



Portrait of Elizabeth I, Public Domain

MARY STUART

STUDY GUIDE BY GRETA GEBHARD, DRAMATURG



Mary Queen of Scots, Nicholas Hilliard, 1578, CC

Schiller's Life



Friedrich Schiller

Friedrich Schiller was born in 1759 in southern Germany. He grew up in a time where individual cities had a prince or duke in charge, and each leader had complete control over the lives of their subjects. Schiller was ordered by the duke to study at the military academy and become a doctor. This lack of control over his own life led to Schiller flee his home and travel northwards where he became the celebrated poet and playwright known in today's world.

His second play, *Intrigue and Love* (1784), contained commentary on how the rulers of the time abused their power, leading to it being banned in Stuttgart. In order to let his ideas be heard, Schiller transferred his story telling to histories, where he could discuss political philosophies without the risk of offending the men in power. He often changed portions of the historical accounts to better serve his philosophical purposes.



Schiller's Home

Mary Stuart (1800) came in the middle of his writing period, just after he moved his family from Jena to Weimar so he could focus entirely on his writing. This play shows a transition of Schiller's writing style from historical to poetic dramas. He cared less about the historical accuracy of his scripts and more about the story he was trying to tell.

Weimar Classicism



Bust of Friedrich Schiller, Donatello - Own work, CC0

Schiller's initial works started in the Sturm und Drang movement of German Romanticism. He was a huge supporter of the French Revolution and the idea of people controlling their own lives until the beginning of the Reign of Terror. The lack of control and extensive death tolls during this time reformed Schiller's thinking in order to understand that revolution may not be the best route to gain freedom.

Schiller's works after the French revolution take a much more classic and idealized turn. He developed his idea of *die schöne Seele* or the beautiful soul. A person with a beautiful soul maintains their personal dignity no matter the circumstances. This dignity gives freedom where freedom is not readily available. In each of these later works, Schiller portrays a character, usually a woman, as this beautiful soul who exemplifies this quality.



Schiller's Home in Weimar, Germany, Personal Picture, Greta Gabhard, 2017

Schiller's Writing Desk, Personal Picture, Greta Gabhard, 2017

“For man is not destined to perform individual moral acts, but to be a moral being. Not virtues, but virtue is his rule, and virtue is nothing but ‘a propensity to duty.’”

—Schiller, *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*

The History of Two Queens

Elizabeth I

- ✦ **1533** Birth
- ✦ **1536** Mother, Anne Boleyn Executed
- ✦ **1547** Father, Henry VIII, Dies
- ✦ **1554** Imprisonment in the Tower of London
- ✦ **1559** Coronation as Queen of England
- ✦ **1563** Established the official Anglican Church with herself as the Head of the Church
- ✦ **1570** Excommunicated from Catholic Church by the Pope
- ✦ **1586** Babington Plot Assassination Attempt
- ✦ **1588** Defeat of the Spanish Armada
- ✦ **1603** Death

The Volta was one of Queen Elizabeth's favorite dances. It was the only Elizabethan dance to bring partners into close proximity with each other, and it required the man to lift the woman up by her hoop skirt.



Robert Dudley and Elizabeth I Dancing the Volta, Marcus Gheeraerts, 1581, Public Domain

Mary, Queen of Scots

- ✦ **1542** Birth and Coronation as Queen of Scotland
- ✦ **1548** Sent to France
- ✦ **1558** Married Prince Francis
- ✦ **1559** Crowned Queen of France
- ✦ **1561** Returned to Scotland after husband's death
- ✦ **1565** Married Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley
- ✦ **1566** Darnley Murdered
- ✦ **1567** Married James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell and Darnley's supposed murderer and forced to abdicate the throne
- ✦ **1568** Escape to England and Imprisoned
- ✦ **1587** Execution by Elizabeth I



The Marian Hanging, Mary Queen of Scots, Elizabeth Countess of Shrewsbury, 1570-1585

During her imprisonment, Mary spent much of her free time embroidering. This is the Marian Hanging, one of her most famous for its feature of the royal arms of Scotland and Mary's monogram.

England and Scotland

England

From Henry VIII on, England struggled with politics and religion. His Catholic daughter, Mary I, attempted to end all Protestantism in the kingdom. Elizabeth I became known for being tolerant of both religions. Culture flourished under Elizabeth. The period is well known for the development of the playwright, William Shakespeare, the painter, Hans Holbein, the philosopher, Sir Francis Bacon, and the pirateer, Sir Walter Raleigh, among others. With the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, Elizabeth transformed England into the dominant world power.



This is the Hampton Court Palace where Elizabeth spent much of her leisure time. You can see how modern and bright is it compared to the Scottish palace.

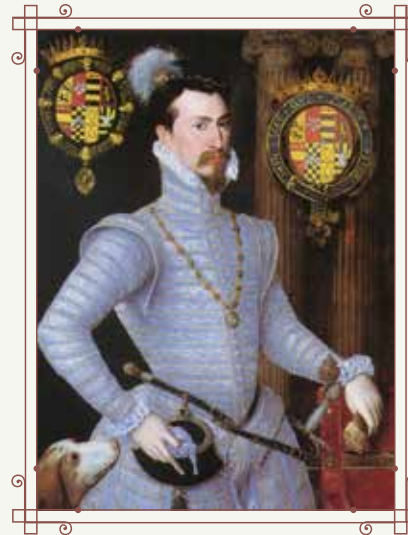
Scotland

Scotland's society was seen as being more backwards than England. Mary's father, James V, tried to bring Scotland into the Renaissance by cultivating things like music, art, and architecture. He built the Holyrood Palace where his daughter would later be born. Compare this palace to the Edinburgh Castle. See the different time periods that are represented. One shows the future of Scotland, the other, the past. Scotland remained in turbulent politics until James VI became James I of England and combined the two nations.



This house of power seem much older and outdated compared to the landscape and architecture of England.

Real Life Characters



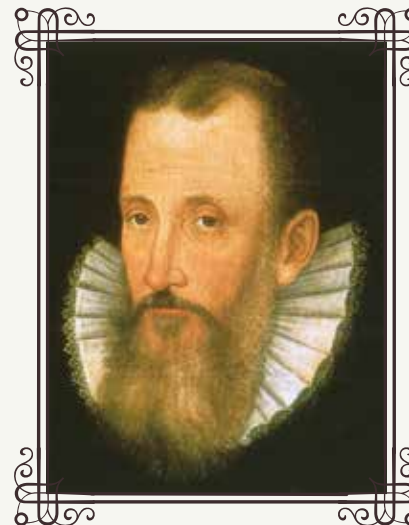
Portrait of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Steven van der Meulen, Public Domain

Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester was Elizabeth's favorite for most of his life. Although they met as children, their real relationship began when both were imprisoned in the Tower of London during Bloody Mary's reign. They were never able to marry due to her rank and the fact that he was married.



Portrait of William Cecil, Earl of Burleigh, Marcus Sheerwats the Younger, Public Domain

William Cecil, Lord Burleigh first met the Princess Elizabeth when he was appointed as her Surveyor of Estates. Once she became queen, he became one of her most trusted counselors and eventually became the Lord Treasurer.



Portrait of George Talbot, the Earl of Shrewsbury, By Unknown, 2008, Public Domain

George Talbot, the Earl of Shrewsbury, was the prison warden for Mary, Queen of Scots for over 15 years. He was eventually released from this responsibility when gossip spread that he had a relationship with Mary.

BYU THEATRE 2018–19 SEASON

Two Dead Queens Live On

Schiller's version of *Mary Stuart* has several historical inaccuracies in the story. Although Elizabeth did imprison Mary for 19 years, they never actually met in person. This meeting allowed Schiller the opportunity to show the importance of maintaining personal dignity in the face of great challenges. This fabrication does not cheapen or invalidate the story that Schiller is trying to tell. In fact, the process of remembering history is just as important as the historical event itself. The story



of Mary and Elizabeth has changed over time, and it will continue to change as the story is retold.

Different pieces of this story are told according to the people telling it and the people hearing it. It is important to recognize how each individual can bring something new and important to story that is centuries old. These stories establish connections: between actors and audience, between the old and the new, between the familiar and the foreign. These kinds of connections and these kinds of stories can help us to engender a society filled with more empathy and understanding.

—Greta Gebhard, *dramaturg*



By Unknown - Scanned from the book The National Portrait Gallery History of the Kings and Queens of England by David Williamson Public Domain

The World's Strongest Librarian YOUNG COMPANY

By Jeff Gottesfeld and Elizabeth Wong From the book by Josh Hanagarne

Recently winning the American Alliance for Theatre & Education's Distinguished Play Award, this play is based on the real life of Salt Lake City's most famous librarian, Josh Hanagarne. Perfect for all ages, this story shows how the superpowers of learning and human kindness are as important as physical strength.

The Mousetrap MYSTERY

By Agatha Christie

Trapped in a local bed and breakfast by a snowstorm, a group of strangers is horrified to learn there is a murderer in their midst. Join us for the longest-running play of the modern era, a tale of suspense and terror that ends as shockingly today as it did in 1952.

Radium Girls DRAMA

By D. W. Gregory

Grace and her coworkers—factory workers who paint the faces of radium-fluorescent watches—fight for their day in court when they all begin to fall ill with a mysterious disease. With nine actors playing 38 roles, *Radium Girls* is a fast-paced snapshot of the true story of what happens when the American dream bumps up against the realities of health, wealth, and big business.

Wonderland MUSICAL

Music by Frank Wildhorn

From the team that brought you the BYU smash hit *The Count of Monte Cristo*, this new musical takes Lewis Carroll's classic story and sets it in present day New York. Jump down the rabbit hole to discover this inspirational story of love, redemption, and the power of imagination.

Comedy of Errors YOUNG COMPANY

By William Shakespeare

Bring your whole family to this zany adaptation of one of Shakespeare's most famous comedies! Featuring two sets of twins, all separated at birth, two rival cities, one happy ending, and plenty of confusion along the way, this production will explore what it really means to be family while keeping you laughing from beginning to end.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead COMEDY

By Tom Stoppard

This Tony Award-winning modern masterpiece follows the classic story of *Hamlet* as seen through the eyes of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two minor characters in Shakespeare's play. Sometimes funny, sometimes tragic, and always philosophical, Stoppard's most popular work forces us to confront the power of life and the meaning of death.

Contemporary Voices: Play Readings from Award-winning Scripts

Join us for an evening of script-in-hand readings of award-winning plays that intrigue, provoke, and enlighten. These performances are part of BYU Theatre's mission to develop the best art and artists. The readings will be from largely unedited scripts that allow the audience to engage with the work of master playwrights whose important voices might otherwise not be heard in our university community. Every performance will be followed by a lively discussion with audience and performers.