

Globe theater reaserch paper essay sample

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The Globe Theater was built by James Burbage in 1576. In 1597 the land lord (Giles Allen) of the land on which the theater was built on wanted to tear it down so they did. The company bought land at Blackfriars in upper Frater Hall and started preparing it for use. They used the timber from the old theater to build the new one which soon became the Globe Theater. Burbage basically built the theater for the Chamberlain's Men, including their chief writer, William Shakespeare. The lease for the land and the ownership of the Globe was divided in two parts 50 percent was owned by Cuthbert and, Richard Burbage, and the other 50 percent was divided between five other members of the Chamberlain's men, John Heminge, Augustine Phillips, Thomas Pope, Will Kempe, and, Shakespeare.

After some success in the early 1590s with three parts of Henry VI an outbreak of plague hit London. This caused a shutter in the theater. During this time Shakespeare went from writing playwrights to writing poetry. Finally in 1594 some of the theaters in London began to reopen, this included the Globe Theater.

The Theater could hold up to 2000 and 3000 spectators. The theater had no lights. All the performances depended on the weather. Most of the plays took place between 2 P. M. and 5 P. M. The theater was mostly all open air so the acoustics were really bad. The actors had to pretty much shout out there lines. Oddly enough the theater unlike modern day theaters the Globe had no background scenery. There were also no curtains and no stage hands. The actors utilized props and costumes. When the scene would change it would be explained in short speeches Shakespeare wrote into his plays. The stage of the theater was about 43 feet in width and 27 or 28 feet deep. It

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was raised up about five feet off the ground. The stage had many mechanisms like trap doors.

It also had distinct sections such as a sub-stage towards the back.

Shakespeare creatively used these in his stage direction. The stage was surrounded by a "pitt" on three sides. The "one-penny" spectators stood and watched from there. The "two-penny" spectators sat in three stories of setback seating. The stage and one penny area were completely in open air while the two penny section was partially covered. On the fourth side of the stage was a "tiring" house. This is where costume changes were made. It also had a small tent structure where there was a flag and the trumpeter would announce the daily performances.

The theater was not in "formal jurisdiction" during Shakespeare era. With its rivals it could have been called a "sporting district" or even "red light district". The theater was condemned by the London authorities just like taverns. However the theater operated outside the legal reach of the city officials. While the theater opened itself to the one penny people it also accommodated people of higher status and better educated people. The theater had a wide range of audience members and was constituted as a "little world". It was open to pheasants and drunks but at the same time was seen as grand in the eyes of the most powerful and prosperous leaders in the Elizabethan society.

The theater was looked down upon by London's town fathers. Acting was considered a purple profession a precarious way to live life. Most actors were vulnerable to arrest at any time for vagrancy if they were not protected by a

powerful sponsor. However the Globe theater was set apart because of being formally patronized by Lord Chamberlain and then by King James.

At the Globe Theater there is a total of 26 names recorded as the “ principal actors”. One of them Richard Burbage is said to have played some of Shakespeare’s most famous characters such as; Hamlet, Lear, and Othello. Some say Shakespeare wrote those characters with Burbage in mind, because he gave them great glory.

It is said Shakespeare has appears as an actor in some of the performances at the Globe theater. His name has come up in cast lists of his own plays and others, but there is no proof that he actually preformed. Some people say that Shakespeare likened some of the characters in his plays to himself such as the ghost of Hamlets Father and Adam the loyal servant in “ As You Like It” and he apparently acted in a play by a friend. This is the last time he is recorded in the cast lists of the Elizabethan theater.

The original Globe Theater stood until June 29th 1613 when the thatched roof caught fire because of a cannon fired during a performance. The theater burned to the ground. When this happened Shakespeare was already semi-retired in Stratford-on-Avon where he died three years later.

The Globe Theater was rebuilt in 1614 with tiles replacing the straw roof. However in 1642 a new theater regime took power in England and all of the country’s theaters were closed down. Two years later the Globe Theater was tore down by Cromwells. They leveled the ground and built houses on it.

Today's reconstructed theatre lies about 200 yards from the site of the original Globe Theater.