

# Shakespeare and Costume: The Arden Shakespeare

Shakespeare and Costume: The Arden Shakespeare is a comprehensive study of the relationship between Shakespeare's plays and the costumes worn by his characters. The book examines the historical context of Elizabethan and Jacobean costume, as well as the specific ways in which Shakespeare used costume to create character and convey meaning.



## Shakespeare and Costume (The Arden Shakespeare)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 2419 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 313 pages
Screen Reader	: Supported



The book is divided into three parts. The first part provides an overview of the history of Elizabethan and Jacobean costume. The second part examines the specific ways in which Shakespeare used costume to create character. The third part explores the ways in which costume has been used to interpret Shakespeare's plays in performance.

The book is lavishly illustrated with over 200 images of costumes from both historical and modern productions of Shakespeare's plays. These images

provide a valuable resource for students, scholars, and theater professionals alike.

## **Part 1: The History of Elizabethan and Jacobean Costume**

The first part of the book provides an overview of the history of Elizabethan and Jacobean costume. This section discusses the different types of clothing worn by men, women, and children during this period, as well as the social and cultural significance of clothing.

The Elizabethan period (1558-1603) was a time of great change in England. The country was becoming increasingly prosperous, and there was a growing interest in the arts and sciences. This period also saw the rise of the theater, and Shakespeare was one of the most popular playwrights of the time.

The Jacobean period (1603-1625) was a time of consolidation and expansion. The country continued to prosper, and the arts and sciences flourished. This period also saw the development of the English Renaissance, and Shakespeare's plays were some of the most important works of this period.

The clothing worn during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods was heavily influenced by the fashion of the time. The upper classes wore elaborate and expensive clothing made from fine fabrics. The lower classes wore simpler clothing made from less expensive fabrics.

Clothing also played an important social and cultural role during this period. The way a person dressed could indicate their social status, their occupation, and their religious beliefs.

## **Part 2: Shakespeare's Use of Costume**

The second part of the book examines the specific ways in which Shakespeare used costume to create character and convey meaning. This section discusses the different types of costumes that Shakespeare used, as well as the ways in which he used costume to create visual effects.

Shakespeare used costume to create a wide range of characters, from kings and queens to peasants and fools. He also used costume to create visual effects, such as the use of color to create mood and atmosphere.

For example, in the play Hamlet, the title character wears black throughout the play. This color choice helps to create a sense of mourning and foreboding.

In the play Macbeth, the witches wear dark and sinister clothing. This color choice helps to create a sense of evil and danger.

Shakespeare's use of costume was not limited to creating visual effects. He also used costume to convey meaning. For example, in the play King Lear, the title character wears a crown made of thorns. This costume choice helps to symbolize Lear's suffering and madness.

## **Part 3: Costume in Shakespeare Performance**

The third part of the book explores the ways in which costume has been used to interpret Shakespeare's plays in performance. This section discusses the different approaches to costume design that have been used over the years, as well as the ways in which costume can help to bring Shakespeare's plays to life.

There is no one right way to design costumes for Shakespeare's plays. The best approach will vary depending on the specific play, the director's interpretation, and the resources available.

However, there are some general principles that can be applied to costume design for Shakespeare's plays. These principles include:

- **Accuracy:** The costumes should be accurate to the historical period in which the play is set.
- **Clarity:** The costumes should help to clarify the characters' relationships and motivations.
- **Effectiveness:** The costumes should help to create the desired visual effect.

Costume can play a vital role in bringing Shakespeare's plays to life. By using costume effectively, directors and designers can help to create a memorable and engaging theatrical experience.

Shakespeare and Costume: The Arden Shakespeare is a comprehensive and authoritative study of the relationship between Shakespeare's plays and the costumes worn by his characters. The book is a valuable resource for students, scholars, and theater professionals alike.

The book is available for Free Download from the Arden Shakespeare website.

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