Such Stuff podcast
Season 5, Episode 10: The Shakespeare Diaries, Love's Labour's Lost

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Imogen Greenberg: Hello and welcome to another episode of Such Stuff, the podcast from Shakespeare's Globe.

This week, we're back with another episode of the Shakespeare Diaries. Every fortnight, actor and Shakespeare's Globe artistic director Michelle Terry sits down with actor Paul Ready to discuss a different Shakespeare play from isolation.

This week, Michelle and Paul chatted about **Love's Labour's Lost**. If you've listened to the Shakespeare Diaries before you know how this works, but as ever our questions come from you – our audience – and we pass them on to Michelle and Paul. Thank you once again for your brilliant questions.

Now, all the way back in 2008, Michelle and Paul actually both starred in **Love's Labour's Lost** on the Globe stage, and it was the first production they were ever in together. Here, they chatted about why this is Michelle's favourite Shakespeare play, how Shakespeare once again marries joy and melancholy and why it's such an anarchic play. And do stayed tuned to listen to Michelle and Paul try to pronounce the unpronounceable…

Over to Michelle and Paul.

Michelle Terry: Okey dokey. My name's Michelle Terry.

Paul Ready: And my name's Paul Ready.

MT: And in this episode of Such Stuff, we're gonna be talking about **Love's Labour's Lost**. Have you been in **Love's Labour's Lost**, Paul?

PR: Well, I'm very pleased to say that finally after many weeks of talking about plays that I haven't been in, I have actually been in **Love's Labour's Lost** and finally I can be an absolute authority on a play.

MT: [Laughs] Who did you play?

PR: I've been in it once. How many times have you been in it?

MT: [Laughs] Three.

PR: Oh right, OK. I cannot be an absolute authority.

MT: [Laughs]

PR: Yeah so I was in it once. In fact I was in it at the Globe about 10 or 11 years ago?

MT: 2008.

PR: Thank you. 2008. And I was in it with Michelle. First play we did together.

MT: Yup.

PR: And I played Don Armado.

MT: And I played the Princess of France in that one, having played it in 2007 at the Globe. And then played it again in 2015, I think, or 14 and this time played Rosaline in the RSC production. And I think, it's probably worth saying like before we start, this may well be my favourite play.

PR: Tell me why. Tell us, tell us all.

MT: [Laughs] Because there's an audacity to it, there's an irreverence to it, there's an underlying sort of... well not totally underlying, some of it's completely explicit, but this sort of

subversive like fingers up to the whole... it's quite an anti-establishment play. And I think it's the play that's supposed to be completely impenetrable. I can't say that word.

PR: You did. Very well.

MT: But it's, I think it's one of the most beautiful plays. I think it's one of the hardest plays to do. Yeah I think it's so profound. Just to finish on the thought about how subversive it is, because it was one of the first plays that he ever wrote. And this idea - and we still live with the legacy of it now - the idea that you're supposed to have gone to university and particularly gone to Oxford and Cambridge, like the legacy of the establishment, being part of the establishment. And in this he's playing with language, he's making up words, it's so precocious, it's such a precocious play, and I think even Costard says later on, he's been at a great feast of language's and stolen the scraps. It's like he's playing with sounds and words. At the same time as exploring love and at the same time, this whole strand of the inevitability of death that begins the play and sears it's way right through to the end. I think it's a masterpiece. That's what I think.

PR: Wow.

MT: [Laughs]

PR: I would say about it, on a much more base level, that when I said yes to being in this play, it wasn't a play that I was particularly interested in. I loved the idea of playing Don Armado, but it was one of those plays that I didn't know that well. And we've seen the examples of the many plays I don't know that well over these weeks. No but it was one of those plays I didn't know that well so I was starting from a place without any assumptions about it. And I love it too, it grew into one of those plays for me that I find... I find it extraordinary. That idea that is playing, you said, impenetrable, there is something being played with that seems impenetrable, the image or the persona of being an academic or the persona of being lovers, I think?

MT: Well the armour of intellect as well I think.

PR: The armour of intellect.

MT: The persona that they all play, but yeah. Sorry.

PR: Yeah, please Michelle.

MT: [Laughs]

PR: No, so yeah the armour they have is being penetrated. I feel like what I find astonishing about it, is it is: truth will out and love will out and I think that's what, despite all of that armour, what is revealed are the human hearts.

MT: Exactly.

PR: And I think that is astonishing about it.

MT: And especially if you just took it at face value, it's really hard to dip into this play? Like I think you could probably get a sense of Rosalind if you picked her up midway through **As You Like It,** you'd probably get a sense maybe of Bottom, well you do, you don't meet Bottom until halfway through the play. But there's something about each stitch of **Love's Labour's Lost** is an, you can't have, and actually now I've said it maybe it's true of all the plays, but you can't have one bit without fully understanding the bit that came before it. So the fact that the play begins with a King that says 'let fame, that all hunt after in their lives', straight away is a provocation: does everybody hunt after fame? Is that just that's motivated by the King? Each stitch builds up this... I know we use this image a lot about the tapestry, but it feels like each stitch is building the tapestry and then in comes this Princess who's only there because her father is on his death bed. So already she comes in with, whether you believe in psychological motivation or not, the only reason she is there is because of the inevitability of death. And like even metaphysically, that's a profound thought to begin a play with. If you play each moment, you can't play just the surface level of: it's a play about

lovers, it's a play about youth. The levels of this play have to be honoured. And someone talked about that RSC production, which I adored, it was partnered with **Much Ado About Nothing**, but the one thing, because of the partnership, there was a very clear trajectory of trying to go from pre-war to post-war and there was a construction of a journey from the beginning of **Love's Labour's Lost** right through to the end of **Much Ado About Nothing**. But what that meant was, to create the arc of that journey, some of the melancholy and some of the layers of **Love's Labour's Lost** had to slightly be sacrificed in order to make that construction work. But if you take **Love's Labour's Lost** in its entirety, yes it's seemingly: let fame and it's all people that speak very well and it's all bombast. But underneath it there are these shards of melancholy, which would be so easy to dismiss as accidental writing, but if you honour it, it's the truth of human beings that are constantly navigating their way through, I mean I know we talked about it with **Much Ado**, didn't we? But it's constantly navigating the pain of life and the joy of life and how you find ways to almost fabricate joy in order to deal with the pain. So what you watch with these women come in, they spin themselves up into this frenzy because the power of the frenzy and the power of the distraction and the power of the Princess just trying to play at being lovers, play at being youthful and then realising when Marcade or Marcade, however you choose to say his name comes in and says 'the King your father'. Boom. Even the messenger can't say the word. And she has to say 'dead'. That's not just the father's dead, that's the King is dead, that's like the patriarchy in that moment goes boom. And so someone's asked a question about the end: what do you think Shakespeare was exploring...

PR: Yes. OK. It's actually quite incredible the women turn around at the end of the play and refuse to marry the men and make them wait a year. What do you think Shakespeare was exploring here? What do you like about this ending of the play?

MT: I think there's something in the naivety and the innocence which they have deliberately explored and played with throughout the play, they play with what it is to swear, they play with what it is

to make an oath, they play with what it is to love or to not love, it's all a game and then the minute reality hits, it's like shock doctrine. The ricochet of that goes through all of them. So I think he's exploring what it is to suddenly be faced with reality and go actually, what does it mean to be in love, what does it mean to swear, what does it mean to truly commit yourself to another human being or commit yourself to love, or all of these youthful ideas, again the persona they've all been playing with suddenly... I mean death is the greatest leveller isn't it? So I think he's playing with actually, well you said it earlier, what is truth? Is it true love or are we going to just play the game of love? And actually if it's true love, it will survive and it will last.

PR: Wow.

MT: You're staring at me like you've just realised you're not in love with me and it's time to go [laughs].

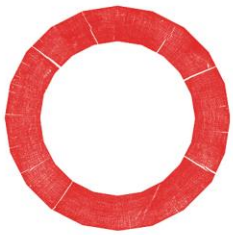
PR: I've just realised I don't really know this play.

MT: [Laughs]

PR: All over again. No, no, no. I was thinking about that thing that you were saying about... let fame. Where is this beginning bit?

PR: OK, so this is the opening speech from the King of Navarre setting out his intent to achieve greatness.

Let fame, that all hunt after in their lives,
Live register'd upon our brazen tombs
And then grace us in the disgrace of death;
When, spite of cormorant devouring Time,
The endeavor of this present breath may buy
That honour which shall bate his scythe's keen edge
And make us heirs of all eternity.
Therefore, brave conquerors, for so you are,
That war against your own affections
And the huge army of the world's desires,



Our late edict shall strongly stand in force:
Navarre shall be the wonder of the world;
Our court shall be a little Academe,
Still and contemplative in living art.
You three, Berowne, Dumain, and Longaville,
Have sworn for three years' term to live with me
My fellow-scholars, and to keep those statutes
That are recorded in this schedule here:
Your oaths are pass'd; and now subscribe your names,
That his own hand may strike his honour down
That violates the smallest branch herein:
If you are arm'd to do as sworn to do,
Subscribe to your deep oaths, and keep it too.

PR: I suppose just what activities do you as human beings do in order to try and find meaning, you know? So you try and find, the men in the beginning of the play, are looking for fame. But they're looking for fame through something that has some kind of integrity, or they think has some kind of integrity, which is study. Some kind of, I suppose, and that's probably about wisdom and acquiring knowledge and then it's denying something in themselves. And so it breaks in kind of love games, love folly but that is also not the truth, it's a part of it, it's an ingredient, but as you say kind of at the end, the games are up because mortality has entered the room and so how can you be truly serious and live with true meaning?

MT: But also that idea of commitment, they swear to, to study and then as you say, the minute you make a single commitment, suddenly all the other things that you will never be able to enjoy in your life, make themselves known. I mean literally in this play they make themselves known by, they swear to study and foreswear women. And then four women turn up. And there's something about the commitment to love that the minute you commit, well it's like marriage isn't it? The minute you single-mindedly go 'this is who I commit to', suddenly you reveal all the other people that you will never be with in your life. So he is playing with what it is to commit and when you make a commitment, the fact that they make that commitment to study and all the other men go 'oh but if we make

this commitment, there's quite a lot of other things we're going to miss out on', that may also be an education? Like the idea that you just have to learn from reading and again, that is what he's playing isn't it? Intellectual curiosity and intellectual superiority, like what you can learn from sitting and studying from books and what you learn about love from sitting and studying about books. They actually learn more throughout the course of the two and a half hour play what it is to love and the whole play is an education for all of them. So he's sort of playing with the idea of what is learning.

PR: The whole play... do that again? The whole play is an education... It's not the study.

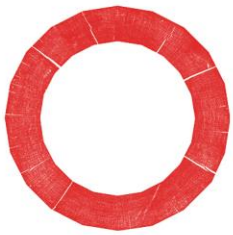
MT: Yes, what you could learn from books, 'this little academe', what you can learn from just sitting down and learning from a book is only one way of learning because there is also experiential learning and being out in the world and living your life and that's what the women bring in, it's this experiential learning, you will learn more about what it is to converse, love, sexuality, sensuality by being in the presence of other human beings, probably more so than you will about sitting and reading about love.

PR: Interesting.

MT: Yeah.

PR: I don't know why it occurs to me there's something from The Great Gatsby that I've always remembered. You saying that thing about marriage, when you choose one person, then all the other options of who you could have been with become apparent, like the difficulty of commitment perhaps. And in the Great Gatsby I remember them saying 'life is best viewed from a single window, rather than being a jack of all trades', I think is the...

MT: That's just made me think... like Berowne does 'a lover's eye will gaze an eagle blind', Berowne does learn before all the other men you will learn more about love from being in the presence of women.

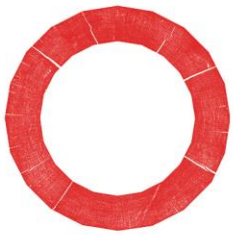


MT: So this is the speech that Berowne gives to Dumaine, Longaville and Navarre after they've all revealed themselves to have broken their oaths and sent favours and written letters to their respective women. And this is the speech that, where we were talking about you can't study love, you can't sit in a classroom and study what it is to love and be a lover, you have to practice it. And this is the speech that Berowne gives talking about the enormity of that, the epic, mythic, cosmic nature of that.

PR:

Have at you, then, affection's men at arms.
Consider what you first did swear unto,
To fast, to study, and to see no woman;
Flat treason 'gainst the kingly state of youth.
Say, can you fast? your stomachs are too young;

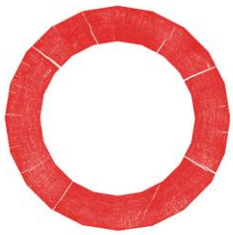
And abstinence engenders maladies.
Oh we have made a vow to study, lords,
And in that vow we have forsworn our books,
For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,
In leaden contemplation have found out such fie
O, we have made a vow to study, lords
And in that vow we have forsworn our books.
For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,
In leaden contemplation have found out
Such fiery numbers as the prompting eyes
Of beauty's tutors have enrich'd you with?
Other slow arts entirely keep the brain;
And therefore, finding barren practisers,
Scarce show a harvest of their heavy toil:
But love, first learned in a lady's eyes,
Lives not alone immured in the brain;
But, with the motion of all elements,
Courses as swift as thought in every power,
And gives to every power a double power,
Above their functions and their offices.



It adds a precious seeing to the eye;
A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind;
A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
When the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd:
Love's feeling is more soft and sensible
Than are the tender horns of cockl'd snails;
Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste:
For valour, is not Love a Hercules,
Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?
Subtle as Sphinx; as sweet and musical
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair:
And when Love speaks, the voice of all the gods
Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony.
Never durst poet touch a pen to write
Until his ink were temper'd with Love's sighs;
O, then his lines would ravish savage ears
And plant in tyrants mild humility.
From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the arts, the academes,
That show, contain and nourish all the world:
Else none at all in ought proves excellent.
Then fools you were these women to forswear,
Or keeping what is sworn, you will prove fools.
For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love,
Or for love's sake, a word that loves all men,
Or for men's sake, the authors of these women,
Or women's sake, by whom we men are men,
Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves,
Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths.
It is religion to be thus forsworn,
For charity itself fulfills the law,
And who can sever love from charity?

[Music plays]

MT: The thing about the melancholy in the play? I mean you played Don Armardo, that is literally sick, is love sick, isn't he? He has



melancholy, he's so sick with love. But I'm also thinking about that amazing bit when Katherine talks about her sister? So the four girls, there's the Princess, Rosaline, Maria and Katherine. And they're all giddy with the fact these men have brought them favours, and there's just this moment where Katherine cuts through with the most... it's such a surprising story about the death of her sister?

MT: So this is the moment where we talked about shards of melancholy that cut into the pain and humour? And as we go into the, like, unbelievably long scene in the play, Act 5 Scene 2, the woman come out and they're joking about the favours that the boys have given them and the letters that the boys have given them and up until this point, the whole thing's been really light and frothy and all of a sudden, they're talking about Cupid, they're talking about you know the fact that he, you're trying to cram Cupid into this tiny, tiny page of writing and then suddenly, it just turns on a pin head and this is the conversation that happens between Rosaline and Katherine.
PR: That was the way to make his godhead wax,
For he hath been five thousand years a boy.

MT: Ay, and a shrewd unhappy gallows too.

PR: You'll ne'er be friends with him; a' kill'd your sister.

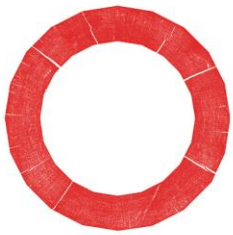
MT: He made her melancholy, sad, and heavy;
And so she died: had she been light, like you,
Of such a merry, nimble, stirring spirit,
She might ha' been a grandam ere she died:
And so may you; for a light heart lives long.

PR: What's your dark meaning, mouse, of this light word?

MT: A light condition in a beauty dark.

PR: We need more light to find your meaning out.

MT: You'll mar the light by taking it in snuff;



Therefore I'll darkly end the argument.

PR: Look what you do, you do it still i' the dark.

MT: So do not you, for you are a light wench.

PR: Indeed I weigh not you, and therefore light.

MT: You weigh me not? O, that's you care not for me.

PR: Great reason; for 'past cure is still past care.'

MT: Well bandied both; a set of wit well play'd.

MT: That's the Princess jumping in and cutting off this sort of tennis match of wit between these two women, but it's just an example of a play that can seem quite light and frothy, suddenly can turn on a pin head and just these shards of melancholy and sadness and how they pepper, they just pepper their way throughout the play.

MT: And again it's where he doesn't apologise about this very thin layer that we all try and exist on because it makes life a little bit more bearable, but every now and again, the glass breaks and it's just like these shards of glass that lacerate this thin veil of civilisation or civility and persona and he just keeps cutting through it. And even, like, my favourite line in the whole play is, like you said, 'to grace us in the disgrace of death' and then right at the end, that amazing line where they're doing the nine worthies, and again the young lovers have whipped themselves up into this sort of mob mentality and they're being really obnoxious, like unbelievably obnoxious to the performers doing the nine worthies and Don Armado stops the performance and says 'beat not the bones of the buried: when he breathed, he was a man'. And like the worth around every single human life? Again, like every single life matters because at some point every single one of us is going to die. And that will have a profound, I mean talk about how relevant that is now, again we talk about 44,000 deaths, 1 million deaths, but for every single life, the impact on someone's family is massive. But of

course death is just around them all, isn't it? But 'beat not the bones of the buried', like every single life is worth something. And again it's not something you would think about in **Love's Labour's Lost**, the profundity of mortality, it bookends the play because the announcement of the dying father and then the inevitability of the death is like the bookends, well the bookends of life isn't it. And then sort of the immaturity, well not the immaturity, but the innocence of like going wild in the middle and then every now and again going, 'Oh actually, what is meaning? What is to swear? What is it to have something to believe in? What is it to commit?' Oh it's brilliant, it's brilliant. Such a brilliant play.

PR: And I think a little bit about what is it to swear, what is it to make an oath...

MT: That's a question isn't it?

PR: It is one of the questions... it took me multiple readings and viewings of the play to truly understand the consequences of swearing an oath and then foreswearing it. How is a promise different from an oath, what would swearing an oath have meant to original audiences? How important is the oath swearing to the play? I was just thinking from what you were saying there is an oath to how the characters live, the oath they make to themselves in a way. Thinking about Don Armado, even though he has a lot of persona, as I read it, he was trying to be accepted, but also to stand out, to be a man of the heart. And I think it was that line you were just saying there about 'beat not the bones of the buried', he has an integrity, that line has an integrity which kind of cuts through persona, that touches something he believes very much in his heart. And so just this idea about what does it mean to make an oaths, and those oaths have to, to have meaning, they have touch the heart, they're not just words, they're not just surface. What is an oath? It has to go deep. And probably take some sacrifice, to live with integrity takes some sacrifice. There's my opening on oath swearing.

MT: So I guess my question is, it depends what you think, like what the heart is? So for some people the heart might be god, for some people the heart might be study, for some people the heart might be their partner, for some people the heart might be their children. There's like a divinity attached to it. So I think if I made a promise to you or to Scout, and I broke that, that would have consequence to it because we rely on, we trust each other. I think even today, if you said to somebody I promise, that's a contract of trust, that if you break I think is significant.

PR: You'd feel it.

MT: You'd feel it and you would trust that person a little bit less and there would be some work to do to repair that. But I think the thing about in this time, I don't think it's any different, but I think there is the presence of the gods, there is a vertical presence that isn't just this horizontal relationship between person to person. There is also a spiritual realm to it so in the presence of God or the presence of the gods, you make this oath and then you break it, you don't only break the transaction and the trust between the person, you break the vertical, the divine trust as well, so I think that's what the women are playing with, it's how can you make an oath, swear something one minute and then break something the next, like where, as you say where is your...

PR: Integrity.

MT: Where is your integrity? And where should you as a person place your trust?

PR: Interesting talking about oaths, oaths and swearing in this day and age. It made me think of Twitter and it made me think of President Trump, like where's the integrity, where's the connection to the oath and to the bigger picture, to a bigger world in this kind of surface, that kind of surface modern world?

MT: Yeah, but I don't think you even have to leap that far. Because I think about the position I'm in now, like a position of leadership, when you think about the King and you think about the Princess, these are people in positions of leadership, and there's a responsibility that comes with that, so people look to you. And it's very easy to, without meaning to, let people down so it's where are you placing your weight, where are you placing your integrity and where are you asking people to trust you. So I think he is playing with all of it.

PR: And interestingly, if you... I suppose why I went to connect it to the heart, which I keep coming back to because I think there's so much heart in this play. If you're making an oath to something that is not truthful of yourself, it will break. And that's what happens right at the beginning, the oath is made, but it's still kind of chasing after something that is potentially of the outside, if you're chasing fame it's somehow of the outside, you're not chasing the essence of learning, you're chasing, you want to be remembered for something, it's already outside yourself. And it doesn't work.

MT: Now I'm just thinking about that Rosaline speech at the end, especially thinking about now. We're surrounded by so many selfless acts at the moment, people putting their own lives on the line to make sure people have the best chance of surviving this virus and what could seem like a very, like a sort of a strange ask of Berowne from Rosaline to go and ask him to 'force the pained impotent to smile', like, that she's watch him sort of banter and play with wit and it's a skill that Berowne has and she says to him now put it to use, now be in service for a bit. Now use it in the most selfless way and there's something about this time, where are we using our best selves to be in service? I think it's very hard for people to be in service. We talk about, like suddenly we have a totally different view of what a key worker is, not the amount we pay people, because what's been exposed is we pay people woefully badly that are in key positions. But when I think about you know, somebody coming to deliver a letter for us, suddenly being so grateful to them because they are in service, they've put themselves or they have been forced to be in a position of service. And I just

think there's something quite extraordinary about Rosaline's request of Berowne. You have this extraordinary capability but at the moment, you are only serving yourself. Like what could you do to serve others. Amazing.

MT: So this is the end of the play, where after all of the joking around and all the playing and the masquerading, all of the veils have fallen away and this is the moment of truth for the lovers where they are asked to commit or not commit. And Rosaline asks Berowne to take his incredible gift of his witty tongue and his amazingly quick, what she calls his fruitful brain and his jibing spirit. If he can take that and use it for good, if he can use that not just to taunt people and mock people and hurt people, if he can make people smile with that, if he can put that amazing skill to service, then not only could she love him, this is someone that she could commit the rest of her life to. So this is what she says to him.

MT: Oft have I heard of you, my Lord Berowne,
Before I saw you; and the world's large tongue
Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks,
Full of comparisons and wounding flouts,
Which you on all estates will execute
That lie within the mercy of your wit.
To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain,
And therewithal to win me, if you please,
Without the which I am not to be won,
You shall this twelvemonth term from day to day
Visit the speechless sick and still converse
With groaning wretches; and your task shall be,
With all the fierce endeavor of your wit
To enforce the pained impotent to smile.
That's the way to choke a gibing spirit,
Whose influence is begot of that loose grace
Which shallow laughing hearers give to fools:
A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it, never in the tongue
Of him that makes it: then, if sickly ears,
Deaf'd with the clamours of their own dear groans,

Will hear your idle scorns, continue then,
And I will have you and that fault withal;
But if they will not, throw away that spirit,
And I shall find you empty of that fault,
Right joyful of your reformation.

[Music plays]

PR: Michelle, you have played both Rosaline and the Princess of France. Which did you prefer?

MT: When I played Rosaline I missed the anarchy of the Princess of France, the liberation of just like shaking off power that only the Princess can do because she's ruling the roost. Whereas Rosaline, again there's still that element of having to be contained, having to be in service, I mean I know they sort of seemingly switch roles, but there was just something really, really delicious about the anarchy of the Princess of France. But also I realised when I was... and it doesn't seem that much different I suppose in years, but I first played the Princess of France in 2007. Coming back to the play, was it 14 or 15? But like nearly 10 years later, you can't fake youth and I missed, I think I missed my youth when I played Rosaline. Rightly, I had to collude and collide with her from my world view and who she is, so there was a sort, not a... there is a cynicism to her or a scepticism or a questioning about her, but it was from a very different age and I think there is something that you can't deny about youth in this play and actually you can't really fake it, so I realised what a youthful production the 2007/8 production was that you got for free, because we were young, you know?

PR: Well look I'd say, I'd say there is like something like Don Armado, this is a long time, if I returned to Don Armado, I've obviously rapidly losing my youth, but there is something of the boy who doesn't grow up, in his way of... what he's aiming for. And just thinking about that thing of not being able to fake youth, I think that's true, physically that's true and perhaps you grow, hopefully you grow wiser or the world, you see the world in a different way, but there are also people who do never grow up.

MT: Yeah, I'm not saying it's all the characters. Of course some of them are ageless or age-ful. But I think the four women and the four men, I think the anarchy of youth has an innocence to it that the anarchy of experience doesn't.

PR: Yeah.

MT: And I don't think you can fake that.

PR: Nope. OK, I saw Michelle in an excellent production of LLL a few years ago in Stratford. Would Paul and Michelle like to appear together in the play and which parts would they play? Well we have been in the play together. I would still play Don Armado.

MT: And I think this may be one of those plays that has probably... maybe there's no place for me in it now? Partly because of that youth thing. Yes, I'd love to play Don Armado, I think it's an extraordinary part. But yeah I feel like in any other realm of the play, whether it's the four lovers, then there's... I think Costard's an extraordinary part? I remember reading about, when we were doing it before, those Elizabethan spies, and often they would masquerade as gardeners. And I just got this idea of Costard actually being a spy, like an Elizabethan, a proper, he's actually like more powerful than any of them but he's masquerading as this gardener? So yeah, I'd love to play... Costard would be quite interesting [laughs].

PR: You heard it here first.

MT: But he is a spy! The way he's sort of like got his finger in everything, he's got the letters, he's passing information back and forwards.

PR: It's easy to forget actually, when I return you know when I return to these plays, talking about that, how dangerous it was in Elizabethan times and how, you know, how the spy worked.

MT: Yeah.

PR: And the censoring. Kind of ever present.

MT: Yeah.

PR: Interesting. OK. But one thing I'd say, I loved... though we were in the play together, there was only one line, I was just remembering it the other day and I said to you, there's only one line they actually say to each other, and I think, I think this is right and Don Armado basically says to the Princess, 'I like your shoes'.

[Laughter]

MT: It's so wonderful! Like the nerves, how nervous that creature is in the face of power and all he can think to say is, 'I like your shoe'.

PR: Yeah, 'I do adore thy sweet Grace's slipper'. Love that.

MT: [Laughs] Wonderful.

[Music plays]

PR: So, scholars, directors, and many other people debate what **Love's Labour's Won** could be. Do you think it could be **Shrew** or **Much Ado** or do you think it really is a lost play? You really entered into this didn't you, because your productions were called at Stratford **Love's Labour's Lost** and **Love's Labour's Won**. Very firmly landing in the court of **Much Ado** being **Love's Labour's Won**.

MT: Yeah.

PR: What do you think of this?

MT: I think in the same way we did at Stratford you could fashion those plays to make sense. I was there was a construct that made sense of **Much Ado** coming after **Love's Labour's**. I think if it was **Taming of the Shrew**, I wonder if it would be the other way round, like you have to have Katerina and Petruchio first and then they meet later as Berowne and Rosaline. Because 'I knew you at Brabant once', like it doesn't work. I don't know how you would end Love's Labour's Lost by going 'I'll see you in a year' and then pick up from the place of unfamiliarity that Petruchio and Katerina pick up from. They don't know each other, Petruchio and Katerina, do they? The whole premise relies on you believing that Berowne and Rosaline, Benedick and Beatrice, Katerina and Petruchio, have got any sense of history. And for me I just think they all exist on the same paradigm, this is Shakespeare trying to understand, playing with the masculine and the feminine, playing with equality, playing with these metaphysical ideas, I think they all splurge in terms of order in his head? So I think there is a world where you would want to see them all played out, all three played out together, because what is he exploring about the masculine and feminine is interesting? But I think to construct a linearity is neat, but I don't think it's there. And I think **Love's Labour's Won**, W-O-N is a lost play.

PR: Another question, what similarities or differences can you draw between Rosaline and Berowne versus Beatrice and Benedick? And there doesn't have to be any, it's like as you were saying, they are all things existing within Shakespeare's playing with certain ideas. They don't necessarily have to be a comment on each other. Maybe like an idea is developed further in different plays, but what do you think? Similarities or differences, what similarities or differences can you draw between Rosaline and Berowne versus Beatrice and Benedick?

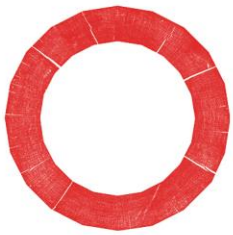
MT: I think there's a wisdom that Rosaline and Beatrice share, there's a lived experience, albeit through a particular world view. Maybe that's not true of Berowne and Benedick, I don't know I haven't played them. I think Beatrice is more pained than Rosaline.

PR: Well Beatrice is, I feel like they're relationship, whoever they are, actually Beatrice and Benedick, are more fully explored. I think certainly Beatrice is more fully explored than Rosaline.

MT: Yeah. Yeah and I don't think... I think Beatrice could exist in isolation, I don't know where I'm going with this, but Beatrice is a character that could sit in and of herself in another play whereas I think, I'm not entirely sure Rosaline could exist, certainly without the Princess. I think he's exploring something about femininity and those two switch back and forwards, literally to the point of switching the mask, so I think it's harder for Rosaline to exist without the Princess whereas I think Beatrice could absolutely exist without Hero, without Benedick, I think there's something whole about her. I'm not sure Rosaline's that whole.

PR: I think also that kind of plays into what you might feel about this play. You don't. There's such great hooks into like **Much Ado About Nothing**. And you might not feel the hooks in **Love's Labour's** of the characters, but I think as you were saying the whole of it becomes something quite extraordinary.

MT: Yeah well maybe because he's playing with ideas more than he's playing with people in **Love's Labour's Lost**. Maybe there's something, like you said just before, about going, 'oh I realised I don't know this play at all'. I think all of them are so ephemeral, you can finish it... well we said it before, but you can think you know **A Midsummer Night's Dream** and then you come to it and because of how your life has changed, or the world has changed, it becomes an entirely different play. Yet still you would probably go, oh I love Bottom or I love Titania or I love Puck, you have a relationship with the characters that you recognise or like **As You Like It**, you go I forgot about Phoebe turning up or Silvius turning up. I don't think you get the same thing about people in **Love's Labour's Lost**? I don't think I've watched a production then gone 'oh yeah I forgot about Costard' or 'oh yeah I forgot about...' I think it's an overwhelm



of ideas, whether it's linguistic, metaphysical, emotional, of course it's a play you can't hold on to, so of course you would go 'I just don't know this play', because you can't anchor yourself in people maybe.

PR: And then I think it means when I watch it, I discover something new about it each time. Because it does feel like I can't hold on to it as you say.

MT: Yup. Because it's about life and you can't hold on to life!

PR: Alright Michelle, let's take it down.

MT: [Laughs]

PR: Alright, here's the last question. Well it's not... it is a question and it's a good place to end.

MT: Oh god [laughs].
PR: **Love's Labour's Lost** features the longest scene, longest speech and longest word in Shakespeare. Can you pronounce this word.

MT: You go first.

PR: Oh. Honor-ific-abilitudin-ati-tatibus.

MT: Honorificabilitudinitatibus [laughs]

PR: I told you not to do it like that.

MT: Honorificabilitudinitatibus [laughs]. No! We should have an entire podcast episode dedicated to that word and just see how many people could actually say it.

PR: OK.

MT: On that note.

PR: On that note and I wish you all honorificabilitudinitatibus.

MT: [Laughs]

PR: Goodbye!

[Music plays]

IG: That's it from us but we'll be back soon with another episode of the Shakespeare Diaries.

You've been listening to Such Stuff with me, Imogen Greenberg, Michelle Terry and Paul Ready.

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