



William Shakespeare

You can't talk about theatre without talking about **William Shakespeare**. Shakespeare was a playwright who lived and worked in England in the 1500s and 1600s, and he's considered to be one of the greatest writers who ever lived.

No one knows exactly when Shakespeare was born, but most people think it was in April of 1564 in a small town in England called Stratford-Upon-Avon. Not much is known about his childhood or early life. By 1592, he was an up-and-coming actor and playwright in London's theatre world. Shakespeare was well-loved in his time, and by the end of the 1500s, he was rich and famous. He was not just known for being a playwright, but for being a talented actor and the leader of a respected acting company, Lord Chamberlain's Men. Lord Chamberlain's Men started out performing at a theatre called The Theatre, but when they built their own theater called The Globe in the middle of London, they really took off. They changed their name to The King's Men after England's newest king, King James I.

Shakespeare's early plays had stories that were not much different from the popular styles of the time, but it was his words that made him stand out. He invented many new phrases and words we still use today, and he made sure to write lines in a rhythm that sounded nice when spoken; almost like poetry. Though Shakespeare's words were what made him different, his stories were great as well. People liked the plots of his plays because they focused on things like love, jealousy, confusion, and happiness – things that practically everyone can relate to.

Shakespeare died in 1616. Though he lived more than 400 years ago, people still love his plays. Entire festivals based on his work are put on all over the world every year, and they are often some of the first plays actors study when learning about acting. His plays have held up so well because he wrote about things that every human can relate to, and wrote them beautifully.