

Visual Story

To support your visit to Shakespeare's Globe

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING



SHAKESPEARE'S
GLOBE

Introduction



This Visual Story gives you information about what to expect from Much Ado About Nothing at Shakespeare's Globe.

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Sonic Story



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Important Information

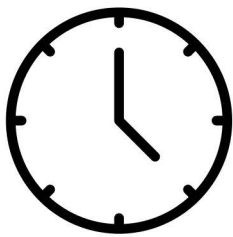


About the theatre

Much Ado About Nothing takes place in the Globe Theatre.

The Globe Theatre has no roof and a capacity of 1,570 (700 standing and the rest seated).

The address is 21 New Globe Walk, Bankside, London, SE1 9DT.



Times

Much Ado About Nothing is 2 hours and 40 minutes including the interval.



About the play

William Shakespeare's plays often fall into one of three types: a comedy, a history, or a tragedy, Much Ado About Nothing is a comedy which means the play includes regular laughter, playfulness and a happy ending.

Cast and Characters

Some of the cast play more than one character during the performance. You may see them in different costumes to the ones shown below.

During the party scenes, the characters are dressed as animals or creatures. Some of them have full animal head masks on, and others don't.

Actor



Jonnie Broadbent

Character



Dogberry



Calum Callaghan



Borachio

Actor



Ryan Donaldson



Emma Ernest



Lydia Fleming

Character



Don Pedro



Margaret



Hero

Actor



Colm Gormley



John Lightbody



Peter McGovern

Character



Antonio/ Verges



Leonato



Ensemble

Actor



Robert Mountford



Dharmesh Patel



Ekow Quartey

Character



Don John



Conrade/Friar Francis



Benedick

Actor



Lucy Reynolds

Character



Ensemble



Amalia Vitale



Beatrice



Adam Wadsworth



Claudio

Set



Two blue platforms are placed around the two main pillars of the stage.



Fake orange fruit trees fill the back of the stage. There are baskets and crates of real oranges on stage.



Characters often enter from the yard. There is a runway that extends beyond the main stage, and into the yard. Characters often walk onto it.

Content and Trigger Warnings

This production includes themes of:



Sexual Assault



Weapon Violence



Grief



Xenophobia



Intimacy



Threatening Language

Much Ado About Nothing – Synopsis

The next 11 pages describe what happens in the show. If you do not want to spoil the surprise, jump to page 22.

ACT 1

The actors enter and sing a cheerful folk song. Leonato tells everyone that Don Pedro is coming to town. Beatrice asks whether Benedick has returned yet – which he has. Beatrice sarcastically talks more about Benedick, and while doing so, stabs an orange with a knife mid-air.

Don Pedro enters dramatically through the yard on a long wagon. He sings as he moves through the audience. With him are Claudio and Benedick. Leonato introduces Don Pedro to Hero, and everyone leaves apart from Benedick and Beatrice. They chat and tease each other.



Don Pedro re-enters, followed by lots of other people. He tells Claudio and Benedick that Leonato has invited them all to stay for a month. Everyone leaves apart from Benedick and Claudio.

Claudio tells Benedick that he thinks Hero is beautiful and would like to marry her. Benedick dramatically complains about this and says that marriage is a trap that Claudio will regret.

Much Ado About Nothing – Synopsis

Don Pedro returns, and Benedick shouts playfully that Claudio's in love. They laugh, and Don Pedro chases Claudio around the stage. Benedick gives a funny speech about how he'll be a bachelor forever, then he leaves.

Don Pedro says that, to help Claudio get with Hero, he'll pretend to be Claudio later at the masked ball. If he pretends to be Claudio, he can woo Hero, and get Leonato's permission to marry her. Then, the real Claudio can marry Hero. They agree on this plan and leave together.

Leonato and Antonio enter, followed by a few others. Borachio wanders around the stage swinging an incense burner, and the smell travels through the theatre. Antonio tells Leonato that Don Pedro has confessed his love for Hero. Leonato is happy about this, and says he'll tell Hero. In his excitement, he runs into Beatrice, carrying a basket of oranges, and shouts out in pain. Then, he and Beatrice leave together, followed by a line of cheerful marching musicians.



One of the musicians is Conrade, who stays on stage, and talks to Don John, who has just entered. Conrade and Don John talk about how Don John feels upset and excluded by his family. Borachio enters, still swinging incense. He tells Don John that Claudio is going to marry Hero. Don John is pleased to hear this, because he wants to sabotage Claudio. He asks Borachio and Conrade if they will help him scheme against Claudio, they agree then all leave.

Much Ado About Nothing – Synopsis

Leonato, Antonio, Beatrice, Hero and Margaret enter. Margaret is holding a very large pair of butterfly wings. Beatrice speaks to Leonato about how she never wants to get married to a man. Leonato says he hopes Beatrice will be married one day, but she says this will never happen. Leonato tells Hero to respond well to Don Pedro if he tries to woo her. Beatrice teases Hero about this, and slaps Antonio's bottom.

Musicians enter and gather around one of the pillars, ready for the party. Lots of people dressed up as different animals enter, huddled and crouching. It is difficult to see their faces. Antonio puts on the pair of butterfly wings, then exits with his family briefly, before they all re-enter in costume. One of the animal costumes is a bright orange reptile surrounded by huge, puffy netting. Everyone dances together. Hero (dressed as a devil) and Don Pedro (dressed as a lion) walk and talk together, then re-join the dance.



Borachio (dressed as a bull), dances with Margaret (dressed as an angel) at the front of the stage. They joke together, then join everyone in a lively dance while clapping and cheering. Then, Margaret is paired with Antonio. Antonio tries to trick Margaret into thinking it isn't really him, but she isn't fooled. Everyone dances again, and all the partygoers leave apart from Benedick (dressed as a pigeon) and Beatrice (dressed as a leopard).

Much Ado About Nothing – Synopsis

Beatrice and Benedick talk to each other, but pretend they don't know each other. Beatrice talks about Benedick like he isn't in the room, and makes fun of him. Then, all the partygoers re-enter. Hero dances with someone in the same lion costume that Don Pedro was wearing earlier. Don Pedro, now dressed as the orange reptile, takes off his mask and shouts "yes" happily – he thinks his plan to get Claudio and Hero together has worked. Everyone cheers and runs around the stage, then leaves – apart from Don John, Borachio, Conrade - and Claudio, dressed as a bear.



Don John talks to Claudio, who is stood on a pillar platform. Claudio pretends to be Benedick, and Don John pretends to believe him. Don John tricks Claudio and tells him Don Pedro wants to marry Hero. Then, everyone but Claudio leaves to go to the banquet. Claudio takes his mask off. He is upset, and thinks that Don Pedro has tricked him, and run away with Hero. Benedick enters and tells Claudio that Don Pedro won Hero over. This upsets Claudio and he runs off-stage crying.

Benedick, left alone, talks about how Beatrice acted strangely around him at the masked ball. Don Pedro enters, wearing a lion costume, and talks about Beatrice. This upsets Benedick because Beatrice teased him at the ball. He begins to insult Beatrice just as she walks up behind him. Benedick doesn't want to speak to her, so he storms off stage, and Beatrice trips him up as he leaves.

Much Ado About Nothing – Synopsis

Claudio enters, looking sad, but he says he's OK. Don Pedro says he's organised the marriage between Hero and Claudio. Hero enters with Leonato. Claudio is shocked, but happily says he'll marry Hero. They kiss.



Don Pedro asks Beatrice to marry him – she declines, then runs off. Leonato explains that Beatrice doesn't want to marry anyone, and Don Pedro says that she'd make a good wife to Benedick. He asks Claudio, Hero and Leonato to help him make Benedick and Beatrice fall in love. They agree to the plan, then leave.

Don John enters with Borachio. Borachio comes up with a plan to sabotage Hero and Claudio's wedding. Margaret, who stays in Hero's bedroom each night, likes Borachio. So, Borachio thinks he can make it look like he's flirting with Hero, when he's actually flirting with Margaret. He tells Don John if he makes sure that Don Pedro and Claudio see this happen, then Claudio will call off the marriage. Don John agrees, says he will pay Borachio, and they both leave.

Benedick enters. He's annoyed that Claudio has changed since he's fallen in love. He crouches down to members of the audience and gets them to repeat an oath: 'til he hath made an oyster of me, he'll never make me such a fool'. He talks about how he'll only accept a woman if she is perfect. Don Pedro, Claudio and Leonato all enter. Benedick tries to hide from them on the pillar platform, but they all know he's there.

Much Ado About Nothing – Synopsis

Don Pedro asks Leonato to sing a song for them, so he does. The audience joins in. Don Pedro talks about how Beatrice is in love with Benedick. Benedick drops an orange and collapses dramatically in surprise. Leonato says that Beatrice writes Benedick love letters. Benedick hides behind a wicker basket, then pretends to be a fruit tree. Benedick believes what he's heard, even though it was a trick. He decides he should love Beatrice and begins to list all of Beatrice's good qualities, then kneels down to the audience members and says his attitude towards marriage has changed.

Beatrice enters and tells Benedick to come to dinner, then leaves. Benedick laughs in delight and runs off stage.

Hero, Margaret and Ursula enter. They plan to trick Beatrice into thinking that Benedick is in love with her. Beatrice enters from the yard clumsily and tries to pull herself onto the stage. She runs around, trying to hide. Beatrice is confused at what she hears about Benedick loving her, but decides she will love Benedick back. She leaves.



Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick and Leonato enter. They ask why Benedick seems sad, and he says he has a toothache. They don't believe him and say he's in love. Benedick asks to speak to Leonato privately, and they leave. Don John enters and tells Don Pedro and Claudio that Hero is being disloyal. He tells them to follow him, to see the proof. They agree, and all leave together.

END OF ACT 1

ACT 2

Dogberry enters with his watchmen. He gives an audience member a staff, then asks the audience if they are “good men and true”. He gives instructions to his watchmen, leaves briefly, then comes back on and tells them to keep an eye on Leonato’s door. He takes his staff back from the audience member exits.



Conrade and Borachio enter. Borachio tells Conrade that his scheme to trick Claudio worked, and the wedding will be called off. Meanwhile, the two watchmen hide behind a pillar and listen to the conversation. Then, the watchmen run out screaming, and call Dogberry on stage. They all chase Borachio and Conrade, who agree to go with the watchmen then they all leave.

Hero, Ursula and Margaret enter. Ursula goes to wake up Beatrice. Margaret and Hero talk about what to wear, then Beatrice enters. Beatrice says she’s feeling sick, and Margaret says that’s because she’s in love. Then, Ursula re-enters and says that the men have come to take Hero to the church. They all excitedly help Hero get ready, then they all leave.

Much Ado About Nothing– Synopsis

Leonato, Dogberry and Verges enter. Dogberry tells Leonato that his watchmen arrested Borachio and Conrade. Leonato isn't very interested, because he's in a rush, and he gives Verges some wine. A messenger tells Leonato he needs to give his daughter away at the wedding. Leonato downs a full glass of wine, then leaves. Verges downs his wine, and Dogberry tells him to prepare to interrogate the men in jail. Verges leaves, then Dogberry takes out his sword and runs off stage.

The weddinggoers enter through the yard, singing and throwing petals. When they reach the stage, someone throws petals over Hero and Claudio from the balcony, and Friar Francis climbs up one of the pillar platforms. Friar Francis begins the wedding ceremony, but Claudio says he doesn't want to marry Hero, and tells everyone she's been disloyal. Claudio, Don John and Don Pedro leave.

Hero collapses onto the floor. Beatrice thinks she's dead, until Hero wakes up. Leonato is very angry and disappointed with Hero, and he shouts at her loudly and grabs Beatrice. Friar Francis interrupts. He believes that there's been a mistake, and that Hero is innocent. Benedick says that if Hero's been framed, Don John is probably behind it. Friar Francis says everyone should pretend that Hero died - so her reputation isn't ruined while they find out the truth. They all agree to the plan, and everyone leaves apart from Beatrice and Benedick.



Much Ado About Nothing – Synopsis

Benedick and Beatrice confess their love for each other. Benedick says he'd do anything for Beatrice, so she asks him to kill Claudio. They both leave.

Dogberry, Verges and Sexton enter. Dogberry says that Borachio and Conrade are criminals. Sexton demands that Borachio and Conrade are arrested and brought to Leonato. Everyone leaves, apart from Dogberry and Conrade. Conrade shouts at Dogberry and calls him an ass.

Antonio and Leonato enter. Antonio tries to get Leonato to calm down, but Leonato doesn't want Antonio's advice. Don Pedro and Claudio enter. Leonato shouts angrily at them, saying that they caused Hero to die. He threatens Claudio, and goes to draw his sword, but doesn't actually take it out. Antonio steps in and threatens Claudio. Don Pedro defends Claudio. Antonio and Leonato leave together.

Benedick enters and privately challenges Claudio to a fight. Claudio loudly accepts, joking and laughing about it. Dogberry enters, followed by Borachio, Conrade and a watchman.



Borachio confesses his crimes to Claudio and Don Pedro and says that Don John paid him to do it. Claudio is upset by this news. Leonato, Antonio and Sexton enter. Leonato learns about the crimes and blames Claudio. Claudio falls to his knees in sadness. Leonato says that for Claudio to make up for his part in Hero's death, he should instead marry Leonato's brother's daughter who looks a lot like Hero. Claudio is very grateful and agrees. Leonato throws Dogberry a bag of money for his services, then Dogberry leaves.

Much Ado About Nothing– Synopsis

Benedick and Margaret enter, along with a guitarist. Margaret goes to get Beatrice. Benedick sings a funny song about love, then sends the guitarist away. Benedick talks about how difficult it is to write poetry, then Beatrice enters. They talk about what they love about each other. Margaret bursts in and tells Beatrice about Don John's scheme against Hero. Everyone leaves together.

Claudio sings a sad, slow song while a coffin is brought through the yard. He still thinks Hero is dead. He places Hero's wedding flowers on top of the coffin and reads out a eulogy for her. Don Pedro comes to collect Claudio, and they exit together.



Leonato, Benedick, Friar and Hero enter. Benedick asks Friar whether he can marry Benedick and Beatrice. Hero runs off-stage. Antonio, Claudio and Don Pedro enter, and Claudio says he's ready to marry Beatrice. Four people enter, all wearing red veils which hide their faces. One of the people is Hero, but Claudio can't see it's her. Leonato tells Claudio to promise to marry her before seeing her face. He agrees, and Hero takes her veil off.

Claudio is confused, because he thought Hero was dead, but he's happy. Friar says everyone should go to the chapel together. They go to leave, but Benedick interrupts to find Beatrice amongst the other three veiled people. Benedick gets down on one knee and asks if Beatrice loves him. She says she doesn't, and Benedick says he doesn't love her. They realise they have been tricked.

Much Ado About Nothing – Synopsis

Claudio and Hero show pieces of paper full of love confessions, trying to prove that Benedick and Beatrice really do love each other. Beatrice and Benedick joke together, and then agree to marry each other. They kiss. Benedick and Claudio become friends again, and hug. Everyone begins to dance, but Leonato interrupts and says they have to wait until after the wedding to dance.

Dogberry runs in and tells everyone that Don John tried to escape, but was brought back. Benedick says they shouldn't worry about this until tomorrow, and instead everyone should celebrate. Everyone dances together.



THE END

Sonic Story



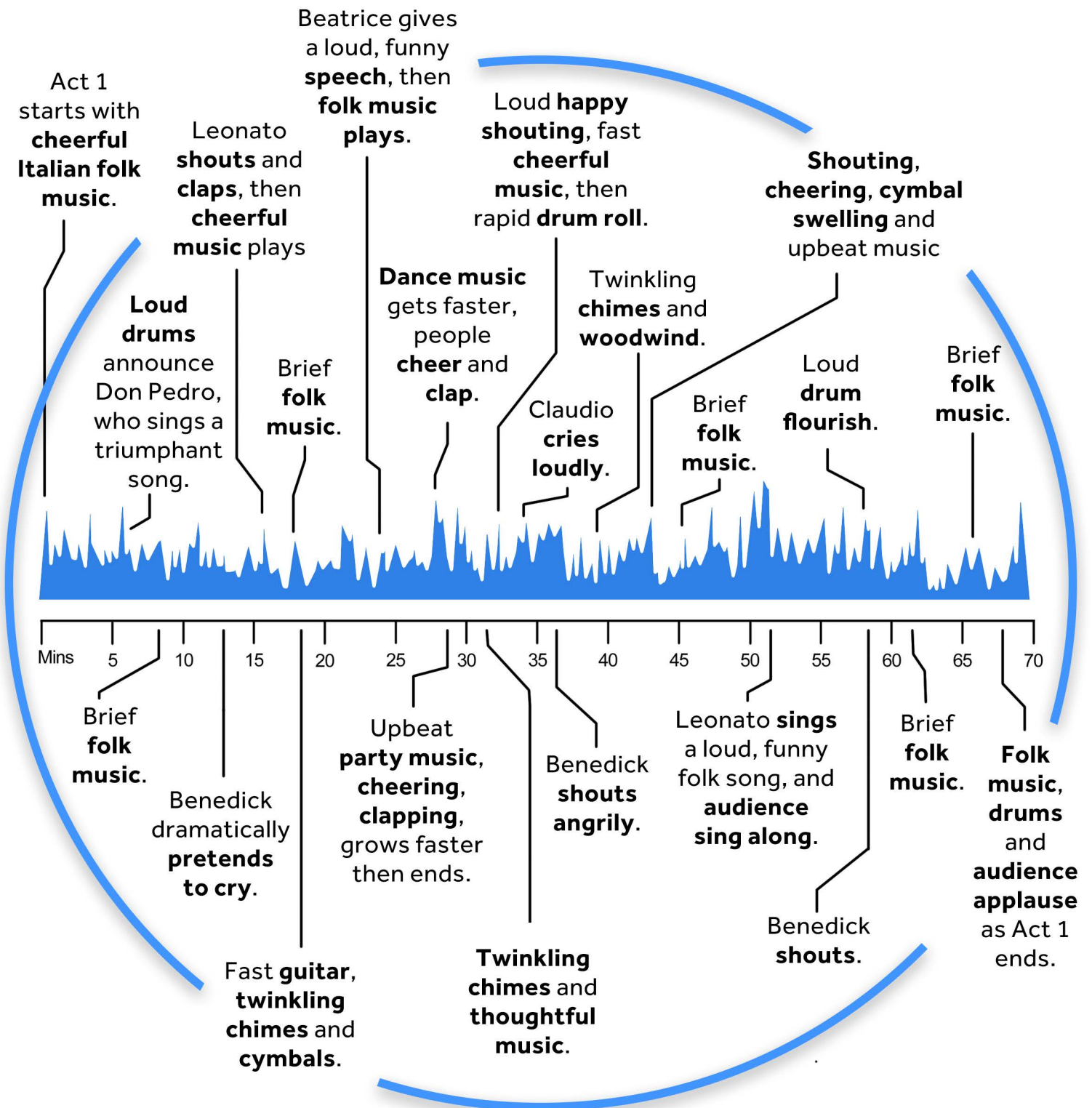
There is live music throughout the performance, played by a folk band. The band play accordion, guitar, mandolin, percussion and woodwind instruments.

The band sit on the balcony, but often also appear on stage, on the blue platforms, or in the yard.

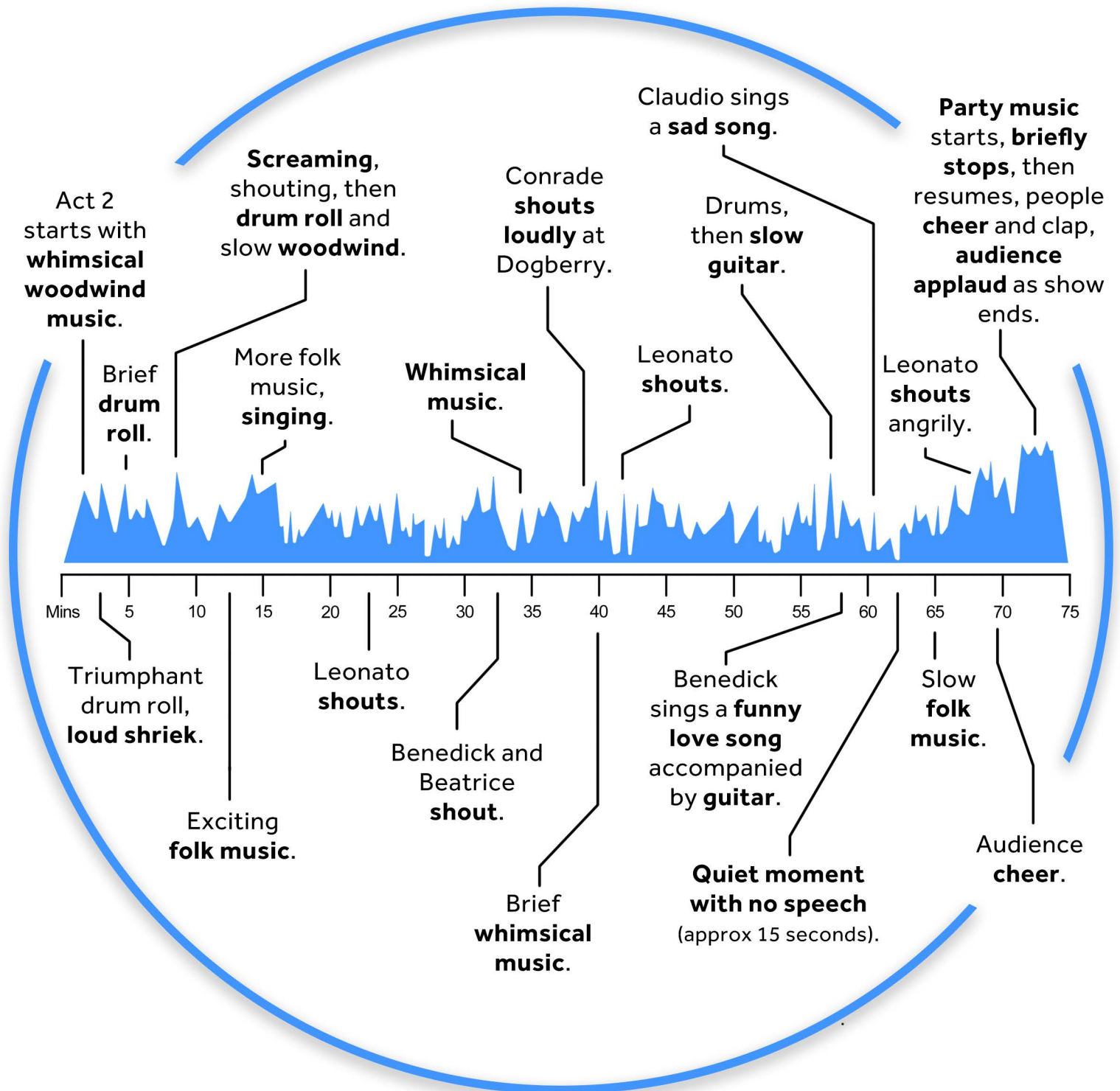


The next two pages show a 'Sonic Story' of *Much Ado About Nothing*. A Sonic Story is an infographic that gives detailed information about how the sounds of the show change over time.

Sonic Story – Act 1



Sonic Story – Act 2



Relaxed Performances & Contact Details



Relaxed performances will take place on:

Sunday 21st July 1.00pm

Thursday 15th August 7.30pm

During a relaxed performance there will be:



- An open-door policy: so you can come in and out of the theatre whenever you like.



- An announcement at the start of the show that it is a relaxed performance and an explanation of what this means.



- A welcome invitation to move, make noise and experience the show however you like.



- A Visual Story (this document) available online and at the welcome desk.



- A chill-out space: on the level below the box office and the main entrance to the building.

Contact Details



If you need any more information or would like to discuss your access requirements please contact the Access Team:



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Visual story designed by Touretteshero CIC, 2024
Production photos: Marc Brenner



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