hortensio,

If I achieve not the young Bianca.

Farewell—for the love I bear Bianca!

*Exit HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO.*

**SCENE 3: PETRUCHIO'S house.**

*Enter HORTENSIO, who changes into the GRUMIO costume.*

GRUMIO

I am now Petruchio's faithful servant Grumio.

CURTIS (*offstage*)

And I, Curtis, entering Petruchio's house.

GRUMIO

Fie, fie on all tired jades, on all mad masters. I am sent before to make a fire, and they are coming after to warm them. I with blowing the fire shall warm myself; my very lips might freeze to my teeth.—Holla, ho, Curtis!

*Enter CURTIS.*

CURTIS

Who is that calls so coldly?

GRUMIO

A piece of ice. If thou doubt it, thou mayst slide from my shoulder to my heel with no greater a run but my head and my neck. A fire, good Curtis!

CURTIS

Is my master and his wife coming, Grumio?

GRUMIO

Oh, ay, Curtis, ay, and therefore fire, fire!

CURTIS

Is she so hot a shrew as she's reported?

GRUMIO

She was, good Curtis, before this frost. But thou know'st winter tames man, woman, and beast.

CURTIS

There's fire ready. And therefore, good Grumio, the news!

GRUMIO

Silence! I hear my master.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE.*

PETRUCHIO

Where be these knaves? Go, rascals, go, and fetch my supper in!

Sit down, Kate, and welcome.

Why, when, I say?—Nay, good sweet Kate, be merry.—

Off with my boots, you rogues, you villains! When?

*GRUMIO begins to remove PETRUCHIO'S boots.*

Out, you rogue! You pluck my foot awry.

Take that! *(He hits the servant.)* And mend the plucking of the other.—

Be merry, Kate.—Some water here! What ho!

Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?—

Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily.—

You whoreson villain, will you let it fall?

*He hits the servant.*

KATHERINE

Patience, I pray you, 'twas a fault unwilling.

PETRUCHIO

A whoreson beetle-headed flap-eared knave!—

Come, Kate, sit down. I know you have a stomach.

Will you give thanks, sweet Kate, or else shall I?—

What's this? Mutton?

CURTIS

Ay.

PETRUCHIO

Who brought it?

CURTIS

I.

PETRUCHIO

'Tis burnt, and so is all the meat.

What dogs are these? Where is the rascal cook?

How durst you, villains, bring it from the dresser

And serve it thus to me that love it not?

There, take it to you, trenchers, cups, and all!

*He throws the food and dishes at them. The two  
servants exit yelling.*

KATHERINE

I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet.

The meat was well, if you were so contented.

PETRUCHIO

I tell thee, Kate, 'twas burnt and dried away,

And I expressly am forbid to touch it,

For it engenders cholera, planteth anger,

And better 'twere that both of us did fast

Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.  
 Be patient. Tomorrow 't shall be mended,  
 And for this night we'll fast for company.  
 Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.

*PETRUCHIO leads KATHERINE offstage, then re-enters.*

PETRUCHIO

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,  
 And 'tis my hope to end successfully.  
 She ate no meat today, nor none shall eat.  
 Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not.  
 As with the meat, some undeservèd fault  
 I'll find about the making of the bed,  
 And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,  
 This way the coverlet, another way the sheets.  
 Ay, and amid this hurly I intend  
 That all is done in reverend care of her.  
 And, in conclusion, she shall watch all night,  
 And, if she chance to nod, I'll rail and brawl,  
 And with the clamor keep her still awake.  
 This is a way to kill a wife with kindness.  
 And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humor.  
 He that knows better how to tame a shrew,  
 Now let him speak; 'tis charity to shew.

*Exit PETRUCHIO.*

**SCENE 4: PETRUCHIO'S house, the next morning.**

*Enter KATHERINE and GRUMIO.*

GRUMIO

No, no, forsooth, I dare not for my life.

KATHERINE

The more my wrong, the more his spite appears.

What, did he marry me to famish me?

Beggars that come unto my father's door

Upon entreaty have a present alms.

If not, elsewhere they meet with charity.

But I, who never knew how to entreat,

Nor never needed that I should entreat,

Am starved for meat, giddy for lack of sleep,

With oaths kept waking and with brawling fed.

And that which spites me more than all these wants,

He does it under name of perfect love,

As who should say, if I should sleep or eat

'Twere deadly sickness or else present death.

I prithee, go, and get me some repast,

I care not what, so it be wholesome food.

GRUMIO

What say you to a neat's foot?

KATHERINE

'Tis passing good. I prithee let me have it.

GRUMIO

I fear it is too choleric a meat.

How say you to a fat tripe finely broiled?

KATHERINE

I like it well. Good Grumio, fetch it me.

GRUMIO

I cannot tell. I fear 'tis choleric.

What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?

KATHERINE

A dish that I do love to feed upon.

GRUMIO

Ay, but the mustard is too hot a little.

KATHERINE

Why then, the beef, and let the mustard rest.

GRUMIO

Nay then, I will not. You shall have the mustard

Or else you get no beef of Grumio.

KATHERINE

Then both, or one, or anything thou wilt.

GRUMIO

Why then, the mustard without the beef.

KATHERINE

Go, get thee gone, thou false deluding slave,

That feed'st me with the very name of meat.

Sorrow on thee, and all the pack of you

That triumph thus upon my misery.

Go, get thee gone, I say.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and GRUMIO with a "banquet" of meat.*

PETRUCHIO

How fares my Kate? What, sweeting, all amorf?

KATHERINE

Faith, as cold as can be.

PETRUCHIO

Pluck up thy spirits. Look cheerfully upon me.

Here, love, thou seest how diligent I am,

To dress thy meat myself and bring it thee.

I am sure, sweet Kate, this kindness merits thanks.

What, not a word? Nay then, thou lov'st it not,

And all my pains is sorted to no proof.

Here, take away this dish.

KATHERINE

I pray you, let it stand.

PETRUCHIO

The poorest service is repaid with thanks,

And so shall mine before you touch the meat.

KATHERINE

*(to PETRUCHIO)*

I thank you, sir.

PETRUCHIO

Eat it all, dear Katherine, if thou lovest me.—

Much good do it unto thy gentle heart.

Kate, eat apace. And now, my honey love,

Will we return unto thy father's house,

And revel it as bravely as the best,

With silken coats and caps, and golden rings,

With ruffs and cuffs, and farthingales and things,

With scarfs and fans, and double change of brav'ry,

With amber bracelets, beads, and all that knav'ry.

What, hast thou dined?

Well, come, my Kate, we will unto your father's. *(beat)*  
 Let's see, I think 'tis now some seven o'clock,  
 And well we may come there by dinner time.

KATHERINE

I dare assure you, sir, 'tis almost two,  
 And 'twill be supper time ere you come there.

PETRUCHIO

It shall be seven ere I move a step. *(beat)*  
 Look, what I speak, or do, or think to do,  
 You are still crossing it.—Let it alone.  
 I will not go today, and, ere I do,  
 It shall be what o'clock I say it is.

KATHERINE *(to the audience)*

Why, so, this gallant will command the sun!

*PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE exit.*

***SCENE 5. A rest stop on the road to Padua.***

KATHERINE THREE *(offstage)*

Travelling to Katherine's father's house for the marriage of Bianca.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE walking across the front of the stage as if on a long journey.*

PETRUCHIO

Come on, i' God's name, once more toward our father's.  
 Good Lord, how bright and goodly shines the moon!

KATHERINE

The moon? The sun! It is not moonlight now.

PETRUCHIO

I say it is the moon that shines so bright.

KATHERINE

I know it is the sun that shines so bright.

PETRUCHIO

Now, by my mother's son, and that's myself,

It shall be moon, or star, or what I list,

Or e'er I journey to your father's house.

KATHERINE

Forward, I pray, since we have come so far,

And be it moon, or sun, or what you please.

And if you please to call it a rush candle,

Henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.

PETRUCHIO

I say it is the moon.

KATHERINE

I know it is the moon.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, then you lie. It is the blessèd sun.

KATHERINE

Then God be blest, it is the blessèd sun.

But sun it is not, when you say it is not,

And the moon changes even as your mind.

What you will have it named, even that it is,

And so it shall be so for Katherine.

PETRUCHIO

Well, forward, forward. Thus the game should run.—

But soft, company is coming here.

*Enter VINCENTIO.*

*(To VINCENTIO)* Good morrow, gentle mistress, where away?  
 Tell me, sweet Kate, and tell me truly, too,  
 Hast thou beheld a fresher gentlewoman?  
 Such war of white and red within her cheeks!  
 What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty  
 As those two eyes become that heavenly face?—  
 Fair lovely maid, once more good day to thee.—  
 Sweet Kate, embrace her for her beauty's sake.

KATHERINE

*(to the audience).* He will make the man mad, to make a woman of him.

*(to VINCENTIO)* Young budding virgin, fair and fresh and sweet,  
 Whither away, or where is thy abode?  
 Happy the parents of so fair a child!  
 Happier the man whom favorable stars  
 Allots thee for his lovely bedfellow.

PETRUCHIO

Why, how now, Kate? I hope thou art not mad!  
 This is a man—old, wrinkled, faded, withered—  
 And not a maiden, as thou sayst he is.

KATHERINE

Pardon, old father, my mistaking eyes  
 That have been so bedazzled with the sun  
 That everything I look on seemeth green.  
 Now I perceive thou art a reverend father.  
 Pardon, I pray thee, for my mad mistaking.

PETRUCHIO

Do, good old grandsire, and withal make known  
Which way thou travelest. If along with us,  
We shall be joyful of thy company.

VINCENTIO

And bound I am to Padua, there to visit  
A son of mine.

PETRUCHIO

Oh hey, no way, we're going there too.

*VINCENTIO exits.*

KATHERINE

Husband, let's follow to see the end of this ado.

PETRUCHIO

First kiss me, Kate, and we will.

KATHERINE

What, in the midst of the street?

PETRUCHIO

What, art thou ashamed of me?

KATHERINE

No, sir, God forbid, but ashamed to kiss.

PETRUCHIO

Why, then, let's home again. Come, let's away.

KATHERINE

Nay, I will give thee a kiss. *She kisses him.* Now pray thee, love, stay.

PETRUCHIO

Is not this well? Come, my sweet Kate.  
Better once than never, for never too late.

*They exit.*

**SCENE 6. Baptista's house; a banquet.**

*Enter PETRUCHIO, KATHERINE, LUCENTIO, BIANCA, HORTENSIO, and the WIDOW, all setting up chairs on the stage.*

LUCENTIO

*Holding up LUCENTIO'S script.*

Welcome to the house of I, Lucentio,  
 For the wedding of myself and the fair Bianca.  
 My fair Bianca, bid my father welcome,  
 While I with selfsame kindness welcome thine.  
 Brother Petruchio, sister Katherina,  
 And thou, Hortensio, with thy loving widow,  
 Feast with the best, and welcome to my house.  
 For now we sit to chat as well as eat.

PETRUCHIO

Padua affords nothing but what is kind!

HORTENSIO

For both our sakes, I would that word were true!

PETRUCHIO

Now, for my life, Hortensio fears his widow.

WIDOW

Then never trust me if I be afeard.

PETRUCHIO

I mean Hortensio is afeard of you.

WIDOW

He that is giddy thinks the world turns round.

KATHERINE

I pray you tell me what you meant by that.

WIDOW

Your husband being troubled with a shrew  
 Measures my husband's sorrow by his own.  
 And now you know my meaning.

KATHERINE

A very mean meaning.

WIDOW

Right, I mean you.

PETRUCHIO

To her, Kate!

HORTENSIO

To her, widow!

PETRUCHIO

A hundred marks, my Kate does put her down.

HORTENSIO

That's my office.

*The three women withdraw offstage.*

LUCENTIO

Now, in good sadness, dear Petruchio,  
 I think thou hast the veriest shrew of all.

PETRUCHIO

Well, I say no. And therefore, for assurance,  
 Let's each one send unto his wife,  
 And he whose wife is most obedient  
 To come at first when he doth send for her  
 Shall win the wager which we will propose.

HORTENSIO

Content. What's the wager?

LUCENTIO

Twenty crowns.

PETRUCHIO

Twenty crowns?

I'll venture so much of my hawk or hound,

But twenty times so much upon my wife.

LUCENTIO

A hundred, then.

HORTENSIO

Content.

PETRUCHIO

A match! 'Tis done.

HORTENSIO

Who shall begin?

LUCENTIO

That will I.

Go, Biondell... Oh?

*He looks around realizing BIONDELLO is nowhere to be seen. He points to DIRECTOR KATHARINE and waves her onstage. She looks at him quizzically as if to say "me?" She then tentatively walks up onto the stage. LUCENTIO hands BIONDELLO a hat, which she puts on.*

Biondello!

*He presents her. She bows.*

Bid your mistress come to me.

BIONDELLO

I go, I go, look how I go.

*BIONDELLO exits.*

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

LUCENTIO

How now, what news?

BIONDELLO

Sir, my mistress sends you word

That she is busy, and she cannot come.

PETRUCHIO

How? "She's busy, and she cannot come"?

Is that an answer?

HORTENSIO

Ay, and a kind one, too.

Pray God, sir, your wife send you not a worse.

PETRUCHIO

I hope better.

HORTENSIO

Sirrah Biondello, go and entreat my wife

To come to me forthwith.

*BIONDELLO exits.*

PETRUCHIO

O ho, entreat her!

Nay, then, she must needs come.

HORTENSIO

I am afraid, sir,

Do what you can, yours will not be entreated.

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

Now, where's my wife?

BIONDELLO

She will not come. She bids you come to her.

PETRUCHIO

Worse and worse. She will not come! O vile,  
Intolerable, not to be endured!—  
Now, Biondello, go to my lady,  
Say I command her come to me.

*BIONDELLO exits.*

HORTENSIO

I know her answer.

PETRUCHIO

What?

HORTENSIO

She will not.

PETRUCHIO

The fouler fortune mine, and there an end.

*Enter KATHERINE, dragging BIANCA and the WIDOW, who are resisting and protesting.*

KATHERINE

Fie, fie! Unknit that threat'ning unkind brow,  
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes  
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.  
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,  
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,  
And in no sense is meet or amiable.  
A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,  
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty,

And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.  
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
Thy head, thy sovereign, one that cares for thee,  
And for thy maintenance commits his body  
To painful labor both by sea and land,  
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe,  
And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
But love, fair looks, and true obedience—  
Too little payment for so great a debt.  
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,  
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;  
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,  
And not obedient to his honest will,  
What is she but a foul contending rebel  
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?  
I am ashamed that women are so simple  
To offer war where they should kneel for peace,  
Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway  
When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.  
Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,  
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,  
But that our soft conditions and our hearts  
Should well agree with our external parts?  
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!  
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,  
My heart as great, my reason haply more,  
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;

But now I see our lances are but straws,  
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,  
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.  
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,  
And place your hands below your husband's foot;  
In token of which duty, if he please,  
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

PETRUCHIO

Why, there's a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate.

**TRANSITION ONE**

*House lights come up. All but the KATHERINES leave the stage. KATHERINE ONE starts taking off her costume.*

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

*Clapping.* Great job you guys!

KATHERINE TWO

That was really great... but... I don't know.

KATHERINE ONE

I mean, I thought it was pretty good.

KATHERINE TWO

I think you're avoiding a lot of the sexism inherent to the text. Here, can I just show you? *She starts putting on her costume and speaking to the audience.* Nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States.

KATHERINE THREE

"The invitation to strike the hunted animal as an instruction for rape belongs to the same imagery as wooing a woman like a soldier."

KATHERINE ONE

"I myself am moved to woo thee for my wife."

KATHERINE TWO

Women between the ages of 18 and 24 are most commonly abused by an intimate partner.

KATHERINE THREE

"'Winning love' is a common courtship trope, provided she is loved—on a higher position than the man—provided he is hopelessly in love."

KATHERINE ONE

"And kiss me Kate, we will be married o' Sunday."

KATHERINE TWO

Studies suggest that there is a relationship between intimate partner violence and depression.

KATHERINE THREE

“A woman has to be treated like a battlefield on which there can be only winners and losers after brutal combat.”

KATHERINE ONE

“The lady doth protest too much, me thinks.”

KATHERINE THREE

“We must try to determine the different ways of not saying things...”

KATHERINE ONE

“...which type of discourse or which form of discretion is authorized in particular situations...”

ALL

“...there is not one silence...”

KATHERINE TWO

“...but many.”

*KATHERINE ONE and KATHERINE THREE put their hands over KATHERINE TWO's mouth and all walk off stage. Blackout.*

**ACT TWO****SCENE 1: BAPTISTA'S house.**

*Stage lights come up. To the side of the stage, next to the costume rack, BIANCA finishes putting her costume on.*

*Enter KATHERINE, and BIANCA with her hands tied.*

KATHERINE (*offstage*)

Of all thy suitors here I charge thee tell  
Whom thou lov'st best. See thou dissemble not.

BIANCA (*offstage*)

Believe me, sister, of all the men alive  
I never yet beheld that special face  
Which I could fancy more than any other.

KATHERINE

Minion, thou liest.

*Enter BAPTISTA.*

BAPTISTA

Why, how now, dame, whence grows this  
insolence?—  
Bianca, stand aside.—Poor girl, she weeps!  
Bianca, get thee in.

*Bianca exits.*

KATHERINE

What, will you not suffer me? Nay, now I see  
She is your treasure, she must have a husband,

I must dance barefoot on her wedding day  
 And, for your love to her, lead apes in hell.  
 Talk not to me. I will go sit and weep  
 Till I can find occasion of revenge.

*She exits.*

BAPTISTA

Was ever gentleman thus grieved as I?  
 But who comes here?

*HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO rush in talking indistinguishably about how much they love and want to marry Bianca.*

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, importune me no farther,  
 For how I firmly am resolved you know:  
 That is, not to bestow my younger daughter  
 Before I have a husband for the elder.  
 If one of you will have my Katherina—  
 For shame, a hilding of a devilish spirit—  
 Leave shall you have to court her at your leisure.

*Enter PETRUCHIO*

PETRUCHIO

Why, that is nothing; for I tell you, father,  
 I am as peremptory as she proud-minded.  
 Signior Baptista, my business asketh haste,  
 And every day I cannot come to woo.

BAPTISTA

Signior Petruchio, will you go with us,  
Or shall I send my daughter Kate to you?

PETRUCHIO

I'll attend her here—

*ALL but PETRUCHIO exit quickly.*

And woo her with some spirit when she comes!  
Say that she rail, why then I'll tell her plain  
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale.  
Say that she frown, I'll say she looks as clear  
As morning roses newly washed with dew.  
Say she be mute and will not speak a word,  
Then I'll commend her volubility  
And say she uttereth piercing eloquence.  
If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks  
As though she bid me stay by her a week.  
If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day  
When I shall ask the banns, and when be married.  
But here she comes—and now, Petruchio, speak.

*Enter KATHERINA.*

Good morrow, Kate, for that's your name, I hear.

KATHERINE

Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing.  
They call me Katherine that do talk of me.

PETRUCHIO

You lie, in faith, for you are called plain Kate,  
And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst.  
But Kate, the prettiest Kate in Christendom,

Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate  
 (For dainties are all Kates)—and therefore, Kate,  
 Take this of me, Kate of my consolation:  
 Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,  
 Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded  
 (Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs),  
 Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

KATHERINE

“Moved,” in good time! Let him that moved you hither  
 Remove you hence. I knew you at the first  
 You were a movable.

PETRUCHIO

Why, what’s a movable?

KATHERINE

A joint stool.

PETRUCHIO

Thou hast hit it. Come, sit on me.

KATHERINE

Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO

Women are made to bear, and so are you.

KATHERINE

No such jade as you, if me you mean.

PETRUCHIO

Alas, good Kate, I will not burden thee,  
 For knowing thee to be but young and light—

KATHERINE

Too light for such a swain as you to catch,  
 And yet as heavy as my weight should be.

PETRUCHIO

“Should be”—should buzz!

KATHERINE

Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO

O slow-winged turtle, shall a buzzard take thee?

KATHERINE

Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO

Come, come, you wasp! I' faith, you are too angry.

KATHERINE

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

PETRUCHIO

My remedy is then to pluck it out.

KATHERINE

Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.

PETRUCHIO

Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting?

In his tail.

KATHERINE

In his tongue.

PETRUCHIO

Whose tongue?

KATHERINE

Yours, if you talk of tales, and so farewell.

PETRUCHIO What, with my tongue in your tail? Nay, come again,

Good Kate. I am a gentleman—

KATHERINE

That I'll try. *She strikes him.*

PETRUCHIO

I swear I'll cuff you if you strike again.

KATHERINE

So may you lose your arms.

If you strike me, you are no gentleman,

And if no gentleman, why then no arms.

PETRUCHIO

A herald, Kate? O, put me in thy books.

KATHERINE

What is your crest? A coxcomb?

PETRUCHIO

A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.

KATHERINE

No cock of mine. You crow too like a craven.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, come, Kate, come. You must not look so sour.

KATHERINE

It is my fashion when I see a crab.

PETRUCHIO

Why, here's no crab, and therefore look not sour.

KATHERINE There is, there is.

PETRUCHIO

Then show it me.

KATHERINE

Had I a glass, I would.

PETRUCHIO

What, you mean my face?

KATHERINE

Well aimed of such a young one.

PETRUCHIO

Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.

KATHERINE

Yet you are withered.

PETRUCHIO

'Tis with cares.

KATHERINE

I care not.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, hear you, Kate—in sooth, you 'scape not so.

KATHERINE

I chafe you if I tarry. Let me go.

PETRUCHIO

No, not a whit. I find you passing gentle.

'Twas told me you were rough, and coy, and sullen,

And now I find report a very liar.

For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing courteous,

But slow in speech, yet sweet as springtime flowers.

Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?

O sland'rous world! Kate like the hazel twig

Is straight, and slender, and as brown in hue

As hazelnuts, and sweeter than the kernels.

O, let me see thee walk! Thou dost not halt.

KATHERINE

Go, fool, and whom thou keep'st command.

PETRUCHIO

Did ever Dian so become a grove

As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?

O, be thou Dian and let her be Kate,

And then let Kate be chaste and Dian sportful.

KATHERINE

Where did you study all this goodly speech?

PETRUCHIO

It is extempore, from my mother wit.

KATHERINE

A witty mother, witless else her son.

PETRUCHIO

Am I not wise?

KATHERINE

Yes, keep you warm.

PETRUCHIO

Marry, so I mean, sweet Katherine, in thy bed.  
 And therefore, setting all this chat aside,  
 Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented  
 That you shall be my wife, your dowry 'greed on,  
 And, will you, nill you, I will marry you.  
 Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn,  
 For by this light, whereby I see thy beauty,  
 Thy beauty that doth make me like thee well,  
 Thou must be married to no man but me.  
 For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,  
 And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate  
 Conformable as other household Kates.

*Enter BAPTISTA, LUCENTIO, and HORTENSIO.*

Here comes your father. Never make denial.

I must and will have Katherine to my wife.

BAPTISTA

Now, Signior Petruchio, how speed you with my daughter?

PETRUCHIO

How but well, sir? How but well?

It were impossible I should speed amiss.

BAPTISTA

Why, how now, daughter Katherine? In your dumps?

KATHERINE

Call you me daughter? Now I promise you  
 You have showed a tender fatherly regard,  
 To wish me wed to one half lunatic,  
 A madcap ruffian and a swearing Jack,  
 That thinks with oaths to face the matter out.

PETRUCHIO

Father, 'tis thus: yourself and all the world  
 That talked of her have talked amiss of her.  
 If she be curst, it is for policy,  
 And to conclude, we have 'greed so well together  
 That upon Sunday is the wedding day.

KATHERINE

I'll see thee hanged on Sunday first.

HORTENSIO

Hark, Petruchio, she says she'll see thee hanged first.

LUCENTIO

Is this your speeding? Nay, then goodnight our part.

PETRUCHIO

Be patient, gentlemen. I choose her for myself.

If she and I be pleased, what's that to you?  
 'Tis bargained 'twixt us twain, being alone,  
 That she shall still be curst in company.  
 I tell you, 'tis incredible to believe  
 How much she loves me. O, the kindest Kate!  
 She hung about my neck, and kiss on kiss  
 She vied so fast, protesting oath on oath,  
 That in a twink she won me to her love.  
 O, you are novices! 'Tis a world to see  
 How tame, when men and women are alone,  
 A meacock wretch can make the curstest shrew.—  
 Give me thy hand, Kate. I will unto Venice  
 To buy apparel 'gainst the wedding day.—  
 Provide the feast, father, and bid the guests.  
 I will be sure my Katherine shall be fine.

BAPTISTA

I know not what to say, but give me your hands.  
 God send you joy, Petruchio. 'Tis a match.

HORTENSIO/LUCENTIO

Amen, say we. We will be witnesses.

PETRUCHIO

Father, and wife, and gentlemen, adieu.

*BAPTISTA, LUCENTIO, and HORTENSIO exit.*

I will to Venice. Sunday comes apace.  
 We will have rings, and things, and fine array,  
 And kiss me, Kate. We will be married o' Sunday.

*PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE exit.*

**SCENE 2: a street.**

*Enter HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO, opposite.*

KATHERINE ONE (*offstage*)

Sunday. *She mimics a solemn church bell, slowly.*

LUCENTIO,

Signior Hortensio, came you from the church?

HORTENSIO

As willingly as e'er I came from school.

Why, he's a devil, a devil, a very fiend.

Such a mad marriage never was before!

And so farewell, Signior Lucentio.

I will be married to a wealthy widow!

LUCENTIO

Farewell—for the love I bear Bianca!

*Exit HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO, opposite.*

**SCENE 3: PETRUCHIO'S house.**

*Enter GRUMIO and CURTIS.*

CURTIS

Is my master and his wife coming, Grumio?

GRUMIO

Oh, ay, Curtis, ay, and therefore fire, fire!

CURTIS

Is she so hot a shrew as she's reported?

GRUMIO

She was, good Curtis, before this frost. But thou know'st winter tames man, woman, and beast.

CURTIS

There's fire ready. And therefore, good Grumio, the news!

GRUMIO

Silence! I hear my master.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE.*

PETRUCHIO

Where be these knaves? Go, rascals, go, and fetch my supper in!

Sit down, Kate, and welcome.

Why, when, I say?—Nay, good sweet Kate, be merry.—

Off with my boots, you rogues, you villains! When?

*GRUMIO begins to remove PETRUCHIO'S boots.*

Out, you rogue! You pluck my foot awry.

Take that! *He hits the servant.* And mend the plucking of the other.—

Be merry, Kate.—Some water here! What ho!

Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?—

Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily.—

You whoreson villain, will you let it fall?

*He hits the servant.*

KATHERINE

Patience, I pray you, 'twas a fault unwilling.

PETRUCHIO

A whoreson beetle-headed flap-eared knave!—  
 Come, Kate, sit down. I know you have a stomach.  
 Will you give thanks, sweet Kate, or else shall I?—  
 What's this? Mutton?

CURTIS

Ay.

PETRUCHIO

Who brought it?

CURTIS

I.

PETRUCHIO

'Tis burnt, and so is all the meat.  
 What dogs are these? Where is the rascal cook?  
 How durst you, villains, bring it from the dresser  
 And serve it thus to me that love it not?  
 There, take it to you, trenchers, cups, and all!

*He throws the food and dishes at them. The two  
 servants exit yelling.*

KATHERINE

I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet.  
 The meat was well, if you were so contented.

PETRUCHIO

I tell thee, Kate, 'twas burnt and dried away,  
 And I expressly am forbid to touch it,  
 For it engenders cholera, planteth anger,  
 And better 'twere that both of us did fast  
 Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.

Be patient. Tomorrow 't shall be mended,  
 And for this night we'll fast for company.  
 Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.

*PETRUCHIO leads KATHERINE offstage, then re-enters.*

PETRUCHIO

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,  
 And 'tis my hope to end successfully.  
 She ate no meat today, nor none shall eat.  
 Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not.  
 As with the meat, some undeservèd fault  
 I'll find about the making of the bed,  
 And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,  
 This way the coverlet, another way the sheets.  
 Ay, and amid this hurly I intend  
 That all is done in reverend care of her.  
 And, in conclusion, she shall watch all night,  
 And, if she chance to nod, I'll rail and brawl,  
 And with the clamor keep her still awake.  
 This is a way to kill a wife with kindness.  
 And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humor.  
 He that knows better how to tame a shrew,  
 Now let him speak; 'tis charity to shew.

*Exit PETRUCHIO.*

***SCENE 4: PETRUCHIO'S house, the next morning.***

*Enter KATHERINE and GRUMIO.*

GRUMIO

No, no, forsooth, I dare not for my life.

KATHERINE

The more my wrong, the more his spite appears.

What, did he marry me to famish me?

Beggars that come unto my father's door

Upon entreaty have a present alms.

If not, elsewhere they meet with charity.

But I, who never knew how to entreat,

Nor never needed that I should entreat,

Am starved for meat, giddy for lack of sleep,

With oaths kept waking and with brawling fed.

And that which spites me more than all these wants,

He does it under name of perfect love,

As who should say, if I should sleep or eat

'Twere deadly sickness or else present death.

I prithee, go, and get me some repast,

I care not what, so it be wholesome food.

GRUMIO

What say you to a neat's foot?

KATHERINE

'Tis passing good. I prithee let me have it.

GRUMIO

I fear it is too choleric a meat.

How say you to a fat tripe finely broiled?

KATHERINE

I like it well. Good Grumio, fetch it me.

GRUMIO

I cannot tell. I fear 'tis choleric.

What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?

KATHERINE

A dish that I do love to feed upon.

GRUMIO

Ay, but the mustard is too hot a little.

KATHERINE

Why then, the beef, and let the mustard rest.

GRUMIO

Nay then, I will not. You shall have the mustard

Or else you get no beef of Grumio.

KATHERINE

Then both, or one, or anything thou wilt.

GRUMIO

Why then, the mustard without the beef.

KATHERINE

Go, get thee gone, thou false deluding slave,

That feed'st me with the very name of meat.

Sorrow on thee, and all the pack of you

That triumph thus upon my misery.

Go, get thee gone, I say.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and GRUMIO with a "banquet" of meat.*

PETRUCHIO

How fares my Kate? What, sweeting, all amorf?

KATHERINE

Faith, as cold as can be.

PETRUCHIO

Pluck up thy spirits. Look cheerfully upon me.  
 Here, love, thou seest how diligent I am,  
 To dress thy meat myself and bring it thee.  
 I am sure, sweet Kate, this kindness merits thanks.  
 What, not a word? Nay then, thou lov'st it not,  
 And all my pains is sorted to no proof.  
 Here, take away this dish.

KATHERINE

I pray you, let it stand.

PETRUCHIO

The poorest service is repaid with thanks,  
 And so shall mine before you touch the meat.

KATHERINE

*(to PETRUCHIO)*

I thank you, sir.

PETRUCHIO

Eat it all, dear Katherine, if thou lovest me.—  
 Much good do it unto thy gentle heart.  
 Kate, eat apace. And now, my honey love,  
 Will we return unto thy father's house,  
 And revel it as bravely as the best,  
 With silken coats and caps, and golden rings,  
 With ruffs and cuffs, and farthingales and things,  
 With scarfs and fans, and double change of brav'ry,  
 With amber bracelets, beads, and all that knav'ry.  
 What, hast thou dined?  
 Well, come, my Kate, we will unto your father's. *(beat)*  
 Let's see, I think 'tis now some seven o'clock,

And well we may come there by dinner time.

KATHERINE

I dare assure you, sir, 'tis almost two,  
And 'twill be supper time ere you come there.

PETRUCHIO

It shall be seven ere I move a step. *(beat)*

Look, what I speak, or do, or think to do,

You are still crossing it.—Let it alone.

*(He strikes her)*

I will not go today, and, ere I do,

It shall be what o'clock I say it is.

*PETRUCHIO exits.*

*KATHERINE is handed a small makeup compact and she puts a bruise on her face.*

KATHERINE *(to the audience)*

Why, so, this gallant will command the sun!

*KATHERINE exits.*

***SCENE 5. A rest stop on the road to Padua.***

KATHERINE THREE *(offstage)*

Travelling to Katherine's father's house for the marriage of Bianca.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE walking across the front of the stage as if on a long journey.*

PETRUCHIO

Come on, i' God's name, once more toward our father's.

Good Lord, how bright and goodly shines the moon!

KATHERINE

The moon? The sun! It is not moonlight now.

PETRUCHIO

I say it is the moon that shines so bright.

KATHERINE

I know it is the sun that shines so bright.

PETRUCHIO

Now, by my mother's son, and that's myself,

It shall be moon, or star, or what I list,

Or e'er I journey to your father's house. *He grabs her hair and pulls it.*

KATHERINE

Forward, I pray, since we have come so far,

And be it moon, or sun, or what you please.

And if you please to call it a rush candle,

Henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.

PETRUCHIO

I say it is the moon.

KATHERINE

I know it is the moon.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, then you lie. It is the blessèd sun.

KATHERINE

Then God be blest, it is the blessèd sun.

But sun it is not, when you say it is not,

And the moon changes even as your mind.

What you will have it named, even that it is,

And so it shall be so for Katherine.

PETRUCHIO

Well, forward, forward. Thus the game should run.—

But soft, company is coming here.

*Enter VINCENTIO.*

*(To VINCENTIO)* Good morrow, gentle mistress, where away?—  
 Tell me, sweet Kate, and tell me truly, too,  
 Hast thou beheld a fresher gentlewoman?  
 Such war of white and red within her cheeks!  
 What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty  
 As those two eyes become that heavenly face?—  
 Fair lovely maid, once more good day to thee.—  
 Sweet Kate, embrace her for her beauty's sake.

KATHERINE

*(to the audience).* He will make the man mad, to make a woman of  
 him.

*(to VINCENTIO)* Young budding virgin, fair and fresh and sweet,  
 Whither away, or where is thy abode?  
 Happy the parents of so fair a child!  
 Happier the man whom favorable stars  
 Allots thee for his lovely bedfellow.

PETRUCHIO

Why, how now, Kate? I hope thou art not mad!  
 This is a man—old, wrinkled, faded, withered—  
 And not a maiden, as thou sayst he is.

KATHERINE

Pardon, old father, my mistaking eyes  
 That have been so bedazzled with the sun  
 That everything I look on seemeth green.  
 Now I perceive thou art a reverend father.

Pardon, I pray thee, for my mad mistaking.

PETRUCHIO

Do, good old grandsire, and withal make known  
Which way thou travelest. If along with us,  
We shall be joyful of thy company.

VINCENTIO

My name is called Vincentio, my dwelling Pisa,  
And bound I am to Padua, there to visit  
A son of mine, which long I have not seen; Lucentio.

PETRUCHIO

Happily met, the happier for thy son.  
The sister to my wife, this gentlewoman,  
Thy son by this hath married.  
Now wander we to see thy honest son,  
Who will of thy arrival be full joyous!

*VINCENTIO exits.*

KATHERINE

Husband, let's follow to see the end of this ado.

PETRUCHIO

First kiss me, Kate, and we will.

KATHERINE

What, in the midst of the street?

PETRUCHIO

What, art thou ashamed of me?

KATHERINE

No, sir, God forbid, but ashamed to kiss.

PETRUCHIO

Why, then, let's home again. Come, let's away.

KATHERINE

Nay, I will give thee a kiss. *She kisses him.* Now pray thee, love, stay.

PETRUCHIO

Is not this well? Come, my sweet Kate.

Better once than never, for never too late.

*They exit.*

***SCENE 6. Baptista's house; a banquet.***

*Enter PETRUCHIO, KATHERINE, LUCENTIO, BIANCA, HORTENSIO, and the WIDOW, setting up chairs on the stage.*

LUCENTIO

*Holding up Lucentio's script.*

Welcome to the house of I, Lucentio,

For the wedding of myself and the fair Bianca.

Feast with the best, and welcome to my house.

For now we sit to chat as well as eat.

PETRUCHIO

Padua affords nothing but what is kind!

HORTENSIO

For both our sakes, I would that word were true!

PETRUCHIO

Now, for my life, Hortensio fears his widow.

WIDOW

Then never trust me if I be afeard.

PETRUCHIO

I mean Hortensio is afeard of you.

WIDOW

He that is giddy thinks the world turns round.

KATHERINE

I pray you tell me what you meant by that.

WIDOW

Your husband being troubled with a shrew  
Measures my husband's sorrow by his own.  
And now you know my meaning.

KATHERINE

A very mean meaning.

WIDOW

Right, I mean you.

PETRUCHIO

To her, Kate!

HORTENSIO

To her, widow!

PETRUCHIO

A hundred marks, my Kate does put her down.

HORTENSIO

That's my office.

*The three women withdraw offstage.*

LUCENTIO

Now, in good sadness, dear Petruchio,  
I think thou hast the veriest shrew of all.

PETRUCHIO

Well, I say no. And therefore, for assurance,  
Let's each one send unto his wife,  
And he whose wife is most obedient  
To come at first when he doth send for her

Shall win the wager which we will propose.

HORTENSIO

Content. What's the wager?

LUCENTIO

Twenty crowns.

PETRUCHIO

Twenty crowns?

I'll venture so much of my hawk or hound,

But twenty times so much upon my wife.

LUCENTIO

A hundred, then.

HORTENSIO

Content.

PETRUCHIO

A match! 'Tis done.

HORTENSIO

Who shall begin?

LUCENTIO

That will I.

Go, Biondello, bid your mistress come to me.

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

BIONDELLO

I go, I go, look how I go.

*BIONDELLO exits.*

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

LUCENTIO

How now, what news?

BIONDELLO

Sir, my mistress sends you word

That she is busy, and she cannot come.

PETRUCHIO

How? "She's busy, and she cannot come"?

Is that an answer?

HORTENSIO

Ay, and a kind one, too.

Pray God, sir, your wife send you not a worse.

PETRUCHIO

I hope better.

HORTENSIO

Sirrah Biondello, go and entreat my wife

To come to me forthwith.

*BIONDELLO exits.*

PETRUCHIO

O ho, entreat her!

Nay, then, she must needs come.

HORTENSIO

I am afraid, sir,

Do what you can, yours will not be entreated.

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

Now, where's my wife?

BIONDELLO

She will not come. She bids you come to her.

PETRUCHIO

Worse and worse. She will not come! O vile,  
 Intolerable, not to be endured!—  
 Now, Biondello, go to my lady,  
 Say I command her come to me.

*BIONDELLO exits.*

HORTENSIO

I know her answer.

PETRUCHIO

What?

HORTENSIO

She will not.

PETRUCHIO

The fouler fortune mine, and there an end.

*Enter KATHERINE, dragging BIANCA and the WIDOW, who are resisting and protesting.*

KATHERINE

Fie, fie! Unknit that threat'ning unkind brow,  
 And dart not scornful glances from those eyes  
 To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.  
 It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,  
 Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,  
 And in no sense is meet or amiable.  
 A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,  
 Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty,  
 And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
 Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.

Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
Thy head, thy sovereign, one that cares for thee,  
And for thy maintenance commits his body  
To painful labor both by sea and land,  
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe,  
And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
But love, fair looks, and true obedience—  
Too little payment for so great a debt.  
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,  
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;  
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,  
And not obedient to his honest will,  
What is she but a foul contending rebel  
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?  
I am ashamed that women are so simple  
To offer war where they should kneel for peace,  
Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway  
When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.  
Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,  
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,  
But that our soft conditions and our hearts  
Should well agree with our external parts?  
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!  
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,  
My heart as great, my reason haply more,  
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;  
But now I see our lances are but straws,  
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,

That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.  
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,  
And place your hands below your husband's foot;  
In token of which duty, if he please,  
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

*PETRUCHIO slowly claps as the other characters lower their heads.*

PETRUCHIO

Why, there's a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate.

*After a long kiss PETRUCHIO leaves, shortly followed by the others, leaving KATHERINE alone on stage.*

**TRANSITION TWO**

*KATHERINE TWO is alone on stage; she begins to take off her costume. KATHERINE ONE and THREE enter. KATHERINE THREE carries her Katherine costume and sets it down next to her as KATHERINE ONE begins to speak.*

KATHERINE ONE

“If men could be contented to be what they are, there were no *fear* in marriage.”

KATHERINE THREE

“The course of true love never did run smooth.”

KATHERINE TWO

“We cannot fight for love, as men may do;  
We shou’d be woo’d, and were not made to woo.”

KATHERINE THREE

“But where there is true friendship, there needs none.”

KATHERINE ONE

“Love, which teacheth me that thou and I am one.”

KATHERINE TWO

“Say, thou art mine; and ever,  
My love as it begins shall so persevere.”

KATHERINE THREE

“By Heaven, I love thee better than myself.”

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

*Clapping solemnly and rising. House lights come up. How was that?*

KATHERINE TWO

Rough.

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Yeah, it was. *So Taming of the Shrew* is a tragedy then?

KATHERINE THREE

I don't know. I mean, I think you're right. We need to address the sexism that is inherent to the text, and you did it beautifully, but I just think there's more to the story that you might not be considering. Rather than just tragedy or comedy, it could be something in between. Like what if Petruchio and Katherine really fall in love?

KATHERINE ONE

Hmm?

KATHERINE THREE

Yeah! Right at the beginning, what if they actually have a connection?

DIRECTOR KATHERINE

Huh?

KATHERINE THREE

Ooh! What if right at the beginning they plan the bet at the end of the play as a way to get back at all the people who doubted them? *She notices the quizzical looks on the other Katherines' faces.* Here, just let me show you.

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

Okay, but, if we're going to do this whole show again, it's gotta be a speed run, okay?  
*The women nod.*

*KATHERINE THREE picks up her costume and begins to get dressed with the help of the other women. She begins to speak, and each time she does the other women echo what she says in different intonations, sometimes repeating her words as a statement or as a question. They repeat each phrase until she says another one.*

KATHERINE THREE

I do love nothing. *Women echo.* I do love nothing in the world. *Women echo.* I do love nothing in the world so well as you. *Women echo.* I do love nothing in the world so well as you; is not that strange? *Women echo.* Is not that strange? *Once she is in her costume she thanks the other women.*

*KATHERINES exit. Blackout.*

**ACT THREE****SCENE 1: BAPTISTA'S house.**

*Stage lights. Enter Katherine and Bianca with her hands tied, moving at 2x normal speed.*

KATHERINE

I hate you!

BIANCA

Well Dad loves me more anyways!

KATHERINE

Minion, thou liest.

*Enter BAPTISTA.*

BAPTISTA

Katherine you're the worst!

*Bianca exits.*

KATHERINE

What, will you not suffer me? Nay, now I see  
 She is your treasure, she must have a husband,  
 I must dance barefoot on her wedding day  
 And, for your love to her, lead apes in hell.  
 Talk not to me. I will go sit and weep  
 Till I can find occasion of revenge.

*She exits.*

*HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO rush in talking indistinguishably about how much they love and want to marry Bianca. Enter PETRUCHIO.*

BAPTISTA

Guys! No one can marry Bianca until someone marries Katherine.

PETRUCHIO

Why, that is nothing; for I tell you, father,  
I am as peremptory as she proud-minded.  
Signior Baptista, my business asketh haste,  
And every day I cannot come to woo.

BAPTISTA

Signior Petruchio, will you go with us,  
Or shall I send my daughter Kate to you?

PETRUCHIO

I'll attend her here—

*ALL but PETRUCHIO exit quickly.*

And woo her with some spirit when she comes!  
Say that she rail, why then I'll tell her plain  
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale.  
Say that she frown, I'll say she looks as clear  
As morning roses newly washed with dew.  
Say she be mute and will not speak a word,  
Then I'll commend her volubility  
And say she uttereth piercing eloquence.  
If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks  
As though she bid me stay by her a week.  
If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day  
When I shall ask the banns, and when be married.

But here she comes—and now, Petruchio, speak.

*Enter KATHERINA.*

Good morrow, Kate, for that's your name, I hear.

KATHERINE

Well have you heard, but something hard of hearing.

They call me Katherine that do talk of me.

PETRUCHIO

You lie, in faith, for you are called plain Kate,

And bonny Kate, and sometimes Kate the curst.

But Kate (*he turns and sees her, taken aback by her beauty*), the prettiest Kate in Christendom,

Kate of Kate Hall, my super-dainty Kate

(For dainties are all Kates)—and therefore, Kate,

Take this of me, Kate of my consolation:

Hearing thy mildness praised in every town,

Thy virtues spoke of, and thy beauty sounded

(Yet not so deeply as to thee belongs),

Myself am moved to woo thee for my wife.

KATHERINE

“Moved,” in good time! Let him that moved you hither

Remove you hence. I knew you at the first

You were a movable.

PETRUCHIO

Why, what's a movable?

KATHERINE

A joint stool.

PETRUCHIO

Thou hast hit it. Come, sit on me.

KATHERINE

Asses are made to bear, and so are you.

PETRUCHIO

Women are made to bear, and so are you.

KATHERINE

No such jade as you, if me you mean.

PETRUCHIO

Alas, good Kate, I will not burden thee,  
For knowing thee to be but young and light—

KATHERINE

Too light for such a swain as you to catch,  
And yet as heavy as my weight should be.

PETRUCHIO

“Should be”—should buzz! *He stumbles on his words, and they both laugh.*

KATHERINE

Well ta'en, and like a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO

O slow-winged turtle, shall a buzzard take thee?

KATHERINE

Ay, for a turtle, as he takes a buzzard.

PETRUCHIO

Come, come, you wasp! I' faith, you are too angry.

KATHERINE

If I be waspish, best beware my sting.

PETRUCHIO

My remedy is then to pluck it out.

KATHERINE

Ay, if the fool could find it where it lies.

PETRUCHIO

Who knows not where a wasp does wear his sting? In his tail.

KATHERINE

In his tongue.

PETRUCHIO

Whose tongue?

KATHERINE

Yours, if you talk of tales, and so farewell.

PETRUCHIO What, with my tongue in your tail? Nay, come again,

Good Kate. I am a gentleman—

KATHERINE

That I'll try. *She lightly strikes him.*

PETRUCHIO

I swear I'll cuff you if you strike again.

KATHERINE

So may you lose your arms.

If you strike me, you are no gentleman,

And if no gentleman, why then no arms.

PETRUCHIO

A herald, Kate? O, put me in thy books.

KATHERINE

What is your crest? A coxcomb?

PETRUCHIO

A combless cock, so Kate will be my hen.

KATHERINE

No cock of mine. You crow too like a craven.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, come, Kate, come. You must not look so sour.

KATHERINE

It is my fashion when I see a crab.

PETRUCHIO

Why, here's no crab, and therefore look not sour.

KATHERINE

There is, there is.

PETRUCHIO

Then show it me.

KATHERINE

Had I a glass, I would.

PETRUCHIO

What, you mean my face?

KATHERINE

Well aimed of such a young one.

PETRUCHIO

Now, by Saint George, I am too young for you.

KATHERINE

Yet you are withered.

PETRUCHIO

'Tis with cares.

KATHERINE

I care not. *He tickles her.*

PETRUCHIO

Nay, hear you, Kate—in sooth, you 'scape not so.

KATHERINE

I chafe you if I tarry. Let me go. *She sits down on the piano bench.*

PETRUCHIO

No, not a whit. I find you passing gentle.

'Twas told me you were rough, and coy, and sullen,

And now I find report a very liar.

*She plays a da da da dum on the piano.*

For thou art pleasant, gamesome, passing  
courteous,

*She plays a da da da dum on the piano.*

But slow in speech, yet sweet as springtime flowers.

Why does the world report that Kate doth limp?

O sland'rous world! Kate like the hazel twig

Is straight, and slender, and as brown in hue

As hazelnuts, and sweeter than the kernels.

O, let me see thee walk! Thou dost not halt.

KATHERINE

Go, fool, and whom thou keep'st command.

PETRUCHIO

Did ever Dian so become a grove

*She plays random notes on the piano.*

Did ever Dian so become a grove

*She plays random notes on the piano.*

Did ever Dian so become a grove

*She continues to play through his speech, eventually trying to play the notes for "Heart and Soul," very simply.*

As Kate this chamber with her princely gait?

O, be thou Dian and let her be Kate,

And then let Kate be chaste and Dian sportful.

*Petruchio notices that she is playing "Heart and Soul." He cracks his knuckles and plays "Heart and Soul" very well. She tries to recreate his playing but can't quite get the notes. He shows her again. Eventually they start to play together as a duet. When the song is finished they look at each other for a moment before resuming speech.*

KATHERINE

Where did you study all this goodly speech?

PETRUCHIO

It is extempore, from my mother wit.

KATHERINE

A witty mother, witless else her son.

PETRUCHIO

Am I not wise?

KATHERINE

Yes, keep you warm.

PETRUCHIO

Marry, so I mean, sweet Katherine, in thy bed.

*He offers his hand to her, but she offers her hand out for an arm wrestle. They arm wrestle.*

And therefore, setting all this chat aside,  
 Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented  
 That you shall be my wife, your dowry 'greed on,  
 And, will you, nill you, I will marry you.

*She wins, which he takes with good cheer.*

Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn,  
 For by this light, whereby I see thy beauty,  
 Thy beauty that doth make me like thee well,

*He offers her his necklace and she accepts.*

Thou must be married to no man but me.  
 For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,  
 And bring you from a wild Kate to a Kate  
 Conformable as other household Kates.

*Enter BAPTISTA, LUCENTIO, and HORTENSIO.*

Here comes your father.

*He whispers something in her ear.*

KATHERINE TWO

*(offstage)* They're planning the bet, they're planning the bet!

PETRUCHIO

Never make denial. *(They quickly pinkie swear.)*

I must and will have Katherine to my wife.

BAPTISTA

Now, Signior Petruchio, how speed you with my daughter?

*Katherine pushes Petruchio.*

PETRUCHIO

How but well, sir? How but well?

It were impossible I should speed amiss.

BAPTISTA

Why, how now, daughter Katherine? In your dumps?

KATHERINE

Call you me daughter? Now I promise you

You have showed a tender fatherly regard,

To wish me wed to one half lunatic,  
 A madcap ruffian and a swearing Jack,  
 That thinks with oaths to face the matter out.

PETRUCHIO

Father, 'tis thus: yourself and all the world  
 That talked of her have talked amiss of her.  
 If she be curst, it is for policy,  
 And to conclude, we have 'greed so well together  
 That upon Sunday is the wedding day.

KATHERINE

I'll see thee hanged on Sunday first.

HORTENSIO

Hark, Petruchio, she says she'll see thee hanged first.

LUCENTIO

Is this your speeding? Nay, then goodnight our part.

PETRUCHIO

Be patient, gentlemen. I choose her for myself.  
 If she and I be pleased, what's that to you?  
 'Tis bargained 'twixt us twain, being alone,  
 That she shall still be curst in company.  
 I tell you, 'tis incredible to believe  
 How much she loves me. O, the kindest Kate!  
 She hung about my neck, and kiss on kiss  
 She vied so fast, protesting oath on oath,  
 That in a twink she won me to her love.  
 O, you are novices! 'Tis a world to see  
 How tame, when men and women are alone,  
 A meacock wretch can make the curstest shrew.—  
 Give me thy hand, Kate. I will unto Venice

To buy apparel 'gainst the wedding day.—  
 Provide the feast, father, and bid the guests.  
 I will be sure my Katherine shall be fine.

BAPTISTA

I know not what to say, but give me your hands.  
 God send you joy, Petruchio. 'Tis a match.

HORTENSIO/LUCENTIO

Amen, say we. We will be witnesses.

PETRUCHIO

Father, and wife, and gentlemen, adieu.

*BAPTISTA, LUCENTIO, and HORTENSIO exit.*

I will to Venice. Sunday comes apace.  
 We will have rings, and things, and fine array,  
 And kiss me, Kate. We will be married o' Sunday.

*PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE exit.*

***SCENE 2: a street.***

*Enter HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO, opposite.*

KATHERINE TWO (*offstage*)

Sunday. Ding Dong.

LUCENTIO

Were you at the wedding?

HORTENSIO

Yeah.

LUCENTIO

Did it suck?

HORTENSIO

Yeah.

*Exit HORTENSIO and LUCENTIO.*

***SCENE 3: PETRUCHIO'S house.***

*Enter GRUMIO.*

GRUMIO

I am now Petruchio's faithful servant Grumio.

CURTIS

It's cold. Are they coming?

GRUMIO

Yes, they're both terrible.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE. Every time they are in the company of the servants PETRUCHIO is yelling, but in the moments the servants go offstage to retrieve something, he becomes sweet again.*

PETRUCHIO

Where be these knaves? Go, rascals, go, and fetch my supper in!

Sit down, Kate, and welcome.

Why, when, I say?—Nay, good sweet Kate, be merry.—

Off with my boots, you rogues, you villains! When?

*GRUMIO begins to remove PETRUCHIO'S boots.*

Out, you rogue! You pluck my foot awry.

Take that! (*He hits the servant.*) And mend the plucking of the other.—

Be merry, Kate.—Some water here! What ho!

Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?—

Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily.—

You whoreson villain, will you let it fall?

*He hits the servant.*

KATHERINE

Patience, I pray you, 'twas a fault unwilling.

PETRUCHIO

A whoreson beetle-headed flap-eared knave!—

Come, Kate, sit down. I know you have a stomach.

Will you give thanks, sweet Kate, or else shall I?—

What's this? Mutton?

CURTIS

Ay.

PETRUCHIO

Who brought it?

CURTIS

I.

PETRUCHIO

'Tis burnt, and so is all the meat.

What dogs are these? Where is the rascal cook?

How durst you, villains, bring it from the dresser

And serve it thus to me that love it not?

There, take it to you, trenchers, cups, and all!

*He throws the food and dishes at them. The two servants exit yelling.*

KATHERINE

I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet.  
The meat was well, if you were so contented.

PETRUCHIO

I tell thee, Kate, 'twas burnt and dried away,  
And I expressly am forbid to touch it,  
For it engenders choler, planteth anger,  
And better 'twere that both of us did fast  
Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.  
Be patient. Tomorrow 't shall be mended,  
And for this night we'll fast for company.  
Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.

*PETRUCHIO leads KATHERINE offstage, then re-enters with GRUMIO and CURTIS.*

PETRUCHIO

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,  
And 'tis my hope to end successfully.  
She ate no meat today, nor none shall eat.  
Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not.

*He snaps his fingers, and GRUMIO and CURTIS exit.*

As with the meat, some undeservèd fault  
I'll find about the making of the bed,  
And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,  
This way the coverlet, another way the sheets.

*KATHERINE enters unseen by PETRUCHIO.*

Ay, and amid this hurly I intend  
That all is done in reverend care of her.

KATHERINE

Awww.

PETRUCHIO

And, in conclusion, she shall watch all night,  
And, if she chance to nod, I'll rail and brawl,  
And with the clamor keep her still awake.  
This is a way to kill a wife with kindness.  
And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humor.  
He that knows better how to tame a shrew,  
Now let him speak; 'tis charity to shew.

*Exit PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE together.*

***SCENE 4: PETRUCHIO'S house, the next morning.***

*Enter KATHERINE and GRUMIO.*

GRUMIO

No, no, forsooth, I dare not for my life.

KATHERINE

The more my wrong, the more his spite appears.  
What, did he marry me to famish me?  
Beggars that come unto my father's door  
Upon entreaty have a present alms.  
If not, elsewhere they meet with charity.  
But I, who never knew how to entreat,

Nor never needed that I should entreat,  
 Am starved for meat, giddy for lack of sleep,  
 With oaths kept waking and with brawling fed.  
 And that which spites me more than all these wants,  
 He does it under name of perfect love,  
 As who should say, if I should sleep or eat  
 'Twere deadly sickness or else present death.  
 I prithee, go, and get me some repast,  
 I care not what, so it be wholesome food.

GRUMIO

What say you to a neat's foot?

KATHERINE

'Tis passing good. I prithee let me have it.

GRUMIO

I fear it is too choleric a meat.

How say you to a fat tripe finely broiled?

KATHERINE

I like it well. Good Grumio, fetch it me.

GRUMIO

I cannot tell. I fear 'tis choleric.

What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?

KATHERINE

A dish that I do love to feed upon.

GRUMIO

Ay, but the mustard is too hot a little.

KATHERINE

Why then, the beef, and let the mustard rest.

GRUMIO

Nay then, I will not. You shall have the mustard

Or else you get no beef of Grumio.

KATHERINE

Then both, or one, or any thing thou wilt.

GRUMIO

Why then, the mustard without the beef.

KATHERINE

Go, get thee gone, thou false deluding slave,

That feed'st me with the very name of meat.

Sorrow on thee, and all the pack of you

That triumph thus upon my misery.

Go, get thee gone, I say.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and GRUMIO with a "banquet" of meat.*

PETRUCHIO

How fares my Kate? What, sweeting, all amorf?

KATHERINE

Faith, as cold as can be.

PETRUCHIO

Pluck up thy spirits. Look cheerfully upon me.

Here, love, thou seest how diligent I am,

To dress thy meat myself and bring it thee.

I am sure, sweet Kate, this kindness merits thanks.

What, not a word? Nay then, thou lov'st it not,

And all my pains is sorted to no proof.

Here, take away this dish.

KATHERINE

I pray you, let it stand.

PETRUCHIO

The poorest service is repaid with thanks,  
 And so shall mine before you touch the meat.

KATHERINE

*(to GRUMIO)*

I thank you, sir.

PETRUCHIO

Eat it all, dear Katherine, if thou lovest me.—  
 Much good do it unto thy gentle heart.  
 Kate, eat apace. And now, my honey love,  
 Will we return unto thy father's house,  
 And revel it as bravely as the best,  
 With silken coats and caps, and golden rings,  
 With ruffs and cuffs, and farthingales and things,  
 With scarfs and fans, and double change of brav'ry,  
 With amber bracelets, beads, and all that knav'ry.  
 What, hast thou dined?  
 Well, come, my Kate, we will unto your father's. *(beat)*  
 Let's see, I think 'tis now some seven o'clock,  
 And well we may come there by dinner time.

KATHERINE

I dare assure you, sir, 'tis almost two,  
 And 'twill be supper time ere you come there.

PETRUCHIO

It shall be seven ere I move a step. *(beat)*  
 Look, what I speak, or do, or think to do,  
 You are still crossing it.—Let it alone.  
 I will not go today, and, ere I do,  
 It shall be what o'clock I say it is.

*GRUMIO exits.*

KATHERINE *(to the audience)*

Why, so, this gallant will command the sun!

*PETRUCHIO extends his hand to KATHERINE and they exit.*

***SCENE 5. A rest stop on the road to Padua.***

KATHERINE THREE *(offstage)*

Travelling quickly to Katherine's father's house for the marriage of Bianca.

*Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHERINE and GRUMIO, walking across the apron of the stage as if on a long journey.*

PETRUCHIO

Come on, i' God's name, once more toward our father's.

Good Lord, how bright and goodly shines the moon!

KATHERINE

The moon? The sun! It is not moonlight now.

PETRUCHIO

I say it is the moon that shines so bright.

KATHERINE

I know it is the sun that shines so bright.

PETRUCHIO

Now, by my mother's son, and that's myself,

It shall be moon, or star, or what I list,

Or e'er I journey to your father's house.

KATHERINE

Forward, I pray, since we have come so far,  
 And be it moon, or sun, or what you please.  
 And if you please to call it a rush candle,  
 Henceforth I vow it shall be so for me.

PETRUCHIO

I say it is the moon.

KATHERINE

I know it is the moon.

PETRUCHIO

Nay, then you lie. It is the blessèd sun.

KATHERINE

Then God be blest, it is the blessèd sun.  
 But sun it is not, when you say it is not,  
 And the moon changes even as your mind.  
 What you will have it named, even that it is,  
 And so it shall be so for Katherine.

PETRUCHIO

Well, forward, forward. Thus the game should run.—  
 But soft, company is coming here.

*Enter VINCENTIO.*

*(To VINCENTIO)* Good morrow, gentle mistress, where  
 away?—

Tell me, sweet Kate, and tell me truly, too,  
 Hast thou beheld a fresher gentlewoman?  
 Such war of white and red within her cheeks!  
 What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty  
 As those two eyes become that heavenly face?—

Fair lovely maid, once more good day to thee.—  
Sweet Kate, embrace her for her beauty's sake.

KATHERINE

*(to the audience)*. He will make the man mad, to make a woman of him.  
*(to VINCENTIO)*. Young budding virgin, fair and fresh and sweet,  
Whither away, or where is thy abode?  
Happy the parents of so fair a child!  
Happier the man whom favorable stars  
Allots thee for his lovely bedfellow.

PETRUCHIO

Why, how now, Kate? I hope thou art not mad!  
This is a man—old, wrinkled, faded, withered—  
And not a maiden, as thou sayst he is.

KATHERINE

Pardon, old father, my mistaking eyes  
That have been so bedazzled with the sun  
That everything I look on seemeth green.  
Now I perceive thou art a reverend father.  
Pardon, I pray thee, for my mad mistaking.

PETRUCHIO

Do, good old grandsire, and withal make known  
Which way thou travelest. If along with us,  
We shall be joyful of thy company.

VINCENTIO

Fair sir, and you, my merry mistress  
Have with your strange encounter much amazed me.  
My name is called Vincentio, my dwelling Pisa,  
And bound I am to Padua, there to visit

A son of mine, which long I have not seen.

PETRUCHIO

What is his name?

VINCENTIO

Lucentio, gentle sir.

PETRUCHIO

Happily met, the happier for thy son.

The sister to my wife, this gentlewoman,

Thy son by this hath married.

Now wander we to see thy honest son,

Who will of thy arrival be full joyous!

*VINCENTIO and GRUMIO exit.*

KATHERINE

Husband, let's follow to see the end of this ado.

PETRUCHIO

First kiss me, Kate, and we will.

KATHERINE

What, in the midst of the street?

PETRUCHIO

What, art thou ashamed of me?

KATHERINE

No, sir, God forbid, but ashamed to kiss.

PETRUCHIO

Why, then, let's home again. Come, let's away.

KATHERINE

Nay, I will give thee a kiss. *She kisses him.* Now pray thee, love, stay.

PETRUCHIO

Is not this well? Come, my sweet Kate.

Better once than never, for never too late.

*They exit.*

**SCENE 6. Baptista's house; a banquet.**

*Enter GRUMIO, PETRUCHIO, KATHERINE, LUCENTIO, BIANCA, HORTENSIO, and the WIDOW.*

GRUMIO

They're still married and she's still a bitch!

LUCENTIO

Let's eat.

KATHERINE

I don't like you.

WIDOW

I don't like you.

PETRUCHIO

To her, Kate!

HORTENSIO

To her, widow!

*The three women withdraw offstage.*

LUCENTIO

Now, in good sadness, dear Petruchio,  
I think thou hast the veriest shrew of all.

PETRUCHIO

Well, I say no. And therefore, for assurance,  
Let's each one send unto his wife,  
And he whose wife is most obedient

To come at first when he doth send for her  
Shall win the wager which we will propose.

HORTENSIO

Content. What's the wager?

LUCENTIO

Twenty crowns.

PETRUCHIO

Twenty crowns?

I'll venture so much of my hawk or hound,  
But twenty times so much upon my wife.

LUCENTIO

A hundred, then.

HORTENSIO

Content.

PETRUCHIO

A match! 'Tis done.

HORTENSIO

Who shall begin?

LUCENTIO

That will I.

Go, Biondello, bid your mistress come to me.

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

BIONDELLO

I go, I go, look how I go.

*BIONDELLO exits.*

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

BIONDELLO

Sir, my mistress sends you word

That she is busy, and she cannot come.

HORTENSIO

Sirrah Biondello, go and entreat my wife

To come to me forthwith. *BIONDELLO exits.*

PETRUCHIO

O ho, entreat her!

Nay, then, she must needs come.

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

BIONDELLO

She will not come. She bids you come to her.

PETRUCHIO

Worse and worse. She will not come! O vile,

Intolerable, not to be endured!—

Now, Biondello, go to my lady,

Say I command her come to me. *BIONDELLO exits.*

HORTENSIO

I know her answer.

PETRUCHIO

What?

HORTENSIO

She will not.

PETRUCHIO

The fouler fortune mine, and there an end.

*Enter KATHERINE, dragging BIANCA and the WIDOW, who are resisting and protesting.*

KATHERINE

Fie, fie! Unknit that threat'ning unkind brow,  
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes  
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor.  
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,  
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,  
And in no sense is meet or amiable.  
A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,  
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty,  
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.  
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
Thy head, thy sovereign, one that cares for thee,  
And for thy maintenance commits his body  
To painful labor both by sea and land,  
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe,  
And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
But love, fair looks, and true obedience—  
Too little payment for so great a debt.  
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,  
Even such a woman oweth to her husband;  
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,  
And not obedient to his honest will,  
What is she but a foul contending rebel  
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?

I am ashamed that women are so simple  
To offer war where they should kneel for peace,  
Or seek for rule, supremacy, and sway  
When they are bound to serve, love, and obey.  
Why are our bodies soft and weak and smooth,  
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,  
But that our soft conditions and our hearts  
Should well agree with our external parts?  
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!  
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,  
My heart as great, my reason haply more,  
To bandy word for word and frown for frown;  
But now I see our lances are but straws,  
Our strength as weak, our weakness past compare,  
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.  
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,  
And place your hands below your husband's foot;  
In token of which duty, if he please,  
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

PETRUCHIO

Why, there's a wench! Come on, and kiss me, Kate.

**EPILOGUE**

DIRECTOR KATHARINE

*Clapping.* Excellent, you guys, really excellent. So, have we decided? What is *Taming of the Shrew*? A comedy, a tragedy, a bit of both?

KATHERINE ONE

Well, I don't think it's just a comedy.

KATHERINE TWO

And I don't think it's just a tragedy.

KATHERINE THREE

And I don't think it's just a bit of both.

KATHERINE ONE

Women have lived all of these stories. They have been shrewish and strong.

KATHERINE TWO

They have been beaten and resilient.

KATHERINE THREE

They have loved and been loved.

KATHERINE ONE

A woman—

KATHERINE TWO

A woman—

KATHERINE THREE

A woman—

ALL

A woman—

KATHERINE ONE

moved

ALL

is

KATHERINE TWO

like a fountain troubled,

KATHERINE THREE

Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of

ALL

beauty,

KATHERINE ONE

And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty

KATHERINE TWO

Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.

KATHERINE THREE

Thy husband is thy lord, thy

ALL

life,

KATHERINE ONE

thy keeper,

ALL

Thy head,

KATHERINE TWO

thy sovereign,

ALL

one that cares

KATHERINE THREE

for thee,

And for thy maintenance

ALL

commits

KATHERINE TWO

his

ALL

body

To painful labor

KATHERINE THREE

both by sea and land,

KATHERINE ONE

To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,

KATHERINE TWO

Whilst thou li'st warm at home, secure and safe,

KATHERINE THREE

And craves no other tribute at thy hands

KATHERINE ONE

But love,

KATHERINE TWO

fair looks,

KATHERINE THREE

and true obedience—

ALL

Too little payment for

KATHERINE ONE

so great a debt.

KATHERINE TWO

Such duty as the subject owes the prince,

KATHERINE THREE

Even

ALL

such a woman

KATHERINE THREE

oweth to her husband.  
 My mind hath been as big as one of yours,  
 KATHERINE TWO  
 My heart as great,  
 KATHERINE ONE  
 my reason haply more,  
 ALL  
 To bandy word for word and frown for frown;  
 KATHERINE ONE  
 But now  
 ALL  
 I see our lances  
 KATHERINE TWO  
 are but straws,  
 ALL  
 Our strength  
 KATHERINE THREE  
 as weak, our weakness past compare,  
 ALL  
 That seeming to be most which we indeed  
 KATHERINE THREE  
 least  
 ALL  
 are.

*The KATHERINES all take a breath together and begin the monologue again; this time they only say the lines they speak together, creating a new version of the speech.*

KATHERINES

A woman is beauty, life, thy head, one that cares, commits body to painful labor.  
Too little payment for such a woman, to bandy word for word and frown for frown.  
I see our lances, our strength,  
That seeming to be most which we indeed

*The KATHERINES all take a breath together.*

are.

*Blackout.*

*FINIS*

Supplementary Materials: Production Photos













**Appendix 1**  
**Initial Concept and Production Proposal**  
**Submitted to the Department of Theatre and Dance Play Selection Committee**

Proposal for Senior Showcase:  
 Taming of the Shrew(s)  
 The Three Faces of the *Taming of the Shrew*

submitted by  
 Katharine Cognard-Black

**Section One: Raison D'être**

*Introduction*

As Emma Smith, a professor at Oxford's Hertford College, says in her book *This is Shakespeare*, "Shakespeare's plays do not answer questions; they are not definitive about characters, themes, and concepts. Rather, they raise questions that are subject to interpretation of every new century, every director, every reader, and every sensibility."

Professor Smith's point seems especially true in relation to *The Taming of the Shrew*, given the complexity associated with the relationship between the play's two main characters, Petruchio and Katharine. When they are first introduced, and then as their relationship changes throughout the play, there is little pre-conceived understanding of what their relationship entails and where it will go—the difficult dynamics of gender and sexuality that define their wooing and marriage are "not definitive." And although those of us who are now living inside the contemporary #MeToo movement bring an understanding of power and gender to bear on this play, *Taming* itself, and the message it conveys, is a mystery waiting to be explored.

There are critics from the early twentieth century all the way to today who see this play as misogynistic—claiming that it should no longer be performed because of how it portrays (and maybe celebrates) men "owning" and curtailing women, or "taming" them. However, other critics argue that this play is one of Shakespeare's proto-feminist masterpieces, and that the mere fact that Shakespeare creates Katharine—a woman with a strong tongue and a quick wit who "speaks truth to power"—is proof that Shakespeare isn't interested in perpetuating the patriarchy as much as he is in asking questions about such social hierarches based on gender. His characterization of Katharine unfolds relative to the overall needs of the play, and those needs are definitely complicated, just as Shylock and Othello are characters who both affirm and yet also undermine stereotypes of Jewish and Black men.

Such contradictions within his characters are not only a phenomenon within this particular play, for Shakespeare constructs strong female characters across many of his works, especially within his comedies. In fact, the unfolding of many of his comic plays needs the strength of its central female characters to undo the idiocy surrounding issues of gender and power that are inherent in Shakespeare's comedic structures. Such characters as Rosalind, Viola, Helena, Beatrice, and even Hippolyta have the ability to determine each play's meaning as they outwit—or at least out-think—their male counterparts. Take, for example, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, where the two main characters, Mistress Ford and Mistress Page, are middle-aged women who trick and humiliate their unwanted suitor, Sir John Falstaff, while simultaneously teaching a lesson to their jealous, authoritative husbands. Or, too, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, it's Beatrice who steers Benedict away from going along with the other men to disgrace her cousin Hero after she's been "slut shamed"—which is the plot pivot for redeeming Hero's reputation and bringing the play to its resolution, including a lesson on the constructed nature of female purity. Or, finally, in *As You Like It* when Rosalind dresses as a boy, she does so in part to educate her crush and male counterpart Orlando on the ways of love—yet it's also because she wishes to experience the freedoms of masculinity. In the end, though, she comes to see how men are limited in their powers and worldview, and it's ultimately Rosalind who becomes the play's hero, helping to negotiate a happy ending for all of the couples (even the dysfunctional ones), thus making clear that love and gender roles are what you make of them, or "as you like it."

The sheer fact that Shakespeare created female characters with wit and intelligence as well as the ability to use language purposefully and powerfully indicates that these are multi-dimensional women, insightful about humanity, and able to negotiate identities beyond their societally proscribed roles of subservience and deference. Further, it could be argued that these women are actually the creators or agents of these comic plots. In this way, Shakespeare invests them with the power of an author: someone who tries to teach others how to recognize oppression and how to feel empathy for everyone, including those of other genders, sexualities, races, or class levels.

In the case of *The Taming of the Shrew* and analyzing the way it portrays and performs gender, I think it's crucial to keep in mind Shakespeare's collaboration with a younger playwright named John Fletcher in writing a sequel to *Taming*, one they called *The Tamer Tamed*. In this second play, Petruchio gets remarried after the death of Katharine to a character named Maria—a woman who treats him to the same kind of oppressive practices that he forced upon his first wife to "tame" her. Not only does Maria have the upper hand in this sequel, but she also teaches Petruchio to recognize how demeaning it is to be treated as inferior just because you're a man or a woman. However, Maria is also implicated in her decision to humiliate Petruchio because she winds up furthering the wrongs of toxic masculinity—which demonstrates once again that Shakespeare's female characters are fully complex and very human.

*Performance History*

I would argue that, in looking at the recent performance history of this play, the text of *Taming* offers three primary ways of interpreting the gendered relationship between Katharine and Petruchio. Each of these interpretations provides distinct and sometimes contradictory ideas about who might be the “shrew” and who is “tamed” within the play.

The first interpretation is the most common within the stage history, and it’s one I will call the “battle of the sexes.” This approach is reflected well, I think, in a 1976 production by the San Francisco American Conservatory Theatre directed by William Ball—which is a *commedia dell’arte* interpretation of the play. This performance shows that both Katharine and Petruchio are so-called “shrews,” for both are hot-tempered and violent, though their violence is highly stylized. In their relationship, they “tame” one another, for they are evenly matched intellectually and they outwit one another through language as well as through their choreographed staging. When Petruchio first tries to tame Katharine, their “wooing scene” is filled with a back-and-forth of wit and physical comedy that demonstrates two things: that their interest in each other is mutual from the start and that Kate quickly comes to understand Petruchio’s game, using it to her advantage. In the final act in this production, Kate turns to the audience and gives them a knowing wink, which suggests that even in her “powerlessness” as a “tamed” wife, she is actually running the show, where she manipulates Petruchio even as he believes he is manipulating her. In this way, Kate is the more powerful “shrew”—a savvy schemer who will ultimately rule the roost.

The second interpretation is one of sadistic brutality, as shown by the 2008 performance at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon directed by Conall Morrison. In this production, Morrison made the choice to have a character called Christopher Sly from the play’s Induction step into the role of Petruchio (the Induction is an introduction that isn’t performed much but that sets up a play-within-a-play). At the beginning, Sly has already made it clear that he thinks women are only good for sex, and so when he puts on the part of Petruchio—from the wooing scene to the wedding to the wager at the end of the play—he becomes more and more verbally and physically abusive to Katharine. While ramping up the “taming” at his house after their strange wedding ceremony, Petruchio doesn’t just starve Kate and keep her from sleeping as the text says he does—Morrison also has him strike Kate and have sex with her against her will. And so when Katharine gives her final speech on women’s obedience to men, she does so in a robotic way, showing that she is now withdrawn, muted, and controlled. Importantly though, when the play-within-the-play is over and Petruchio must once again become Sly, the actor playing Katharine rips his costume from his body and spits in his face before walking away. Obviously, it is Petruchio who is the “shrew” now, and this production offering a critique of how violence against women perpetuates patriarchal culture and suggests that the play’s misogyny is simply not acceptable to a modern-day audience.

The final interpretation I'm interested in is what I would call a "meeting of true minds," which I think is shown well by the 2003 production directed by Gregory Doran for the RSC. In Doran's version, Katharine and Petruchio's relationship is portrayed as a true love story, where both characters are misunderstood by everyone else around them, and they find solace and companionship in one another, realizing that in a fellow "shrew" they have someone who will listen to them, talk to them, and praise them. In the wooing scene, they tickle each other and play footsie on the stage, and so it's really clear that they are in cahoots against everyone else around them who represent a society that lacks humanity when it comes to the dynamics of the marriage market. At the conclusion of Act V, these two misfits are the only happy couple on the stage, and after Kate's final speech, the audience believes that their relationship will be one of, as Petruchio puts it, "peace..., and love, and quiet life." When Petruchio wins the wager after proving that his wife is the most "obedient," Doran has both Petruchio and Kate take the winnings (a bag of gold) and fling the coins out into the audience before walking off hand-in-hand, to show that their love for each other is real wealth. So maybe in this case the "shrew" is society itself as it mandates strict gender roles and limited sexual expressions, thus limiting both men and women.

Within the context of today's #MeToo era, I find myself fascinated by a play that can be interpreted in such a range of ways, especially in how *Taming* takes on of issues of gender and power. *Taming* is layered and deep and complex, and as I said at the beginning of this proposal, it's a play that asks more questions than it gives answers.

Some of these questions are: What makes a woman? What makes a man? What makes a marriage? What does femininity and masculinity mean? Why do we live within a society that excuses—but also rejects—rape culture and sexual harassment? Is it possible for men and women caught within the gender roles of their time to arrive at relationships built on respect and love? Shakespeare raises questions; he does not answer them. So *Taming* is not an answer to the question of gender and power in people's relationships but serves as a way to create dialogue around attitudes about women and men, femininity and masculinity, the social role of marriage, and patriarchal structures of society.

## **Section Two: Directing *Taming of the Shrew* at Bucknell**

### *Overview*

For my Senior Showcase, I propose to direct a shortened version of William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, specifically, a cut version of fifteen minutes that is presented three times using three different interpretations—and with three different actors playing Katharine.

Already, I have done this cutting myself with the aid of my grandfather, Dr. Roger Cognard, who has worked as a dramaturg for Nebraska Wesleyan University for

all of their Shakespeare plays for the last 20 years, and who was an English Professor (prior to his retirement) who specialized in Shakespeare. My directorial intent with this cut version is to explore the different possibilities that are inherent in the power dynamics between Katharine and Petruchio, as demonstrated in the analysis above of the three previous performances.

Since my passion for this project comes from Petruchio and Katharine's relationship, my cut version is in service to that relationship. In my script, I have emphasized their principal scenes to explore their dynamic, including 1) the scene where they first meet or the "wooing scene"; 2) Petruchio's first soliloquy to the audience; 3) Petruchio's taming process of Katharine back at his house after they are married; and, finally, 4) Katharine's final and problematic monologue. In my vision, the three different actors playing Katharine will work with a single actor playing Petruchio. This choice will engage the strength of Bucknell's theatre department by giving three women a chance to inhabit a leading female role, and it will also help the audience to differentiate among three interpretations of the same text.

As a cast, my cut version requires Petruchio, the three Katharines, and four other supporting actors who will serve to make clear the narrative of the play surrounding Katharine and Petruchio's scenes. These supporting actors will each represent more than one character from the original play, although I am open to reducing the supporting characters to three if actors are unavailable. While I am also open to discuss deleting even more of the supporting actors if having three seems unfeasible, this would not be my first choice, for it would necessitate altering the show I have created, which includes the means to shape the action around Katharine and Petruchio. In other words, my cut version maintains the integrity of the play as a whole, but I believe I can still adjust it, while still keeping the central concept and the spine of focusing on the complex and troubled relationship between Katharine and Petruchio.

My hope is that this shortened version of a Shakespeare play would serve as an "aperitif" (if you will) for the Shakespeare mainstage in the spring. For audiences with little to no experience with Shakespeare and his 400-year-old version of English, my show might allow the audience to understand the interpretable nature of Shakespeare's plays—and how current they can be—and thus let them more readily appreciate and understand the subtleties of the mainstage play in the spring.

My intent in casting my *Taming* this way is to illustrate to an audience the possibilities for interpreting a woman's role within marriage and other male-female relationships, both via this play but also within today's society. From a directorial standpoint, this casting choice of three different women will help to mitigate the complexity of the interpretation style I am after. By doing the same fifteen-minute version three times but with three different actors, this will provide a visual cue so that the audience is able to navigate seamlessly the transitions from version to version. This choice will also, from an acting standpoint, help the actor playing Petruchio to

compartmentalize each rendition and authentically react to the nuance of each scene—that is, responding to the variations placed before him by each differing Katharine.

To enhance this creative approach to *The Taming of the Shrew*, my plan in terms of costumes is to have simple, modern costuming with distinctive pieces to denote one character from another. This is important since I plan to do some double casting among Baptista, Vincentio, Lucentio, Grumio, and Curtis. My reasoning for double casting is that I want to have a relatively small cast because a smaller cast will mirror how my cut version asks the audience to keep their focus on the fraught and ever-changing dynamic between Katharine and Petruchio.

In terms of props, I envision that my production will be minimalistic because, once again, my intent is to focus on the language and how that language can give rise to distinct relationship possibilities between the two major characters, rather than displaying grandeur and flourish from an elaborate set, which would take the audience's eye away from my major intent, that is, the human and humanizing interaction of two dynamic, witty, sometimes insecure, sometimes brutal, but always intriguing characters.

In terms of space, I'm aware that at that time of the fall semester, the main theatre and the Black Box will be in use. Therefore, I'd like to suggest staging my play at Bucknell Hall, both for its intimacy and church-like qualities. Like the intimacy of Shakespeare's original Globe Theatre in London with "groundlings" (a standing audience) surrounding the actors and, sometimes, even being part of the action of the play (often actors at the Globe spoke directly to the groundlings and even declaimed their positions to the audience rather than other actors on stage), Bucknell Hall would give my audience an intimate relationship with all three of my interpretations.

My concept for this space is to surround the front stage with seating, allowing people to sit right in the front of the action, while other audience members sit in the pews. This arrangement will mimic the Globe's structure of groundlings vs. those seated in the galleries. Also, as with the Globe, my actors would be able to move among the audience in order to bring people into the world of the play. In addition, I plan to use the piano in Bucknell Hall on the stage as a set piece, incorporating both the piano and its bench into my scenes. Though my props are minimalistic, the piano would bring beauty to the stage and signal too Katharine's and Petruchio's class status as members of the higher class. Indeed, it also might be possible to use the piano for live pre-show music, as in Shakespeare's time, in keeping with my idea to emulate the world of the Globe. In this interactive space, my hope is that my audience will see their own lives, their own uncertainties, their own complex and sometimes difficult or even devastating and very human relationships up close and personal.

*Purpose*

My desire to do this play in this particular way is to ask questions about gender and power and to create a dialogue about the nuances and the complexities within Shakespeare's language relative to his male and female characters. I believe that this play will make people laugh and well as make people cry, but, most importantly, it will make people question—to look inward and examine their own beliefs and preconceptions and understandings both about gender politics in *The Taming of the Shrew* and about gender politics in the present day.

In fact, I believe there is no better moment to do this play than in 2020 because, in this moment in America, and in an election year to boot, there are forces that suggest a one-dimensional, right-or-wrong sense of ourselves. We have become entrenched by our own viewpoint, our own perspective, our own “truth,” especially in an era of #MeToo. *The Taming of the Shrew*, rendered in three distinct ways but each with an intimacy of human interaction, will ask the audience to open themselves beyond themselves into thinking about what other people have to say, especially people who are oppressed or curtailed. Drama is art; art is intended to raise humanity's visions toward a larger and broader humanity. Especially at this time in America, art is called upon to take us from the insufficiencies of ourselves and to re-imagine and explore beyond ourselves. Shakespeare's language, his ability to open rather than close, to ask questions rather than give answers, will give my audience this potential for a new perspective.

### **Section Three: My Qualifications**

#### *Growing Up with Shakespeare*

My own name, Katharine, comes from my mother's teaching of Shakespeare. That's a legacy I've had from the beginning of my life. My parents named me for a character who is a woman who speaks her mind, but also for a woman who must navigate the thorny path of gender oppression and stereotypes. My parents raised me as a feminist, as a woman with ability, strength, determination, and, like Katharine, a potential capacity for interaction and collaboration.

When I was five years old, I visited Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare's birthplace, for the first time. And over the course of my life, this has been a reoccurring trip, almost like a pilgrimage—my family has taken me to Stratford a total of six times as part of a Summer Shakespeare study tour that they lead every second or third summer. As part of my first trip, I saw my first Shakespeare play at age five at with Royal Shakespeare Company—*A Midsummer Night's Dream* directed by Gregory Doran—and fell in love with the magic, the comedy, and the humanity within Shakespeare's plays. Since then I've seen on average six or seven Shakespearean or Renaissance plays per trip. That's a total of thirty-six Shakespeare plays in England alone, although over the years my parents have also taken me to see plays at the Folger Shakespeare Theatre in Washington DC and also to The Blackfriars Theatre to see performances by the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, Virginia.

Each of the Stratford trips has also included sessions led by RSC staff in movement, make-up, and voicing; intimate discussions with RSC actors and directors; and also lectures by academic scholars who work with the Royal Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. Finally, in 2019, I took this study tour as a for-credit course, and during that summer, we saw an intriguing production of *The Taming of the Shrew* that switched all the male characters with all the female characters—creating a matriarchy rather than a patriarchy—which fascinated me and led me to write my final paper on this production and to consider directing a reduced version of the play for my Senior Showcase.

### *Shakespeare Performances*

In addition, I've had the opportunity to act in Shakespearean plays. In ninth grade, I was Tranio in *The Taming of the Shrew* as part of the Nebraska Girls Shakespeare Company; and for the same company, the following summer I played Helena in *All's Well That Ends Well*. (The NGSC puts on all-female productions of Shakespeare's plays each summer.) Then, as a high-school sophomore, I played Ursula in *Much Ado About Nothing* at St. Mary's College of Maryland. Finally, during my senior year in high school, I played Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*, which is my favorite Shakespearean play.

### *Shakespeare Scholarship*

During high school, I was a Fellow at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC, where I studied with various directors and scholars and had a chance to work with the Folger's archival material, including some of the 82 First Folios owned by the Folger Shakespeare Library—the largest holding of First Folios in the world. As a Folger Fellow, I was also able to perform on the Folger stage and engage in original research on archival documents and objects in the Folger's reading room, which I presented at the end of my first semester.

All of this work led to my decision to pursue a Senior Capstone Project in high school investigating the representation of women in historical literature, and attempting to use modern-day creative writing to respond to and to combat the centuries-long representations of oppression of women in plays, poetry, novels, and essays. The culmination of this project was that I organized and promoted a creative reading of original writings by high-school and college-age students at St. Mary's College of Maryland, which I called "Righting Writings Wrongs." As part of the research behind this project, one of the three texts I examined was *The Taming of the Shrew*. Thus, I have examined how *The Taming of the Shrew* is an example of how women are represented as oppressed and silenced figures in literature—while at the same time, based on the matriarchal RSC production in Stratford-upon-Avon I saw in 2019, I've also seen the way in which this play has the potential to affirm a woman's role in society or to question strict gender roles altogether.

For the culminating assignment in the Summer Shakespeare study tour I took, I wrote a twenty-page paper on that gender-swapping Stratford 2019 production of *Shrew* directed by Justin Audibert. This paper was a comprehensive examination of distinct interpretations of *The Taming of the Shrew* across the last thirty years, specifically how the play might be considered through a feminist lens. Now, I'm interested in doing this reduced production of *The Taming of the Shrew* to further my creative exploration of this play and to expand my knowledge of it in conjunction with a Senior Honors Thesis Project in Theatre, working both with Shakespeare's original text, with the stage history of *The Taming of the Shrew*, with my own production of *Taming*, and with relevant feminist theory.

### *Experience Directing*

As a senior in high school, I was selected to direct a one-act play; I chose *Gruesome Playground Injuries*, which only had a cast of two and which included seating on the stage itself, and so I have some experience with the intimacy involved when an audience is close to the action. For that production I build and used a swing set as my principle set piece and used in a myriad of ways to represent different set pieces in various scenes, for example a chair, a bench, an actual swing set, and even a Zamboni, so I have some experience with making creative use of a minimalistic set.

At Bucknell, my directing work so far includes serving as the assistant director for Prof. Anjalee Hutchinson on the play *Bluestockings*; participating in the directing class and directing my own piece of Cocktail Theatre, *Mickey Cares*; as well as co-directing the firstyear show, *Love and Information*, as a Junior Showcase supervised by Prof. Bryan Vandevender.

My intention is that this proposed Senior Showcase with *The Taming of the Shrew* will be the next step in my trajectory as an actor, scholar, and director of Shakespeare's work. Ideally, this experience would help me to pursue graduate-level study in Shakespeare, perhaps with directing as my emphasis. Thus, my directing work at Bucknell and having the opportunity to direct a cut version of *The Taming of the Shrew* in a creative, unexplored-to-date way as a Senior Showcase would be a step toward continuing my education in theatre via graduate school, which is something I would love to do.

### **Section Four: Conclusion**

As Emma Smith suggests about *The Taming of the Shrew* in her book *This is Shakespeare*: "The ambiguity over whether Katharine is tamed at the end of *The Taming of the Shrew* is intrinsic to the play—it isn't a problem...of history. Rather,...the play's own structure and ambiguities...mean that the question was [and is] always present.... A flick through the modern production history of *The Taming of the Shrew* is exemplary:

the suffragettes, the post-war reiteration of gender conservatism, and second-wave feminism have all found the play hospitable and relevant to their concerns.... If *The Taming of the Shrew*'s Katharine looks vulnerable, or ballsy, or beautiful, that makes a difference to our interpretation of this most ambiguous of plays, and if her imposed husband Petruchio is attractive, or boorish, or nervous, that too has an impact.”

This opportunity to direct *The Taming of the Shrew* would be the culminating step at Bucknell in my exploration with Shakespeare dramatically, and *Taming* specifically. Having studied *Taming* in the past as a play that represents gender oppression but also one that functions as a potentially proto-feminist text, I am now hoping to engage the play once again as a director to unpack the complex intersections between gender and power that the play offers—whether Katharine is “vulnerable, or ballsy, or beautiful” and whether Petruchio is “attractive, or boorish, or nervous.” In addition to having the opportunity to develop and direct my specific concept of an adapted *Taming of the Shrew*, I plan to propose to write my senior honors thesis about how Katharine and Petruchio have the potential to teach modern-day audiences something meaningful about gender politics in the age of #MeToo, making this play once again “relevant” to our societal “concerns.”

I have spent time studying *Taming* as a text that represents and possibly furthers the oppression of women in my Senior Capstone Paper’ I have spent time exploring the play as a potentially feminist text in my Summer Shakespeare study tour; and now I would like to explore where and how these two ideas intersect, both in the experience of directing my version of *Taming of the Shrew*, and also in the writing of a Senior Honors Thesis about this experience, my research, my choices, and my audiences’ reactions. Both in directing and in writing my Senior Thesis, I will thereby combine my passion for live theatre and literary studies—and of course my passion for Shakespeare.

Finally, as Smith states, “Shakespeare’s plays are incomplete, woven of what’s said and what’s unsaid, with holes in between.” In having the possibility to direct three versions of *The Taming of the Shrew*, I hope to fill some of the holes, but with my audience’s participation. Rather than telling my audience what to think about Katharine or Petruchio, I will lead them to consider options, ideas, and connections—to come to their own conclusions and to ask their own questions.

For that’s what I see as the significance of Shakespeare and of live theatre more generally: opening rather than closing possibilities. Today, in contemporary America, the idea of how men and women connect or disconnect is forefront to our thinking. *The Taming of the Shrew*, and my approach to the same scenes considered in three distinct ways, opens these questions and allows for speculation and dialogue.

## **Section Five: Addendum**

This rendition of *Taming of the Shrew* is, as I have argued, my first choice for a Senior Showcase.

However, if the committee does not find my proposal amiable, I would suggest instead that I could direct three plays from a collection called *Love's Fire*, which are seven short plays inspired by Shakespearean sonnets, which include a reading of the sonnets as a part of the play. These plays were written and produced in the late 1990s in collaboration with the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis—which specializes in Shakespeare productions—and among the playwrights are three who have won Pulitzer Prizes for Drama, including Tony Kushner, Wendy Wasserstein, and Marsha Norman. The celebrated playwright Ntozake Shange is also included.

I am drawn to these seven plays because of my deep connection with Shakespeare and because I think it would be fascinating to use my background in devising to explore what it means to perform poetry. Thus, if my *The Taming of the Shrew* proposal is not able to be granted, I would be glad to send you another, proposal with a rationale and supplementary information for directing three plays from *Love's Fire*.

### **Section Six: Addendum Two in Light of New COVID-19 Protocols**

The text above is my original proposal for a Showcase Project from the Fall of 2020. However, in light of COVID-19 and my medical leave in Fall 2020, while I intend for the root of my project to remain the same, many of the logistical components will change.

The first change I propose is the cutting of the 4 supporting characters and having a cast of only 4 total (the three Katharines and the one Petruchio). I think that in terms of COVID guidelines, having a small cast will help with social distancing and also provide fewer opportunities for contaminating one another.

In addition, I think it will make the show stronger. As pointed out by Professor Vandevender, the concept for my play is all about the main narrative struggle and relationship between Katharine and Petruchio. Keeping them as the sole cast members streamlines my project and cuts out the unnecessary “side” moments that were weighing down my adapted text. These moments around the main scenes will now be filled with narrations by the three different Katharines, in order to create an understanding of the details that surround my chosen scenes. This narration will be created in a devised style with my company, once my play is cast. Any scenes that have an additional character will have one of the Katharines not currently playing against Petruchio step in with a distinctive hat or coat to denote the character change (reminiscent of the Reduced Shakespeare Company, which is a company of only three players who portray multiple characters). My attempt will be to create a meta-narration through these narrations by the Katharines, particularly about what’s happening in the Petruchio-Katharine scenes. This change fits well, I think, with the idea of each scene being replayed three times but

with markedly different styles of acting between the main characters—and thus with markedly distinct political and cultural interpretations, especially in terms of gender and power.

The second change is that, obviously, my play will no longer be an as an “aperitif” (if you will) for the *As You Like It* production this spring. However, I still think that the relationship between these two Shakespearean productions will be helpful for the Department. With actors coming to my auditions with some experience with Shakespeare’s language after working on *As You Like It*, or at least having seen it, I hope that they will have a base of understanding when it comes to archaic words, phrases, and their meaning. This background and knowledge from *As you Like It* will allow my cast to dive into the subtler distinctions among each of the three “versions” of *Taming* within my show, since they will already have an understanding of how to work with a Shakespearean text. I am also very interested to observe and learn from Professor Vandevender’s *As You Like It* process in terms of how to put up a live theatre piece during COVID.

With regards to this project fitting into my overall trajectory as a scholar, I have just submitted my proposal to do an Honors Thesis Project based on the creation and direction of “The Taming of the Shrew(s)” (if I am approved for this Showcase).

In terms of space and timing for this show, the new COVID-protocols provoke the most drastic changes to my original proposal. These include four distinct performance options:

The first option would still be staging my play at Bucknell Hall, both for its intimacy and church-like qualities. All of the statements in my above proposal still stand, including my concept to surround the front stage with seating, allowing people to sit right in the front of the action, while other audience members sit in the pews. This arrangement will mimic the Globe’s structure of “groundlings” close to the stage vs. those seated further away in the galleries. Also, as with the Globe, my actors would be able to move among the audience in order to bring people into the world of the play. In addition, I plan to use the piano in Bucknell Hall on the stage as a set piece, incorporating both the piano and its bench into my scenes. However, due to the uncertain nature of COVID protocols for next fall, I have three contingency plans that could help me adapt to any possible COVID situation while maintaining the integrity of my piece. These are in no particular order of preference but rather sectioned based on possible levels of COVID regulations.

The second option would be to stage this piece as an outdoor production. There is a longstanding tradition of outdoor Shakespeare, from community theatre productions to Shakespeare in the Park at Central Park in New York City. as I participate in the outdoor production of *As You Like It* this spring, I will have an opportunity to observe such work, and I will see how great theatre can be achieved outdoors, even under COVID protocols. For my own hypothetical outdoor production, I intend to move through

different physical settings, creating a “walking theatre” piece, which will allow different scenes to each have their own place and space. Indeed, I could even use the steps of Bucknell Hall for the scene directly after the marriage of Katharine and Petruchio. This would allow me to have a live audience and potentially work unmasked (depending on protocols). I understand that outside theatre is not without its challenges, such as weather changes, background noise, outside-appropriate costumes, lighting, voice projection, etc. Although I do have experience doing outside Shakespeare with a production of *All's Well That Ends Well* with the Nebraska Girls Shakespeare Company, I also know that there is much to learn. For this reason, I’m planning to have bi-weekly meetings with by Professor Vandevender to discuss the problems and solutions that come with outside theatre as he himself navigates directing *As You Like It*.

My third option would be to present a filmed piece, reminiscent of National Theatre Live. This production would be filmed indoors. The live component of my play is very important to both the devised and audience-interactive nature of my script; however, a recording of a live piece has the potential to create a similar effect. With a small audience—consisting of the members of the crew and perhaps a few roommates (depending on COVID protocols)—this film could create the feel of an audience, even on tape. I intend to participate in Prof. Anjalee Hutchinson’s film acting class during the same semester, and therefore will have advice and knowhow when it comes to working with film, as well as a group of peers in that class who might be interested in helping to produce my play. This approach might also be an avenue for acquiring a built-in audience, if I was able to advocate for the play becoming a “class event.” I would even be interested in using the camera to break the fourth wall, incorporating some faux audience interactions into the recording. For this style of theatre, I understand that learning how to work with film would be a challenge—and with film comes new obstacles to overcome, such as working with specialized equipment, film editing, pivoting actors to play to a camera as their primary audience, and many other unforeseen challenges. Taking the acting on film class with Prof. Hutchinson will improve skills in this department and help me to meet such challenges.

The fourth option would be an entirely online Zoom performance. This approach would allow me to keep the live nature of my piece. While this option would necessitate that I sacrifice some of the physicality that is important to my vision, it would also allow for a maskless, live piece of theatre. I would also hypothetically be able to include some creative elements of audience interaction via the Zoom format. That said, such integration of audience interactions via Zoom would take some playing, as well as a stage manager willing to become versed in Zoom theatre with me. However, I would be interested to figure out how to create scenes and how to “touch” virtually. I think this approach would be very instructive for both me and my cast on the intricacies and possibility of a Zoom theatre piece—a potentially important bit of theatre training, given that Zoom theatre is becoming a style in its own right. Of course, there would be difficulties for me and a steep learning curve for working in Zoom theatre. I plan to take a look at some Zoom

theatre pieces suggested to me by Professor Vandevender, as produced by the Theatre of War.

I am also very intrigued by Rob Myles' and Sarah Peachey's project "The Show Must Go Online," which is a putting up every one of Shakespeare's shows in a Zoom platform. (Here is a link to the Folger's article on the project: <https://shakespeareandbeyond.folger.edu/2020/09/29/the-show-must-go-online-shakespeare-productions-zoom/> ) I hope that watching these Zoom shows can give me creative ideas to navigate the world of "lockdown Shakespeare," as they call it as well as offer me ways to use the technology of Zoom to my advantage in moments where the actors would try to simulate the feeling of being in the same room or having a moment of "touch."

No matter which of the four styles I employ, I plan for my show to go up in Fall 2021 (as it is my final semester at Bucknell), and to have auditions at the end of this spring semester (2021). Although this audition schedule will eliminate any potential firstyears from participating in my project, they will most likely be involved with the firstyear show anyway. I also think that having the experience of *As You Like It* will help actors prepare for auditions for my show, and firstyears would not have had that opportunity. I also believe that this schedule will allow for my actors to come back to campus off book as well as offer the possibility for a few (non-mandatory) workshops over the summer on working with Shakespeare and devising (that of course would be open to the department as well). All of this would also hypothetically allow for an early performance date for my show, perhaps the weekend after the firstyear show. That way, I would not conflict with the main stage production, and if my performance is outside, the weather would still be pleasant.

Living this past fall through this pandemic has reaffirmed my love and interest in this project. In fact, I had the opportunity to take a single virtual course at a local honors college during my semester off, and I chose to take a senior seminar in Shakespearean Adaptations with Prof. Beth Charlebois of the English Department at St. Mary's College of Maryland. In this class, I was able to observe and study a wealth of film, script, and novel adaptations of various Shakespearean plays. Going into this project, then, bring with me a new appreciation and understanding of how adaptations are in dialogue with their source texts, and I hope to employ these tools as I work on my own adaptation. The pandemic has also put interpersonal relationships and spontaneous interactions in the front of my mind. Thus, I intend for my show to explore physicality as much as possible, whether or not my actors can touch in actuality or if that touch will have to be creatively explored through various methods of pantomime or virtual work. Palpable connection is more important than ever since everyone who is living through this global catastrophe is having to confront their understanding of, and comfortability with, physicality—especially given its loss.

## Showcase Proposal Form

**Name and class: Katharine Cognard-Black**

**Advisor consulted: Bryan Vandevender**

**Please list theatre courses taken (Bucknell & St. Mary's College of Maryland):**

Discovery of the Expressive Self – Prof. Dustyn Martincich

Body Language - Prof. Dustyn Martincich & Prof. Ghislaine McDayter

Shakespeare (Upper-Level Literature Course) – Prof. Kat Lechy

Studies in Shakespeare: Summer Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon, England (Study Tour in conjunction with Royal Shakespeare Company and Globe Theatre in London) – Prof. Jennifer Cognard-Black & Prof. Andrew Cognard-Black (St. Mary's College of Maryland)

Shakespearean Adaptations (Senior Seminar) – Prof. Beth Charlebois (St. Mary's College of Maryland)

Acting 2 – Prof. Anjalee Hutchinson

Directing - Prof. Anjalee Hutchinson

Modern Dance – Prof. Kelly Knox

Devising 1 - Prof. Anjalee Hutchinson

Devising 2 - Prof. Anjalee Hutchinson

Theatre and Revolution – Prof. Bryan Vandevender

Bucknell Backstage – Prof. Hutch Hutchinson & Prof. Heath Hansum

Costume Design – Prof. Paula Davis

**Please list production work at Bucknell:**

Jaques | As You Like It | 2021

Tiresias | Antigone, adapted by Anne Carson | 2018

Abby | People Don't Change They Just Change Their Hair | 2017

Linda | Almost Maine | 2017

Director | Love and Information | 2019

Assistant Director and Assistant Dramaturg | Blue Stockings | 2019

Director | Mickey Cares (10-minute play) | 2018

Assistant Stage Manager | Dangerous Liaisons | 2017

**Title and author of play: “Taming of the Shrew(s),”** based on the play *Taming of the Shrew*, originally written by William Shakespeare, edited and adapted by Katharine Cognard-Black, with assistance from Dr. Roger Cognard, Professor Emeritus of English and Shakespeare Studies from Nebraska Wesleyan University. Additional adaptations devised by ensemble.

**Length of play:** 45 minutes

**Setting of play:**

**Locale(s):** Padua (Italy) as denoted by Shakespeare's text. However, as adaptability of local place is common with performances of Shakespeare plays, I intend for it to have a modern American feel.

**Time period:** Written in the 1590's; however, as adaptability of time period is common with performances of Shakespeare plays, I intend for it to have a modern American feel.

**Time frame:** From the meeting of the two main characters, Katharine and Petruchio, through their wedding and up until Bianca's wedding celebration at the end of the play. Approx. a month total.

**Preliminary prop needs:** \*Addressed in proposal

**Preliminary costume needs:** \*Addressed in proposal

**Projected use of \$100.00 budget:** For any props or costumes that cannot be crowdsourced

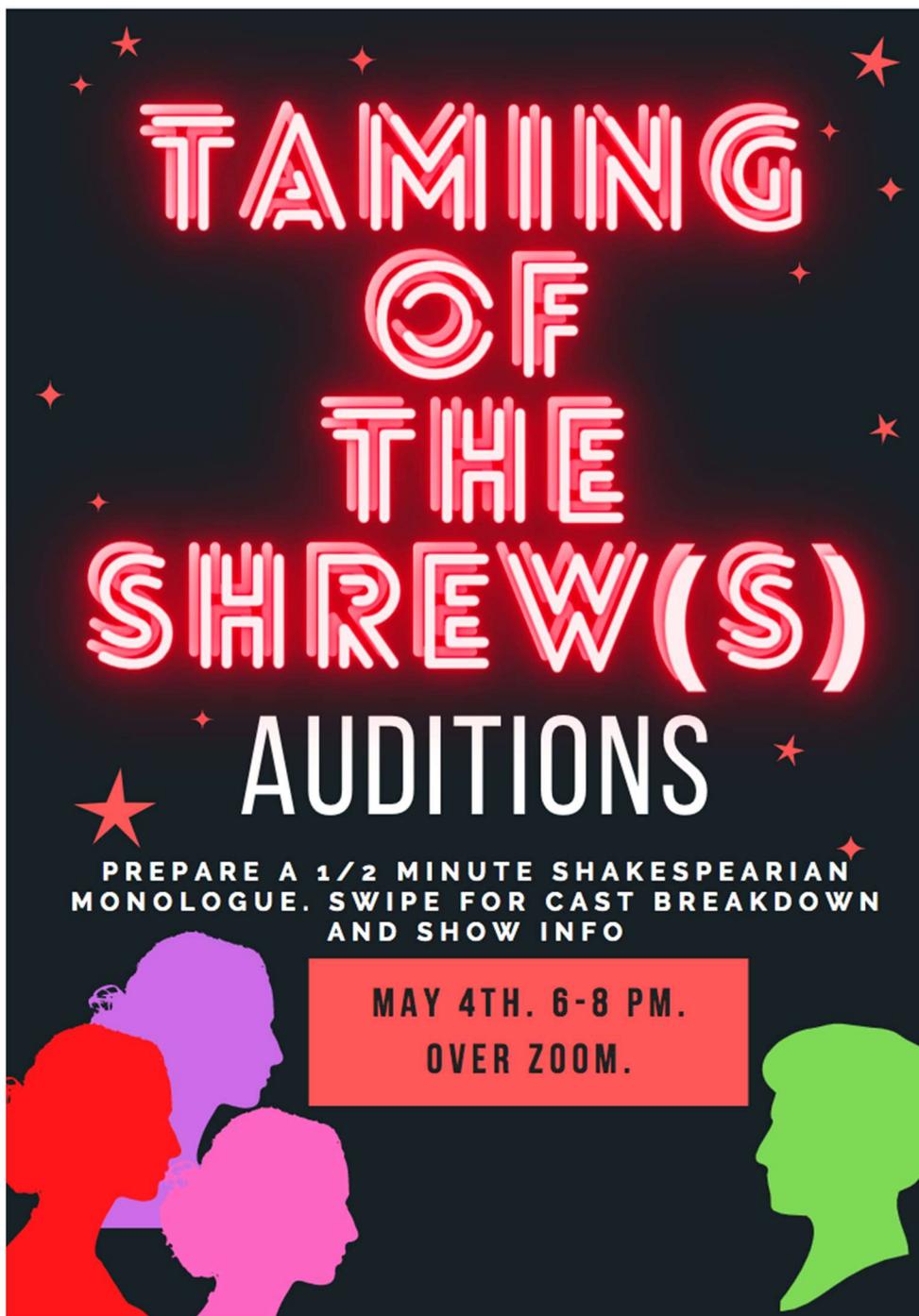
**Cast breakdown:** \*Addressed in proposal

**Artistic intent and goals for this project:** \*Addressed in proposal

**Preferred semester:** \*Addressed in proposal

## Appendix 2

## Taming Of The Shrew(s) Audition Poster and Information Sheet



**TAMING  
OF  
THE  
SHREW(S)  
AUDITIONS**

PREPARE A 1/2 MINUTE SHAKESPEARIAN  
MONOLOGUE. SWIPE FOR CAST BREAKDOWN  
AND SHOW INFO

**MAY 4TH. 6-8 PM.  
OVER ZOOM.**

The poster features a dark background with several red stars of varying sizes. At the bottom, there are colorful silhouettes of people's heads in profile: a red one on the left, a purple one, a pink one, and a green one on the right. The text is centered and uses a mix of white and red colors.

## Auditions for Taming of the Shrew(s)

Directed by Katharine Cognard-Black

Auditions Tuesday May 4<sup>th</sup> 6-8pm by zoom

Callbacks Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup> 6-9pm in person

Auditions are happening this Spring for next Fall's production of Taming of the Shrew(s). There will be some meetings over the summer to allow for a more in-depth study of the play and the language. Actors can present a 1-2 minute monologue from a Shakespeare play that they have already prepared **or if you do not have one feel free to use one of the sides provided at the link below.**

Sign up for an Audition [here](#).

Fill out this audition [form](#).

Choose one of the sides from [this folder](#) to present at your auditions.

Taming of the Shrew(s) by William Shakespeare,  
edited by Katharine Cognard-Black and Roger  
Cognard

**Directed by Katharine Cognard-Black**

Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* is the epitome of a battle of the sexes. It is the struggle between the daughter of rich Baptista, Katharine, and the fortune-seeking Petruchio who hopes to marry her. It is well known that Katharine is brash and shrewish and yet Petruchio decides to take on the task of "taming" her. Does he succeed? Is he himself really the shrew of the tale? Is this a love story, a comedy, a tragedy? We shall find out in this production of Taming of the Shrew(s), a shortened version of William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, specifically, a cut version of fifteen minutes that is presented three times using three different interpretations—and with three different actors playing Katharine opposite a single actor playing Petruchio.

### Cast List

**Katharine 1 / Narrator**, 20's, female

**Katharine 2 / Narrator**, 20's, female

**Katharine 3 / Narrator**, 20's, female

**Petruchio**, 20's, male

**Appendix 3**  
**Audition Form**

***Taming of the Shrew(s) Audition Form***

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERSONAL PRONOUNS \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

BUCKNELL EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Acting Experience (Play Title, Role, Producing Organization, Year):

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Acting Training (Course, Instructor, Institution, Year):

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you sing in a campus ensemble?

\_\_\_\_\_

What other special skills do you have? That you are willing to share.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

If you are not cast in this production, are you interested in being involved backstage as an Assistant Stage Manager or other technical position?

Yes    No    Maybe

Are you comfortable with (or willing to learn) stage combat?

Yes    No    Maybe

Please list any one-time conflicts that you know of between August 23rd and November 7th.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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Are you going to be in the “Directing 1” class next semester?

Yes    No

Are you auditioning for other shows next fall? If so please rank your preferences in order of most preferred to least.

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Please upload a screenshot of your Fall weekly schedule with as much detail as you know. Sunday thru Saturday

(Fall Weekly Calendar Example)



Would you be willing to work on memorizing your lines over the summer if cast in the play?  
Yes    No

Would you be willing to complete some preparatory readings over the summer?

Yes    No

Would you be willing to engage/attend a few preparatory meetings/discussions over the summer?

Yes    No

Please list any ongoing or extra-curricular obligations that might prevent you from attending rehearsal.

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What role (if any) are you most interested in?

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Will you take on any role offered?

Yes    No

Would you be willing to perform as an understudy if not cast in the play?

Yes    No

If COVID precautions are not an issue, are you comfortable with on stage intimacy such as hugging, and kissing?

Yes    No    Maybe

Do you need any accommodations for accessibility?

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Is there anything else that you would like the director to know?

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## Appendix 4 Callbacks Email

Hi Everyone!

Thank you so much for auditioning for *Taming of the Shrew(s)*! I was utterly blown away by the talent and energy you brought into the audition room! Below you will find the Callbacks List. Your name will be listed under the character you are called back for. Callback Sides will be sent to you by this evening. Please look through them before we meet tomorrow night.

Callbacks will be tomorrow night May. 6<sup>th</sup>. The initial idea was to be in person, however, we are shifting to Zoom auditions to better work with our virtual students. Callbacks will start at 6:00 pm and hopefully end no later than 9:15 pm.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE ANY CONFLICTS WITH THIS TIME.

Please be in a space in which you can move around and that I can see your full body. Please print your sides out if you can. Get ready to get your Shakespeare on! Can't wait for you to bring this world to life!

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions!

All Best,  
Katharine Cognard-Black

### Taming of the Shrew(s) Call Back List

#### **Katherine(s)**

Isabel Steinberg  
Sami Wurm  
Miriam Abdellateif  
Emma Battle  
Libby Hoffman  
Elisabeth Penafiel

#### **Petruchio**

Jon Riker  
Andrew Schafale  
Chaim Gould  
Keiran Calderwood  
Reid Fournier

## Appendix 5

### Plan for Callbacks

- Each pairing will read the entirety of the “wooing scene” (1.1) and they will do the first third as a comedy, second as a tragedy, and third as a love story.
- They will clap in between each version to separate them and give them a chance to shift tactics. They will have 15 minutes to prepare and then will go into the following order.
- After that I will ask mix and match any pairings I think would have good chemistry.
- (Elisabeth can’t come until later and Chaim will read again with her.

#### Pairings

- Chaim - Libby
- Kieran - Miriam
- Jon - Sami
- Andrew - Andrew
- Reid – Isabel
- Chaim – Elisabeth

NAME	What I want to see?
Isabel	Can she play in love? V2/V3
Sami	V1/V2/V3
Miriam	Can she push past her nerves in performance? V1/V2
Emma	V1/V2/V3
Elisabeth	Where best does she fit? V1/V2/V3
Libby	Where best does she fit? V1/V2/V3
Jon	V1/V2/V3
Andrew	Can he play abusive? V1/V2/V3
Chaim	Can he play in love? V1/V2/V3
Kieran	Can he handle the language? V1
Reid	Can he play in love? Can he play abusive? V1/V2/V3

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#### Post Callback Notes:

NAME	1-	2 -	3 -	Other Shows	Understudy?
<b>Isabel</b>	No	<b>Yes</b>	Yes	No	No
<b>Sami</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	Potential	No	No
Miriam	Potential	No	Potential	No	No
<b>Emma</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	No	No
Elisabeth	Yes	Potential	Potential	No	Maybe
Libby	Potential	<b>Yes</b>	Potential	No	Yes
Jon	Yes	Yes	No	Appropriate	No
<b>Andrew</b>	<b>Yes</b>	No	Potential	No	
<b>Chaim</b>	Yes	<b>Yes</b>	Potential	No	
Kieran	Yes	Potential	No	Appropriate	Yes
<b>Reid</b>	Yes	Potential	<b>Yes</b>	No	No

**Appendix 6**  
**Cast List Versions One and Two (Post Recasting Katherine 2)**

*Taming of the Shrew(s)*  
 Cast List

Katherine 1 ..... Elisabeth  
 Penafiel  
 (Bianca, Curtis, Baptista, Widow)

Katherine 2 ..... Isabel  
 Steinberg  
 (Bianca, Curtis, Baptista, Widow)

Katherine 3 ..... Emma  
 Battle  
 (Bianca, Curtis, Baptista, Widow)

Petruchio 1 ..... Andrew  
 Schafale  
 (Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)

Petruchio 2 ..... Chaim  
 Gould  
 (Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)

Petruchio 3 ..... Reid  
 Fournier  
 (Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)

Biondello ..... Guest Artist

## *Taming of the Shrew(s)*

### Cast List

Katherine 1 .....	Elisabeth Penafiel
(Bianca, Curtis, Baptista, Widow)	
Katherine 2 .....	Libby Hoffman
(Bianca, Curtis, Baptista, Widow)	
Katherine 3 .....	Emma Battle
(Bianca, Curtis, Baptista, Widow)	
Petruchio 1 .....	Andrew Schafale
(Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)	
Petruchio 2 .....	Chaim Gould
(Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)	
Petruchio 3 .....	Reid Fournier
(Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)	
Biondello .....	Guest Artist

**Appendix 7  
Costume List**

<b>Character</b>	<b>Costume Pieces</b>
Katherine One	white frilled dress, red skirt, red corset
Katherine Two	grey and purple dress with frayed edge, purple skirt, purple corset
Katherine Three	green layered skirt, gauze yellow shirt, flowered corset
Petruchio One	green vest, renaissance shirt, black pants
Petruchio Two	brown paisley vest, blue suit jacket, blue pants
Petruchio Three	green and brown vest, renaissance shirt, black pants
Bianca	pink overdress
Baptista	maroon renaissance hat with large feather
Hortensio	black renaissance hat
Lucentio	red renaissance hat
Vincenzio	cane
Grumio	dark brown ragged vest
Curtis	light brown ragged vest
Biondello	ragged cloth hat

Appendix 8  
Costume Renderings

*"Your husband being troubled by a shrew..."*



*Handwritten signature*

"The more fool you for laying on my duty"



Kate-Cor-Bleu

"Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper:





" For I am he am born to fame you, Kate "



Habit - B4

"Nay, I will give thee a kiss."



## Appendix 9

### Notes from the Dramaturg

#### “A few comments prior to rehearsal on August 24<sup>th</sup>”

Shakespeare is a master of prosody, i.e., the patterns of rhythm and sound in poetry. He makes careful use of the five basic rhythms in English verse:

Iambic—an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one (e.g., conFOUND)

Trochaic—an accented syllable followed by an unaccented one (e.g., WEAKness)

Spondaic—two contiguous accented syllables (e.g., COME, COME)

Anapestic—two unaccented syllables followed by an accented one (e.g., it is SO)

Dactylic—an accented syllable followed by two unaccented ones (e.g., BUT that our)

The iamb (i.e., an iambic unit) is the basic, natural rhythm of English speech, both in Shakespeare’s time and ours. Shakespeare was, after all, a speaker and writer of Early Modern English, very much akin to our own. (Contrary to popular misconception, he did not write in Old English—a form of our language that ceased to exist 500 years before Shakespeare was born.) Consequently, much of Shakespeare’s blank verse (i.e., unrhymed lines of usually ten syllables) is almost completely iambic, and sometimes even perfectly iambic. Here’s a sample of the latter:

To BANDy WORD for WORD and FROWN for FROWN.

But Shakespeare’s characters, like us, do not always speak in uninterrupted iambs. We vary our emphases in order to clarify meaning and/or tone: PREGNANT? HOW CAN THAT BE? would be an extreme example. (The speaker shouts in spondees.)

Shakespeare often carefully adjusts his linguistic rhythms to call attention to key words and phrases, which in turn help us to understand a character’s attitude, objective, or rhetorical prowess. In other words, Shakespeare’s characters know how to persuade—i.e., how to express themselves colorfully and compellingly to others, whether the speakers are kings or servants. The result, to our ears, is what we in general terms call “poetry”; the language sounds more aesthetic than that which we hear in our everyday lives.

Katherina’s final speech (a masterpiece of rhetoric in its own right) illustrates these traits beautifully. Consider Kate’s first line:

FIE, FIE! UN-KNIT that THREAT’-ning UN-KIND BROW.

The line, resounding with anger, establishes Kate as completely in charge. She speaks two spondees in a row (FIE, FIE! UN-KNIT) . . . then two iambs (that THREAT’-ning UN) . . . and then closes the line with another spondee (KIND BROW). She begins the line with force and ends the line with force.

One of the secrets to acting Shakespeare successfully is to understand that although the verse lines cannot easily be separated from each other by the ears of the audience, the actor knows that each line is, indeed, an integer—i.e., it has an integrity of its own, regardless of how it connects to a line preceding or following it. The trick for the actor is to keep the integrity of each line “subconsciously” in mind as he or she speaks the entire speech trippingly on the tongue (as Hamlet says), rendering it as a whole, unified thought. It must seem like real, natural conversation, even though it is, of course, carefully constructed verse.

Look, for example, at how Katherina controls her ideas and attitude in this line:

To WOUND thy LORD, thy KING, thy GOV-ER-nor,

which gives us four iambs and a concluding trochee. The line moves us along smoothly in a three-fold progression (lord, king, governor), with the climactic word—trissyllabic, not monosyllabic—naming clearly and abruptly what men do to women: they govern them.

In fact, throughout Kate’s speech, Kate is clearly in control of the moment, and of her ideas. Shakespeare helps us see that, in part, by giving Kate so many series of nouns which, simply by their “balance,” show us just how in control she is: “Thy husband is thy LORD, thy LIFE, thy KEEPer”; “To painful labor both by SEA and LAND”; “To watch the NIGHT in STORMS, the DAY in COLD”; “Or seek for RULE , suPREMacy, and SWAY”; or, with a series of adjectives: e.g., “Why are our bodies SOFT and WEAK and SMOOTH?”

In short, Shakespeare makes Katherina sound eloquent. In point of fact, she delivers one of the most compelling, complex, and commanding speeches in the entire canon. And Shakespeare does it by paying close attention not only to what she says, but to how—and in what order—she says it.

As actors, you’ll want to pay close attention to Shakespeare’s language, too—not only Katherina’s, of course, but to the speeches of all the characters in your play. And your primary focus will be on the characteristics of the language spoken by *your* character or characters.

But let me dispel what may be your mounting nervousness at this point. You don’t need to be a Renaissance scholar or a linguist to make reasonable assumptions, or even guesses, about what Shakespeare is doing with any set of words. Let your understanding of the text, plus your natural ear, guide you in assessing what Shakespeare *appears* to be doing. Try to get at the basic, simplest meaning that you think the lines carry.

Once you've done that with your characters' speeches, you'll have a basis for investing your lines with your own interpretations—interpretations guided broadly by your director in three different “takes” on how this play can be understood. Soon, you'll get the hang of it: you'll read closely, think in detail, and discover not only what each of your characters says, but—more importantly—why and how she (or he) says it.

Your director will work closely with you to achieve these goals. And (as I said in my *Essentials*) I'll be available via email to answer any questions you might have. (One caveat: I will be away from my email from August 31<sup>st</sup> through September 5<sup>th</sup>; but all other dates are fair game.)

For our “language night” on August 24<sup>th</sup>, I'll be with you via Zoom as we concentrate on the subtleties of language throughout the script. I look forward to seeing you then. And remember: there are no bad questions or suggestions. Our goal is simply to share ideas, come to some common understandings, and get comfortable with Shakespeare's text.

--Roger Cognard  
Dramaturg

## Appendix 10

### Notes from the Dramaturg

#### “Dramaturgical Essentials for *The Taming of the Shrew*; or, How to Succeed in Acting Shakespeare by Really Trying”

**The first essential** in performing a Shakespeare play is *not to be intimidated by Shakespeare’s reputation or text*. Approach this play, therefore, with confidence and an open mind, committed to telling the story (or versions of the story) of *The Taming of the Shrew* with clarity and verve. An excellent example of how Shakespeare can be respected but adapted to the ears and eyes of a modern audience is Kenneth Branagh’s 1993 film of *Much Ado about Nothing*. (If you’ve never seen it, you should, soon.) Branagh advances the setting by 200 years, omits whole lines and scenes, introduces actors of diverse races and nationalities, adds visual elements not found in the original, and yet maintains the integrity and beauty of the primary text. Branagh shows us that if, as some scholars seem to claim, Shakespeare is a god, he is nonetheless a god we can (and should) remake, over and over, in our own image—as long as we respect the essence of his original work. In short, you will not be declaiming your lines in the reverential style of Sir Laurence Olivier or Dame Peggy Ashcroft—no matter what “interpretation” of the story you are telling.

**The second essential** is co-equal with the first: you must pay close attention to the language, delivering it *conversationally* but with precise diction, volume, and understanding. If your audience cannot grasp what you’re saying, or—worse yet—cannot even hear you, then the play is lost.

You must understand not only what your character and others’ characters are saying, but you must also be acutely aware of *how* Shakespeare structures his lines. For instance, if a character is speaking blank verse, his or her lines will follow a predominantly *iambic rhythm*, a rhythm most similar to everyday English speech. (An iamb consists of an unaccented syllable followed by an accented one.) For example, when Katherina tells her female companions that a husband’s duty is “To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,” she is speaking in perfect iambic meter: “To WATCH the NIGHT in STORMS, the DAY in COLD.”

But Shakespeare does not always write perfectly iambic verse. A few lines further, Katherina compares a “woman moved” (i.e., an unruly woman) to “a fountain troubled”: such a woman, she says, is “Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty.” The rhythm of this line is, MUDDy, ILL-SEEMing, THICK, beREFT of BEAUty.” Shakespeare begins the line with *trochaic rhythm* (a trochee is an accented syllable followed by an unaccented one). He follows that with *spondaic rhythm* (a spondee has two contiguous accented syllables)—and then completes the line with iambic rhythm (albeit with a superfluous, unaccented syllable at the very end). By altering the rhythm, Shakespeare calls subtle attention to Katherina’s anger, directness, and determination. Of

course, emphasis in actual, everyday speech occurs naturally, automatically, depending on the audience and the occasion. And your Shakespearean lines will be delivered naturally, too. But it is important that you recognize where Shakespeare intends the emphasis to be—and then work deliberately with that intention, or deliberately against it (for reasons of your own interpretation). The key word here is *deliberately*. Acting Shakespeare successfully is never a matter of guesswork.

Shakespeare is also a master of prose, with hundreds of paragraphs filling his plays—paragraphs spoken by some of his most memorable characters, such as Falstaff (“The better part of valor is discretion”) or Shylock (“Hath not a Jew eyes?”). One of his best-known characters, Benedick, from *Much Ado*, provides an excellent illustration. In one of the longest prose soliloquies in the canon, Benedick rationalizes his change of heart toward Beatrice by “punctuating” his inordinately long sentences with short, pithy sentences, strategically placed, showing the progression of his thinking. Suddenly convinced (although through trickery) of Beatrice’s love, Benedick says: “Why, it must be requited.” Later on, he remembers that “I never did think to marry.” Later still, he counters with “But doth not the appetite alter?” Finally, he concludes climactically that “The world must be peopled.” The paragraph is a masterpiece of comedic rhetoric, a masterpiece of amateur psychoanalysis, and a masterpiece of rhythm—albeit a rhythm in prose. Similarly, Grumio’s prose speech beginning “A piece of ice” is another, minor example of Shakespeare’s craftsmanship: Grumio’s short sentence is followed by a sentence of inordinate length, which serves to emphasize Grumio’s slipperiness (like ice) from head to toe. In short, Shakespeare’s prose has just as distinctive a “feel” as his verse.

This attention to the detail and power of language is one of the central ways in which Shakespeare sets himself apart from his fellow dramatists, and one of the central reasons Shakespeare is still acted today. His language compels us to pay close attention to what is said, and how it is said. In other words, Shakespeare re-creates in his verse and prose the same urgent importance we feel in our everyday lives as we attempt with careful language to influence others around us.

**The third essential:** get familiar with Shakespeare’s vocabulary. Sometimes it sounds alien, but you’ll discover that it’s not as alien as it first appears. When, for example, Grumio says “fie,” what does he mean? Or what are the “tired jades” that he refers to? Or when Don Pedro, in *Much Ado*, tells Claudio that Don Pedro will woo Hero in Claudio’s place, and Don Pedro assures his young friend that, “to her father will I break,/ And the conclusion is—she shall be thine,” what does Don Pedro mean by the word “break”? The lines make sense only when we realize that in 1600 the word “break” often meant “speak,” or “inform.” (In fact, we still retain that sense today when journalists tell us they have “breaking news,” or when we ask friends to “break it to us gently.”) Similarly, in *Taming of the Shrew*, when Petruchio talks about Kate’s “humor,” what does he mean by that word? His use of it has nothing to do with our modern definition. (A good place to discover what “humor” and countless other words meant in

Shakespeare's time is the *Oxford English Dictionary*.) It's crucial, therefore, that you know what Shakespeare's words mean—even when they look like words you recognize. Study your speeches carefully, no matter what size your role. Make sure you know exactly what you're saying, and why, and to whom.

How do you make sure? Don't feel guilty about using other texts as aids. Footnotes in standard editions of *Taming of the Shrew* often help, as do explanations in books, like the *No Fear Shakespeare* series, or even the old standby, *Cliff's Notes*. And of course, talk to your director, either in person or via text or email. If you wish, you can even email me ([racthecog@gmail.com](mailto:racthecog@gmail.com)) and I will respond as soon as I see your question.

**The fourth essential** is quite simple: listen carefully, not only to what your director says, but also to what your fellow actors say, both to you and to others. You'll often "hear" what you need to know, even second-hand. "Doth," for instance, is never pronounced "dahth," but always "duth" (with the vowel as in "rust," or "must"). "Get" is always spoken with a distinct short "e" sound (as in "bet"), and never spoken as "git" (i.e., you're not at a rodeo). Some words ending in "ed" will require their final syllable to be sounded, in order to fill out the rhythm of the line. Here's a good example from *Julius Caesar*: "Through this the well-belovED Brutus stabb'd./ And as he pluck'd his cursED steel away,/ Mark how the blood of Caesar follow'd it." With practice, and enough "hearing," these finer shades of Shakespeare's language will become second nature. Of course, it's always important that you pay careful attention generally to every character in a scene, because the words not only cue your lines, but also shape and color the tone of what you say (and how you behave) in response.

And now **the fifth, and final, essential**: know this play inside and out. Read both the **entire original version** and your **adapted script** soon; it will probably take several readings before you are comfortable with the nuances of plot and character. It's important that you do this, because you cannot effectively achieve your adaptations unless you have a very clear grasp of what the play's original "feel" is. Only then will you be able to effectively modify that "feel," or, more precisely, develop multiple "feels" (or interpretations) that reflect other cultural readings of the text. And to develop these modifications during rehearsal, it is absolutely crucial that you **memorize your part by the first rehearsal**. That's a tall order for those with large roles, but it is standard in the post-collegiate theatre industry. And now is the time to embrace the practice.

I'll be glad to be of whatever assistance I can to your endeavor. Congratulations on your being cast; you'll be glad of your commitment to this play.

Roger A. Cognard  
Dramaturg

**Appendix 11**  
**Notes from the Dramaturg**  
**“The Urgency of Shakespeare”**

Thanks for all the great effort you’re putting in to mount *The Taming of The Shrew*. It’s a difficult play to do, and you have the added (but fulfilling) difficulty of mounting three different visions of the play, in a condensed format. The condensation is double-edged: it requires less memorization than the full-length play—but it also gives you less stage time to persuade the audience to accept the vision you’re presenting.

With all this in mind, I’ve had the privilege of reviewing some of the recordings of your rehearsals. I admire your tenacity and commitment, especially in view of the fact that you’ve just finished blocking the play, and health issues have—of necessity—taken a toll on some of your working time together. Like almost all rehearsals of any Shakespeare play, yours have had break-through moments as well as moments of struggle.

My hat’s off to you for your achievements so far. You’re on your way. The language is sounding more controlled and credible, and I can tell you’re becoming more comfortable with it.

But I also write you today because I have become concerned about your memorization, the state of which is impeding your progress toward your performance, now just twelve days away. And I know you want to perform well.

Were I with you in person, in addition to praising your progress under difficult conditions and time constraints, I would also sternly lecture you, because—to be frank—you may not have taken seriously a crucial element of your preparation: i.e., you have not always memorized your lines verbatim.

I know you’re trying—but you’ve got to try harder. You’re too often content with coming close to the right line; or, worse, you’re becoming comfortable, at this late stage, in calling for lines from the SM.

That approach to performing Shakespeare—I’m sorry for being painfully direct—is counterproductive. To be honest, it’s unprofessional. When I say that, I’m talking about the profession of being a student-actor, which each of you is. You are each highly intelligent—and you owe it as a student of the arts and sciences (and especially as a student of Shakespeare) to respect yourself, your fellow actors, and your audiences enough to do your best.

And you can’t do your best—not even close—unless you thoroughly know your lines intuitively; that is, unless you can say them without even having to think about

them. They're just there. They just come. You don't have to consider what words come next: they are literally your own speech, framing your own thoughts.

Once you have them verbatim, confidently, the lines just come because—with line worry out of the way—you're able to concentrate on what other characters are saying to you; you're able to understand their subtextual, subtle meanings; and you're able to respond to them with your own subtleties and nuances of meaning because the lines have become truly—truly—your own. Reid will become his authentic version of Petruchio. Andrew will become his authentic version of Petruchio. Chaim will become his authentic version of Petruchio. Emma will become her authentic version of Katherine. Elizabeth will become her authentic version of Katherine. Libby will become her authentic version of Katherine.

The good news: it's not too late—just barely—to mount a really fine performance, one of which you will be proud, both for yourself, and for your entire company.

Because make no mistake: to succeed in front of an audience that has come to see Shakespeare, each one of you has got to have each's other's back. You're not out there for Mom and Dad. You're not out there for your roommate or your best friend or your significant other. You're out there for each other, in precisely the same way a ball player is out there for the team, or a soldier is out there for the squad. The anniversary of 9/11—which is the day I write this—reminds us all, both in life and in art, that we are there—that we *must* be there—for each other.

That “each other” includes dead people. It includes Shakespeare. It includes his contemporaries, like Richard Burbage—and John Hemings and Henry Condell (without whom 18 of Shakespeare's plays would have been lost forever, including *Shrew*). It includes David Garrick and Laurence Olivier. And it includes actors of our own time who have given their lives to theatre, among them such giants as Kenneth Branagh, Maggie Smith, Ian McKellen, and Judi Dench (who has played much more in her long career than “M” in the James Bond films).

In 2003, after her stirring performance of Shakespeare at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford, my students and I, like groupies, waited for Judi Dench to appear, literally at the stage door. She did. And for a good twenty minutes Judi Dench graciously talked with us, answering my students' questions about what it took to play Shakespeare well.

Her answer was direct and thorough: first and foremost, she said, know your lines intuitively. Instinctively. Viscerally. Right down to your bones. Every word. Every single word—and in the right order. Because then, and only then, can you deliver those lines with the integrity, the grit, the grace, the ardor, the understanding, the flair, the control, the passion, the commitment, and the authenticity that they absolutely demand.

You cannot ad-lib Shakespeare, she said. If you think you can, and you try to, you're doing your own play, uttering your own words, not Shakespeare's.

Shakespeare's work has endured, and will always endure—undergoing changes in interpretation and presentation—by reaching new audiences and moving them to an understanding of the human species, and of themselves. No other playwright—*none*—has ever achieved the power of Shakespeare's work in its unlimited ability to speak to the human psyche and probe the human soul. He achieves it in his greatest characters—like Kate and Petruchio—and even in his lesser characters—like Grumio and Hortensio.

I know you want to be part of that achievement, part of the power that instills Shakespeare's language and insight into the hearts—yes, hearts, and not just minds—of yourself, your fellow actors, and your audience. Anything less is to let down yourself, your fellow actors, and the people who have come to see your art.

I know you can perform your vision of this play at the level it deserves. When I see and hear your performance on the 25<sup>th</sup>, I expect to be proud of you, and I'm confident I will be. I'm confident because you will have long since mastered your lines, *verbatim*; and having done so, you will have the confidence—and therefore the ability—to render them with the nuance and emphasis that your specific interpretations of Katherine and Petruchio require.

So to sum up, and to be direct: superb performance is possible **only if you know and understand your lines intuitively, verbatim**. Doing so is the bedrock of Shakespearean performance, whether you are Judi, or Maggie, or Kenneth, or Ian—or Emma, or Reid, or Elizabeth, or Andrew, or Libby, or Chaim. It's crucial. It's just plain rock-bottom crucial.

Toward that end, please remember that I am just an email away—or, better yet, just a phone call away. If you'd like, we can chat voice-to-voice. ***Just email me a convenient time after 5:00 P.M. EST when you can be called, and I'll phone you then.*** (Yes, I have your phone numbers! My spies are everywhere.) If the time must be late, after rehearsal, that's okay; I'm up late. I have some tips that you may find helpful as you nail down your line memorization over the next few days. (Yes, few days. The clock is ticking, and—believe me—you don't want to go into your last week of rehearsal calling for lines.) Approach this whole mastery-of-the-lines thing as if you had to open on the 17<sup>th</sup>, and not the 24<sup>th</sup>. If you do, you'll be ready to perform this play to the best of your considerable ability.

“To thine own self be true,/ And it must follow, as the night the day,/ Thou canst not then be false to any[one].”

R. Cognard

**Appendix 12**  
**Notes from the Dramaturg**  
**“Final Notes”**

“Shakespeare is difficult to perform, but you have met--and are meeting--that difficulty with hard work, sustained commitment, and good humor. Your characters are clearly defined, and thanks to your effort the audience will be effectively challenged to think about this play in new and critical ways. Isn't that what theatre is supposed to do? You can be proud of your achievement. You should be especially gratified that you have found a unique way to keep “The Taming of the Shrew” relevant for our time--because we nearly lost this play 400 years ago. Saved from oblivion, it only saw print in the First Folio of 1623, with editorial revisions not until the Second Folio of 1632. From its difficult debut to its current controversial reception, it has uniquely examined the relationship between women and men. You have kept alive that tradition with gusto. You have my thanks.” --R. Cognard

### Appendix 13 Props and Set List

<b>Prop</b>	<b>Act/Scene</b>
Rope	1.1 2.1 3.1
Plates (Metal)	1.4 2.4 3.4
Cups (Metal)	1.4 2.4 3.4
Butter Knife	1.4 2.4 3.4
Sandwich	1.4 2.4 3.4
Money Satchels	1.6 2.6 3.6
Bruise Makeup	2.4
Necklace	3.1
Chocolate Coins	3.6
Prop Scripts	All
<b>Set Pieces</b>	
Wooden Chairs x7	Always Onstage
Piano	Always Onstage
Clothing Rack	Always Onstage
Coat Rack	Always Onstage

## Appendix 14 Actor's Agreement

### **BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY ACTOR'S AGREEMENT**

The following shall serve as an Agreement between \_\_\_\_\_ and the Production Staff at Bucknell University.

#### **COMPANY RULES:**

- If You are late for rehearsal, appointments, costume calls, etc., more than twice without giving notification, a memo will be sent to the faculty directors and the Director of Theatre. Please understand that in the past, repeated tardiness has resulted in dismissal from the company. You must be on time to all performances, rehearsals, fittings, interviews, photo calls, and to all production-related activities.
- You must be appropriately dressed for rehearsals.
- You must have the script memorized prior to the rehearsal indicated by the director and/or stage manager.
- You must be thoroughly warmed up, vocally and physically, prior to rehearsals/shows and perform the play as directed and written to the best of your ability.
- You must have choreography and dialect/pronunciation mastered by the rehearsal indicated by the choreographer, vocal/dialect coach and director.
- You must refrain from directing, coaching or advising other actors during the rehearsal and performance process.
- You must properly care for all costumes and props.
- You are required to be available for publicity photos
- You must not alter your physical appearance in any of the following ways without permission from the Director and Designer: cutting, coloring or chemically altering hair tanning, piercing or tattooing gaining or losing weight to a degree that necessitates costume alteration.
- You must respect the physical property of the production and theatre and abide by all rules and regulations of the Bucknell University. Any absences, or failure to come to rehearsal prepared will be noted and reported to the director and may affect your standing in the show.

#### **During Rehearsal/Performance:**

- Once you have signed in, do not leave the rehearsal or performance space without consulting the stage manager/assistant stage manager.
- Never sign in for another actor or crewmember.
- Quiet must be maintained in the rehearsal and performance spaces; this includes any backstage areas.
- The cast and crew of a show are responsible for the cleanliness of the spaces they are using: rehearsal, performance, dressing rooms, closets and bathrooms.
- Props will be pre-set before rehearsals and performances. No prop should be moved before it is needed onstage. It is also the actor's responsibility to check personal props and costumes prior to rehearsal and performance.
- Props should be returned to their assigned space after use.
- Costumes should be hung up carefully and immediately after use.
- Any damage to props or costumes should be reported to the stage manager.
- Please check the callboard daily and "initial" notices when requested.
- Smoking is not permitted in any of the indoor spaces.
- Smoking, eating, or drinking (anything but water) while in costume is not permitted.

#### **TECHNICAL REHEARSAL RULES**

- Remain quiet and attentive offstage.
- If you must leave the rehearsal space, **first** obtain the permission of the stage manager or assistant stage manager.
- Stay relaxed and focused on what is happening around you.
- When you first enter the performance space walk the set and become familiar with your entrances and exits.
- Check where you pick up and leave your props.
- Be prepared to stop, start, and redo cues repeatedly. Be patient and follow the stage manager's directions.
- Please keep noise levels down in the dressing rooms, hallways and green room.
- If you don't know something, ask.

#### **Rehearsals Time Policies--**

- 6 days a week Maximum
- 4 hours of rehearsal per week night Maximum
- 7 hour weekend Maximum
- 24 Hours a week Maximum
- Usually not before 5pm. Never after 11pm on weekdays.
- Never before 7am. Never after 11:00pm on weekends except for tech and dress week which can go until 11:30 and strike which goes until 1am.
- Musical Theatre students may opt for additional rehearsals outside of scheduled times but they must remain optional for the actor. Meeting times should not be more than ½ to 1 hour max.
- All actors may sign up for private meeting times with the director for character meetings. These should not happen more than once in the rehearsal process. These are optional for the director. Meeting times should not be more than ½ to 1 hour max.
- All actors may sign up for private meeting times with vocal or dialect coaching with guest vocal/dialect coach. These should not happen more than 2-3 times in the rehearsal process. These are optional for the director. Meeting times should not be more than ½ to 1 hour max.
- **General rehearsal schedules** must be available for those auditioning for the play **at the time of auditions**. All the dates in which actors could be called for the whole rehearsal and performance period must be made available at this time. This document should include times.
- **Specific rehearsal calls for actors** must be available to actors **at the beginning of each week of rehearsal** (Friday, Sunday or Monday at a specific pre-designated time.) Once the call sheet is created and distributed, the director may not call actors for additional rehearsals that week or if they do it should be optional for the actor. In case of an emergency (such as understudy "put in" rehearsals) exceptions can be made in consultation with program director and/or chair.
- **Breaks** (mirroring Equity rules) Directors should give five-minute breaks after 55 minutes of rehearsal or 10-minute breaks at the conclusion of 80 minutes of rehearsal.

#### **COVID**

- All actors agree to abide by health and safety rules regarding Covid.
- At this point Actors allowed (not required) to be maskless when onstage.
- At this point the audience and those offstage must continue to wear masks

ACTORS ARE EXPECTED TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY AND GENEROUSLY WITH  
EVERY MEMBER OF THE PRODUCTION TEAM.  
EVERYONE INVOLVED IN A PRODUCTION MUST BE RESPECTED.

AGREED AND ACCEPTED:

\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) (Date)

**Appendix 15**  
**Rehearsal Calendar**

**Monday, August 23rd**

**6:30-10:00 pm** – Full Cast Rehearsal - Bucknell Hall

**Tuesday, August 24th**

**6:30-10:00 pm** – Full Cast Dramaturgical Session – Virtual

**Wednesday, August 25th**

**6:30-10:00 pm** – Chaim and Libby Rehearsal – Bucknell Hall

**Friday, August 27th**

**6:30-10:00 pm** – Elisabeth and Andrew Rehearsal – Bucknell Hall

**Saturday, August 28th**

**1:30-4:00 pm** – Elisabeth and Andrew Rehearsal – Bucknell Hall

**Monday, August 30th**

**3:00-4:00 pm** - Andrew Rehearsal - Bucknell Hall

**5:00-6:00 pm** - Elisabeth Rehearsal - Bucknell Hall

**6:00-7:00 pm** - Reid Rehearsal - Bucknell Hall

**7:15-8:15 pm** - Libby Rehearsal - Bucknell Hall

**Wednesday, September 1st**

**1:45-2:45 pm** - Katherines Rehearsal (Elisabeth, Emma, Libby) - LANG 272 Forum

**3:00-4:00 pm** - Emma Rehearsal - LANG 272 Forum

**4:00-5:00 pm** - Chaim Rehearsal - LANG 272 Forum

**Saturday, September 4th**

**1:00-5:30 pm** - Cast Rehearsal (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**Monday, September 6th**

**6:00-9:00 pm** - Act 1 Scene 4/5 (Elisabeth/Andrew) - Bucknell Hall

**Tuesday, September 7th**

**\*12:00-1:00 pm** - Emma Rehearsal - LANG 272 Forum\*

**5:30-9:00 pm** - Fight Choreography Workshop (All Cast) - Grass area between Academic East and West

**Wednesday, September 8th**

**\*12:00-1:00 pm** - Reid Schedule - LANG 272 Forum\*

**7:00-10:00 pm** - Act 2 Scene 4/5 (Libby/Chaim) - Bucknell Hall

**Saturday, September 11th**

**10:00 am - 1:00 pm** - Act 3 Scene 4/5 (Emma/Reid) - Bucknell Hall

**1:30-5:00 pm** - All Cast Rehearsal - Bucknell Hall

**Monday, September 13th**

**6:30-10:00 pm** – Full Cast – Fight Choreography - Bucknell Hall

**Tuesday, September 14th**

**6:30-10:00 pm** – Full Cast – Background Characters Blocking - Bucknell Hall

**Sunday, September 19th**

**11:00 am - 9:00 pm** - Tech Weekend (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall (break times: 1:00-1:45, 4:00-5:30)

**Monday, September 20th**

**6:30-10:00 pm** - Run Through (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**Tuesday, September 21st**

**6:30-10:00** - Run Through (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**Wednesday, September 22nd**

**5:30-10:00** - Dress Rehearsal (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**Thursday, September 23rd**

**5:30-10:00** - Invitational Dress Rehearsal (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**Friday, September 24th**

**5:30 pm** - Call time (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**7:30 pm** - Show time (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**Saturday, September 25th**

**5:30 pm** - Call Time (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**7:30 pm** - Show Time (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**Sunday, September 26th**

**12:30 pm** - Call Time (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**2:30 pm** - Show Time (All Cast) - Bucknell Hall

**Appendix 16**  
**Rehearsal Agenda**  
**Example from Day 1**

1. **Talk/Concept/Expectations** (30 minutes)
  - I. Recasting of Katherine Two
  - II. 3 versions – explanation of each version and reasoning
  - III. Costume changes and props and makeup onstage
  - IV. Minimalistic set
  - V. Company of actors concept
  - VI. Transitional moments and devising approach
  - VII. Actor contract and expectations of a show
  
2. **Calendar Work** (45 minutes)
  
3. **Stretching** (5 minutes)
  
4. **Play** (20 minutes)
  - I. Check-ins
  - II. Ensemble building
  - III. Zip-zap-zop
  - IV. Jump game
  
5. **Read Through/Line Bash** (1 hour 40 minutes)
  - I. Stage manager on book taking line notes

**Appendix 17**  
**Examples of Rehearsal Report**

*Taming of the Shrew(s)*  
**REHEARSAL REPORT**  
 8/25/21

Stage Manager: Grace Lostak-Baker

Call Began: 6:32pm    Ended: 10:00pm

Late: N/A    Absent: N/A

Rehearsal Breakdown		
Time	What	Who
6:32 - 10:00 pm	Act 2 Scene 1	Libby, Chaim

<b>General:</b> Blocked out Act 2 Scene 1
<b>Movement:</b> N/A.
<b>Sound:</b> Is there a sound system we can hook up to?
<b>Set:</b> Are allowed to move mic stands/music stands from the side for the show?
<b>Props:</b> N/A
<b>Costumes:</b> N/A
<b>Lights:</b> How do we control the lighting?

**Appendix 18**  
**Director's Rehearsal Notes**  
**Example Tech Weekend**

**Run Notes 9/19/21**

- **Induction**
  - Emma: “how” not “can we.”
  
- **Act 1**
  - Andrew: Cheat out at the beginning.
  - Andrew: Good building of physicality.
  - Andrew: Give the “beat chest” blocking more time.
  - Elisabeth: Good annunciation and vocal work.
  - Andrew: Grab Elisabeth’s arm on “No such jade as me.”
  - Elisabeth: Punctuate each word on “Young budding virgin.”
  - All Cast: Move to center for feast scene.
  - Reid: Don’t have your hat covering face.
  
- **Transition 1**
  - Libby: Don’t forget the citations at the end of your lines.
  - Andrew/Reid: Preset Bianca’s rope and line up the chairs.
  
- **Act 2**
  - Libby/Chaim: Wooing scene timing is looking really good.
  - Libby: Get closer to the chair before he forces you into it.
  - Libby: Can we add more volume to the chocking?
  - Libby: Let the “your father hath consented” line surprise you.
  - Chaim: Cut the space before “mend the plucking of the other”
  - Elisabeth: Don’t forget the wedding bells and the “Sunday.”
  - Libby: Hold Grumio’s shirt till you’re done yelling.
  - Libby: More desperation for “I pray thee.”
  - Chaim: End hair pull with a push.
  - Reid: Vincentio needs to be more somber and less comedic.
  - Chaim: Hold kiss for longer
  - All Cast: Can we move the feast transition faster?
  - Libby: Monologue looks great.
  
- **Transition 2**
  - Emma: Have the costume pre-set.
  
- **Act 3**
  - Reid: Don’t smile before you see Emma.

- Reid: Stand up on “by this light.”
  - Reid/Emma: Project more while on piano bench.
  - Reid: Give your beat after playing more of a bragging quality.
  - Emma: Piano moment looking sweet.
  - Reid: Offer necklace on “thou must be married.”
  - Reid/Emma: “Never make denial” *then* pinkie swear.
  - Reid: Air quotations on “twas burnt.”
  - Reid: Send servants off after “she shall not.”
  - Reid: Add a poke after “rail and brawl.”
  - Chaim: Nice character work for Grumio.
  - Andrew: Start your Lucentio lines as soon as 3.5 finishes.
  - Andrew: Nice beat with the widow.
  - Reid: Let Biondello be in on the plan.
- **Transition 3**
    - Katherines: Work on diction when speaking together.

Appendix 19  
Production Poster

BUCKNELL THEATRE & DANCE PRESENTS

# TAMING OF THE SHREW(S)

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
EDITED AND ADAPTED BY KATHARINE COGNARD-BLACK AND  
ROGER COGNARD  
DIRECTED BY KATHARINE COGNARD-BLACK '21.5

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER  
24TH & SATURDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 25TH, 2021  
7:30PM

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER  
26TH, 2021  
2:00PM

BUCKNELL HALL  
FREE (FIRST COME, FIRST SEATED)

Bucknell  
UNIVERSITY

## Appendix 20

### Article in the Bucknell Theatre & Dance Newsletter Credit to Student Jeniah Martin

“Taking a fresh look at Shakespeare’s classic but challenging play *The Taming of the Shrew*, director/adaptor Katharine Cognard-Black ‘21 will be exploring three interpretations of select scenes from the play and will provide distinct, and sometimes even contradictory ideas, about gender dynamics within the play and in Shakespeare’s work. Cognard-Black’s new adaptation examines and questions the play’s complex depictions of gender and identity within a contemporary context.

“Shakespeare’s plays do not answer questions; they are not definitive about characters, themes, and concepts. Rather, they raise questions that are subject to interpretation of every new century, every director, every reader, and every sensibility.” - Emma Smith, author of *This is Shakespeare*”

### An Interview With *Taming of the Shrew(s)* Director, Katharine ”KCB” Cognard-Black ’21.5



1. Tell us about your directorial vision for *Taming of the Shrew(s)*.

Shakespeare’s plays are usually categorized into three categories: tragedies, histories, and comedies. If it’s tragedy, then everybody dies, and if it’s comedy, then people get married. In *Taming of the Shrew*, we have the main couple get married in Act 2. This means that we have three acts of married life - something that is pretty uncommon for a Shakespeare play. And those three acts are pretty problematic. Depending on how it’s interpreted, it can be a pretty open and shut case of domestic violence. It’s made all the more complicated with the final monologue

given by the lead woman Katherine, where she commends her husband and offers herself up to do whatever it is that he will want, and tells everybody else that women should always be obedient to men. So on the face of it, it’s a pretty disturbing and problematic play. However, it’s key to note that Katherine’s monologue is the longest monologue in the entire show. And in the Elizabethan era where women, to be “good women” must’ve

been both chased, obedient, and silent, she is very much not being silent in that final moment. Her words themselves, her loquaciousness, her brilliance with terms and phrases and language, are themselves a protest. In addition, she says things in this monologue like “your husband is thy lord thy life thy keeper”, and “he watches the night in storms, the day in cold while thou liest home secure and safe”... and the thing about this is, in this show, Petruchio - the lead man - doesn't work. He doesn't watch the night in storms, the day in cold... he doesn't work out in the fields, he doesn't work on the water... he doesn't work at all because he has all his money from Katherine - his wife's dowry. So there is just an inherent sarcasm in her monologue because at least some of the lines are for sure untrue. Because Petruchio, he doesn't work, he doesn't protect her, he doesn't let her lie home secure and safe. He starves her, he doesn't let her sleep. And so the show itself calls into question the truth of the piece. And it is written with Katherine who is just a phenomenally brilliant character. Her lines are by far the smartest in the show. And so because the show cannot completely be a tragedy; cannot completely be a comedy; cannot really be a history at all, the question here is: what is it? So. Taming of the Shrew(s) does three different versions of Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew back to back with three different sets of lead actors. We have the comedic, the tragic, and then we have something that's a little bit in-between.

2. In what ways has the original script of Taming of the Shrew been conducive to your vision? In what ways has it been restrictive?

This version is a pretty intense cutting of Shakespeare's taming of the shrew, and it is cut in such a way that the majority of the time you are watching the piece, you are watching Katherine and Petruchio. The characters that are not Katherine and Petruchio in my version are there to create the exposition so that the audience understands what's happening. But the sideline storylines have been taken out of this version so we're just left with the meat of the Katherine and Petruchio scenes. In that way, the script has been extremely conducive to my vision because my vision is to show how wildly different the same script can be interpreted based on intention, voice, movement, but also in terms of power dynamics. If the



leading man were to be 15 years older than the leading woman, that would change the show a great deal as if they're the same age. Now, we're casting in college - we don't have anyone that's significantly older but we can play with height, with power dynamics, with physicality both physically, but also the power dynamic mentally. And so, through all this it has been extremely fascinating to see the same words carried in different ways, meaning completely different things. Because so many of Shakespeare's texts don't - all of Shakespeare's texts don't have one inherent reading to them. We don't know how they were intended, of course we don't. And for that reason, playing with the language and the versatility of Shakespeare is what's so fascinating. And so it has been an immense joy to work with different actors on the same text. And I'm very excited for audiences to see how wildly different the same words can be from version to version. I think they'll really be surprised.

3. What has been the most challenging part of this process for you? What has brought you the most joy?

The most challenging has definitely been scheduling and logistics. We have worked



through a number of challenges. We've had recasting, we've had injury, we've had somebody in quarantine, we've had it all. However, the part that has brought me the most joy is when we're all in the room every rehearsal. There has not been a rehearsal that I go in and come out feeling worse than when I went in. It always is just an absolute joy to work on this project that I'm so passionate about with other people that are also passionate about it, and come in with ideas and are excited to see this project come to fruition. So that's been amazing.

4. What do you want audience members to take away from this production?

That's an excellent question. Particularly because I think the

audience in Shakespeare's plays are more involved in a play than necessarily a traditional audience member is, because it's born of this tradition of performing at the globe where there are the people in the seats, but there are also these groundlings, these people who are at the front of the stage. And they are the ones who get played to. They are the ones

who get to interact with the people onstage, to get on and offstage sometimes, the actors will move through the groundlings...that is to say that Shakespeare in his writing, particularly because these plays were written for a theatre space like the globe, and because they include so many lines to the audience - soliloquies - they are very much audience based shows. When Petruchio, the leading man, is asking if anybody else knows better how to tame the shrew, he's asking the audience. They are his confidantes. They become the people he's bragging to or the people he's asking for help. So, when the audience is in this production I want them to take on an active role. What we're essentially doing is presenting three different versions of Taming of the Shrew. And we're asking the audience, "Is this show okay to do anymore?" Because it has been argued that Taming of the Shrew is an undoable play. It has also been argued that it's a feminist play, that Katherine is an incredibly strongly written character which in and of itself is grounds for showing women that they can be brilliant and loquacious - depending on how it's played. So we are bringing this show as an offering to our audience with the question "Is Taming of the Shrew okay to do anymore?"

And so because there are three versions, each version has a different takeaway for the audience, but as a whole, the takeaway isn't a one-liner...isn't something that they will at the end of it reach an opinion. I'm hoping that at the end of it they leave with lots and lots of questions. And they go and they discuss these questions with each other or with other people, about how this language works, and whether this show is a viable show to do anymore... if it's too problematic or it's actually a show that we should be doing.

5. Is there anything else you'd like to share with us?

The only thing I'd like to share is that we can't wait to see everybody there! Our show goes up on the 24th, 25th, and 26th - Friday and Saturday at 7:30 PM, Sunday at 2pm, and I am just absolutely thrilled to see everybody there.



Appendix 21  
Show Program

BUCKNELL THEATRE & DANCE PRESENTS

# TAMING OF THE SHREW(S)

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
EDITED AND ADAPTED BY KATHARINE COGNARD-BLACK AND  
ROGER COGNARD  
DIRECTED BY KATHARINE COGNARD-BLACK '21.5

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER  
24TH & SATURDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 25TH, 2021  
7:30PM

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER  
26TH, 2021  
2:00PM

BUCKNELL HALL

Bucknell  
UNIVERSITY

Bucknell Theatre & Dance Presents

# TAMING OF THE SHREW(S)

**Director:** Katharine Cognard-Black '21.5

**Stage Management:** Grace Lostak-Baker '23

**Props:** Sophie McQuaide '23

**Costumes:** Katharine Cognard-Black '21.5

**Dramaturg:** Professor Roger Cognard

**Guest Lecturer:** Professor Elizabeth Charlebois

**Project Advisor:** Professor Bryan M. Vandevender

Special thanks to Professor Paula Davis and Jennifer Lippert for  
assistance with costumes.

**Poster & Program Design:** Katharine Cognard-Black '21.5 & Miki Du Bois '22

**Publicity:** Jeniah Martin '22, Caroline Tattersfield '22, Miki Du Bois '22, Ryan  
Bremer '22, James Howe '23, Clea Ramos '25, Tristan An '25

# ★ CAST LIST ★

**Katherine 1** ..... Elisabeth Penafiel '23  
(Bianca, Curtis, Babtista, Widow)

**Katherine 2** ..... Libby Hoffman '24  
(Bianca, Curtis, Babtista, Widow)

**Katherine 3** ..... Emma Battle '22  
(Bianca, Curtis, Babtista, Widow)

**Petruchio 1** ..... Andrew Schafale '24  
(Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)

**Petruchio 2** ..... Chaim Gould '23  
(Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)

**Petruchio 3** ..... Reid Fournier '24  
(Hortensio, Grumio, Lucentio, Vincentio)

**Biondello** ..... Guest Artist

# Emma Battle '22

## Katherine 3



Bucknell Theatre and Dance Department: As You Like It (Stage Manager); Love/Sick (Director); Unheard/Unspoken (Stage Manager); The Wolves (#14); Women and Wallace (Stage Manager). Dwight Englewood School: DogFight (Director); Romeo and Juliet (Tybalt / Fight Captain); A Chorus Line (Kristine); Addams Family (Pugsley); Seussical (JoJo); Almost Maine (Ginette). Stage Left Theatre: Mary Poppins (Mrs. Banks / Stage Manager); Peter Pan (Nibs / Stage Manager); Cats (Alonzo / Lighting Designer); Shrek (Blind Mouse / Props Master).

# Reid Fournier '24

## Petruchio 3



Bucknell Theatre and Dance Department Love/Sick (Jake); Wildcat Productions (Mechanicsburg High School): Crazy For You (Moose); It's a Wonderful Life (George Bailey); Spamalot (Sir Galahad); Les Miserables (Enjolras); Sherlock Holmes and the hound of Baskerville (Sherlock Holmes); The Three Musketeers (Athos), Newsies (Jack Kelly)

# Chaim Gould '23

## Petruchio 2



40 Story Radio Tower Players (member: 2014-2019). Jim Thorpe Area High School: The Little Mermaid (Chef Louis). Tamaqua Community Arts Center: Our Town (Dr. Willard, Baseball Player #2, Man Among the Dead #3); Arsenic & Old Lace (Dr. Einstein); Boeing, Boeing (Bernard)

# Libby Hoffman '24

## Katherine 2



Bucknell Theatre and Dance Department: Love/Sick (Liz). Western Reserve Academy: You Can't Take It With You (Alice); Almost Maine (Rhonda); Footloose (Ensemble); The Tempest (Ceres); Into the Woods (Sleeping Beauty); Urinetown (Ensemble); Legally Blonde (Ensemble).

# Elisabeth Penafiel '23

## Katherine 1



Bucknell Theatre and Dance Department: Love and Information (Ensemble). Spofford Pond School: Aladdin (Assistant Director/Choreographer/Set Design/Props). Saint John's Preparatory School Theatre: Peter and the Starcatcher (Betty Bumbrake); Beauty and the Beast (Babette). Wide Eyes Theatre Company: The Drowsy Chaperone (Janet Van De Graaff); Footloose (Betty Blast). Greater Boston Stage Company: Bat Boy: The Musical (Shelley Parker); Sweeney Todd (Featured Soloist); Comedy of Errors (Courtezan). Colonial Chorus Players: Annie (Star to Be); Fiddler on the Roof (Shprintze). Reading Memorial High School: The Wedding Singer (Dance Ensemble). Saint Agnes Summer Musicals: The Pajama Game (Mae); Once Upon a Mattress (Jester); The Sound of Music (Brigitta); Seussical (Jojo).

# Andrew Shafale '24

## Petruchio 1



Bucknell Theatre and Dance Department: Love/Sick (Obsessive Impulsive); North Catholic High School: Footloose (Wes); St. Kilian Parish School: Beauty and the Beast (Lumiere); High School Musical (Zeke); Alice in Wonderland (King of Hearts)

## **Katharine Cognard-Black '21.5**

### **Director**

Bucknell Theatre and Dance Department: As You Like It (Jaques); Unheard/Unspoken (Mother), Love and Information (Co-Director), Blue Stockings (Assistant Director), Mickey Cares (Director), Antigone (Teiresias), Rose Players: Gruesome Playground Injuries (Director), Much Ado About Nothing (Beatrice), St. Mary's College of Maryland: Much ado about Nothing (Ursula), Nebraska Girls Shakespeare Company: Taming of the Shrew (Tranio), All's Well that Ends Well (Helena)

## **Grace Lostak-Baker '23**

### **Stage Manager**

Santa Catalina School: Macbeth (Shift Crew); Guys and Dolls (Shift Crew); The Mystery of Edwin Drood (Fly Op); A Winter's Tale (Sound Board Op); You Can't Take It With You (Light Board Op); The Pajama Game (Deck Captain); Little Women (Fly Captain); To Kill A Mockingbird (Stage Manager); The Drowsy Chaperone (Mics); Wind in the Willows (Stage Manager); Peter and the Starcatcher (Light Board Op); We Will Rock You (Stage Manager); The Glass Menagerie (Sound Board Op); Almost, Maine (Visual Effects/Sound Board Op) Bucknell University: Love and Information (Stage Manager); Cabaret (Assistant Stage Manager); Bliss (or Emily Post is Dead) (Stage Manager)

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

When I was a little girl, my parents would take me to see Shakespeare plays at the Folger Theater in Washington, DC, and I have vivid memories of watching the stories unfold as the actors breathed life into the words and the characters. A little critic from the start, one of my favorite parts of the experience was after we left the theatre, when I could intently discuss the action with my parents. Did that casting decision work? Where did the comedy in a monologue come from when I had never read the lines as comedic? How interesting it was that they decided to create a romantic tension between two characters who aren't explicitly written with romantic tension. The ability of directors, actors, and audiences to get wildly different meaning from the same shared text always fascinated me.

Shakespeare's works are traditionally divided into three main categories: comedies, histories, and tragedies. To paraphrase from the 2006 film, *Stranger than Fiction*, featuring Will Ferrell, Dustin Hoffman, and Emma Thompson, at the end of tragedies, everybody dies, and at the end of comedies, everyone gets hitched. So, what happens in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, in which the two protagonists, Kate and Petruchio, get married by Act II of the play? While many stories of romance end with a marriage, in *Taming*, we get to see a rarely explored dynamic in Shakespeare's works; a slice of married life, a problematic vision in which we see Petruchio "tame" his wife, Kate, as one might tame a hound or hawk—by breaking her will.

To explore some of the issues in what many scholars refer to as one Shakespeare's "problem play," we have endeavored to put together a rendition of *The Taming of the Shrew(s)* that asks whether and how we can perform the play today in a way that doesn't glorify misogyny. Is it as it might seem, a traditional comedy in which the resolution is to reinforce a gendered order in which men assert their dominance and women ultimately acquiesce? Or is it a comedic battle of the sexes? Is it a tragic portrayal of the struggle women face when they are forced to forfeit their liberty in a marriage? Or is it something else altogether? In our production of *The Taming of the Shrew(s)*, we present three parallel performances taken from key moments of Shakespeare's *Shrew*—three sets of actors playing out three different versions with three distinct interpretations of a common text.

In her book *This is Shakespeare*, Emma Smith argues "Shakespeare's plays do not answer questions; they are not definitive about characters, themes, and concepts. Rather, they raise questions that are subject to interpretation of every new century, every director, every reader, and every sensibility" Later today, after you retreat from our stage and begin to transition back into the plot of your own making, I hope that you will have the same thrilling conversations that I did as a little girl. Asking yourself and one another: "How do I think can Shakespeare's *Taming* can be played in a modern era?"

Thank you so much for coming to see our show. I am excited and delighted to have you here.

--Katharine Cognard-Black

Theatre & Dance respectfully acknowledges and recognizes our responsibility to the original and current caretakers of this land, water, and air: the Susquehannock peoples and all of their ancestors and descendants, past, present, and future. We live and create our art here within the Bucknell community and we strive to honor those caretakers of this homeland in our presence and work.

## Please Note

Our audiences must be vaccinated and are required to wear masks at all times. The cast is vaccinated and will be unmasked while performing on stage.

Taking photographs and the use of recording devices are strictly prohibited. Please turn off your cell phones and other electronics before the performance begins. Thank you.

Photo: Gordon Wenzel

## DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE

### dr. cfrancis blackchild

Post-doctoral fellow

### Paula D. Davis

Costume design and history

### Ian Evans

Entertainment technology assistant

### Katie Hanes

Academic assistant

### Heath J. Hansum, director of theatre

Lighting and sound design

### Er-Dong Hu

Dance technique and theory

### Anjalee Deshpande Hutchinson

Acting, directing, devising

### Mark Hutchinson, director of theatre

Technical coordination, stage management

### Kelly Knox, director of dance

Dance technique and theory

### Jennifer Lippert

Assistant costumer

### Dustyn Martincich, chair (on leave)

Theatre and dance technique and theory

### Pam Miller

Costume studio manager

### Bryan M. Vandevender

Theatre history, theory

### F. Elaine Williams

Scenography

Generous support by the Bucknell Association for the Arts, the Richard A. Klein Theatre and Dance Endowment, the Lisa Lu Foundation, the Skvarla Family, and the Benson Fund have made guest artists' residencies, master classes, and workshops for our 2021-22 artistic season possible.

## THEATRE AND DANCE AFFILIATE ARTISTS

Dr Jaye Austin Williams

Dr Benae Beamon

Dr Meenakshi Ponnuswami

**TICKET INFORMATION** All seating is general admission. Tickets (Main Stage \$12 regular or \$7 for students, senior citizens, and children; Showcases \$7 all ages) are available by calling 570-577-1000, online at [bucknell.edu/BoxOffice](http://bucknell.edu/BoxOffice) or at any Campus Box Office location: **Weis Center**, Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; **CAP Center**, Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Mobile tickets purchased may be processed up until show time. If available, tickets may be purchased on the night of the performance beginning one hour before the curtain rises. All ticket sales begin Aug. 26 at 10 a.m. All patrons agree to abide by Bucknell University's health and safety guidelines.

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Cap and Dagger 2.0

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## Appendix 22

### Director's Note

When I was a little girl, my parents would take me to see Shakespeare plays at the Folger Theater in Washington, DC, and I have vivid memories of watching the stories unfold as the actors breathed life into the words and the characters. A little critic from the start, one of my favorite parts of the experience was after we left the theatre, when I could intently discuss the action with my parents. Did that casting decision work? Where did the comedy in a monologue come from when I had never read the lines as comedic? How interesting it was that they decided to create a romantic tension between two characters who aren't explicitly written with romantic tension. The ability of directors, actors, and audiences to get wildly different meaning from the same shared text always fascinated me.

Shakespeare's works are traditionally divided into three main categories: comedies, histories, and tragedies. To paraphrase from the 2006 film, *Stranger than Fiction*, featuring Will Ferrell, Dustin Hoffman, and Emma Thompson, at the end of tragedies, everybody dies, and at the end of comedies, everyone gets hitched. So, what happens in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, in which the two protagonists, Kate and Petruchio, get married by Act II of the play? While many stories of romance end with a marriage, in *Taming*, we get to see a rarely explored dynamic in Shakespeare's works: a slice of married life, a problematic vision in which we see Petruchio "tame" his wife, Kate, as one might tame a hound or hawk—by breaking her will.

To explore some of the issues in what many scholars refer to as one Shakespeare's "problem play," we have endeavored to put together a rendition of "The Taming of the Shrew(s)" that asks *whether* and *how* we can perform the play today in a way that doesn't glorify misogyny. Is it as it might seem: a traditional comedy in which the resolution is to reinforce a gendered order in which men assert their dominance and women ultimately acquiesce? Or is it a comedic battle of the sexes? Is it a tragic portrayal of the struggle women face when they are forced to forfeit their liberty in a marriage? Or is it something else altogether? In our production of "The Taming of the Shrew(s)," we present three parallel performances taken from key moments of Shakespeare's *Shrew*—three sets of actors playing out three different versions with three distinct interpretations of a common text.

In her book *This is Shakespeare*, Emma Smith argues "Shakespeare's plays do not answer questions; they are not definitive about characters, themes, and concepts. Rather, they raise questions that are subject to interpretation of every new century, every director, every reader, and every sensibility." Later today, after you retreat from our stage and begin to transition back into the plot of your own making, I hope that you will have the same thrilling conversations that I did as a little girl, asking yourself and one another: "How do *I* think can Shakespeare's *Taming* can be played in a modern era?"

Thank you so much for coming to see our show. I am excited and delighted to have you here.

--Katharine Cognard-Black