

Cardenio (/cardenio)

CARDENIO

A woman seduced and a friend betrayed; desire, deceit and disguise in the heat and dust of Andalusia.

GREGORY DORAN'S RE-IMAGINED CARDENIO

Records show that in the winter of 1612 a play by William Shakespeare, called *Cardenna*, was performed at Court. Gregory Doran decided to try and piece together Shakespeare's 'lost play' as part of our 50th Birthday Season in the Swan Theatre, during winter 2011. Drawing on a team of writers which included Cervantes, Shakespeare, Fletcher, Shelton and Lewis Theobald, his re-imagined *Cardenio* took his audience on a journey to 16th century Spain.



CAST

Maya Barcot - Nun

Lucy Briggs-Owen - Luscinda

Christopher Chilton - Priest

Liz Crowther - Duenna

Nicholas Day - Don Bernardo

Christopher Ettridge - Duke

Christopher Godwin - Don Camillo

Michael Grady-Hall - Shepherd

Alex Hassell - Fernando

Felix Hayes - Shepherd

Matti Houghton - Maid

Simeon Moore - Pedro

Harry Myers - Citizen

Pippa Nixon - Dorotea

Chike Okonkwo - Gerardo

Oliver Rix - Cardenio

Timothy Speyer - Master Shepherd

CREATIVES

Director - Gregory Doran

Designer - Niki Turner

Lighting - Tim Mitchell

Music - Paul Englishby

Sound - Martin Slavin

Movement - Michael Ashcroft

Fights - Terry King

PRODUCTION PHOTOS



Liz Crowther, Timothy Speyer, Alex Hassell, Lucy Briggs-Owen and Harry Myers in *Cardenio*.

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THE STORY OF CARDENIO

Cardenio is set in 16th century Spain, in Andalucia, and the Sierra Morena Mountains.

PART ONE

Cardenio is in love with his childhood sweetheart, Luscinda. Her father Don Bernardo insists that Cardenio's father gives his approval of their relationship, before allowing it to continue any further. Because of his skill in horsemanship, Cardenio is called to Court to be the companion of Fernando, the Duke's wild younger son.

Fernando is passionately obsessed with a wealthy farmer's daughter called Dorotea. After seducing her with promises of marriage, he abandons her and sets his sights on Luscinda, although she is betrothed to his best friend.

Fernando sends Cardenio back to court so he can pursue Luscinda unhindered. Her father is happy to accept such a wealthy young aristocrat as a husband for his daughter, and a marriage is arranged. Luscinda sends in secret for Cardenio, who rushes back to try and

stop the wedding. Unable to prevent it, Cardenio is driven mad with grief and rage and disappears into the mountains.

PART TWO

Dorotea has dressed herself as a boy in order to pursue Fernando, and is living with the shepherds in the mountains when she encounters Cardenio in his madness.

Fernando, determined to pursue Luscinda, flees, discovers that having fled her home she has taken refuge in a convent, and intends to abduct her. Pedro, Fernando's older brother, agrees to help, and in order to resolve the matter, brings all the parties together in an inn, where Fernando is brought face to face with the wronged Dorotea. The couples are finally reunited.

HOW GREGORY DORAN RECONSTRUCTED THE STORY OF CARDENIO

The Bodleian Library in Oxford has records for the Shakespeare plays put on at Court in the winter of 1612. They include an intriguing reference to a play called *Cardenna*. A later edition in the Court records states that further performances of *Cardenno* took place in June 1613 for a special performance in Greenwich.

HOW THE PLAY WAS LOST

There were lots of reasons for plays to get lost. On 29 June 1613 the Globe Theatre burnt down and it is possible that *Cardenna* was lost in the fire. But, if all Shakespeare's plays that had not been published in Quarto had burnt, we would have lost half of Shakespeare's plays including *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Macbeth*.

I went to the Stationer's Hall in London, to look at the list where booksellers could register a particular piece of work for publication. In September 1653, Humphrey Moseley, a publisher, registered a number of plays including *The History of Cardenio* by Mr Fletcher and Shakespeare. That is the first evidence that it had indeed survived the Globe fire.

In 1666, during the Great Fire of London, all the booksellers hurriedly stored all their books, their scripts and their stock in a stone vault at St Faith's, a chapel under St Paul's Cathedral. During the fire, the six acres of lead on the roof of St Paul's melted and poured through the roof of St Faith's into the crypt. The entire thing burnt for two weeks and all that stock went up in flames. It seems that this was another possible fate for *Cardenio*.

THE DOUBLE FALSEHOOD

We have no further evidence of a manuscript of *Cardenio* till 1727. Lewis Theobald, a budding Shakespeare editor, had a play at Drury Lane Theatre called *The Double Falsehood*, based on a lost play by William Shakespeare, given to him in manuscript form by John Downes, a theatre prompter.

The manuscript had never been performed, but possibly had been prepared for an adaptation for Betterton, the great tragic actor of the Restoration.

We got *The Double Falsehood* and read it through. It was fascinating. Some of the language was very Fletcherian. It was certainly a thrilling play. It was a real page-turner. But to tell the story we reasoned there were at least 3 scenes missing: a seduction scene, an abduction scene, and other smaller scenes where there seemed to be beats missing from the story.

So what do we do? It is a great story. There are some great characters. But there are these missing scenes.

CERVANTES' DON QUIXOTE

Cardenio is based, as Lewis Theobald acknowledges, on an episode in *Don Quixote* by Cervantes, the Spanish writer. Looking at history, we discover that in 1612, the year that the play appeared at Court, *Don Quixote* was first translated into English by Thomas Shelton.

I read *The Double Falsehood* and the Thomas Shelton's translation of Cervantes' story side by side and it was practically identical. So the scenes that are missing in *The Double Falsehood* must appear in *Don Quixote*. There is a quite dramatised style in Cervantes' novel, quite a lot of dialogue and a basis of the missing scenes. So what do we do? Can we somehow get these scenes rewritten?

In conversation with Antonio Alamo, a Spanish writer who runs the Lope de Vega Theatre in Seville, we realised that perhaps between us we could reconstruct these scenes and reinvest the play with a sense of its Spanish past.

Cardenio, as a subject, had been the source of a number of other 17th century plays, a ballet and other dramatisations, all of which we studied in terms of writing these extra scenes. But we decided, ultimately, that what we had in *The Double Falsehood* was clearly as much of *Cardenio* as we were going to find by Shakespeare and Fletcher, and therefore we needed to supply these other scenes with help from Antonio Alamo.

It has been a really interesting process of putting together the best telling of the story of *Cardenio* that I can, with a stable of writers that would make the credits on any Hollywood blockbuster look paltry. I have in my team of writers: Cervantes, Shakespeare, Fletcher, Shelton, Lewis Theobald and a bit of help from here and there. And that is pretty good collaborative list - my job was to bring the whole piece together.

But we are not trying to create the play that might have seen in 1612 and 1613, because that is impossible. What I am trying to do is the best version of *Cardenio's* story that I can.

Part of the excitement of *Cardenio* is that you don't know what is going to happen next. You don't quite know what the tone of the piece is going to be. Sometimes it is very funny. It then leads you down a completely different path and turns into something extraordinarily tragic, and then resolves itself like a late Shakespeare play. I think many people will be intrigued by this piece, but overall it should be enjoyed for its own sake.

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