

THE AMERICAN DRAMA GROUP presents TNT THEATRE

in

# ***THE MERCHANT OF VENICE***

by William Shakespeare



Directed by Paul Stebbings

Musical Director John Kenny

Producer: Grantly Marshall

FREILICHTTHEATERAUFFUHRUNG IN ENGLISCHER SPRACHE

## **Palais Liechtenstein, Wien**

Fürstengasse 1

**June 8, 2015, 19.00 Uhr**

Karten € 25,- (Studenten/Schüler € 12,-)

Weitere Information: [info@adg-europe.com](mailto:info@adg-europe.com) [www.adg-europe.com](http://www.adg-europe.com) 0049/1728629753

Eine Veranstaltung von ADG Europe und The Idea Society, Vienna

Diese Aufführung findet bei jedem Wetter statt

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IDEA Society

ADG Europe present TNT theatre Britain in:

## **THE MERCHANT OF VENICE**

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Paul Stebbings

This extraordinary play is disturbingly modern in the questions it raises about race, money and gender. Venice is presented as the commercial hub of the western world, a city teeming with opportunity where law is second to commerce and there at the core of this mercantile world stands Shylock, the first Jew in western literature to be presented as a tragic human figure. Against him are ranged a cast of dubious characters, obsessed with wealth above love or any of the finer feelings. The other magical creation of Shakespeare's masterpiece is the vibrant and independent woman, Portia, who struggles for happiness and love despite her father's bizarre lottery for her hand in marriage. She turns the patriarchy on its head by assuming a male disguise. Through her wit and intelligence she brings down not only Shylock with his vengeful claim to a pound of flesh from his debtor but the whole edifice of male power in Venice.

But her triumph leaves a bitter taste in the mouth, is this play truly a comedy with a happy ending or an extraordinary warning of what will happen when the world is ruled by opportunism, racism and cold cash?

Award winning director Paul Stebbings brings his wide experience of Shakespeare's works to bear on this troublesome masterpiece. The production avoids the easy way out, instead showing Venice's anti-Semitism dramatically and forcefully. The setting is historical which allows us to believe in the cruelty of the law but also avoiding simple parallels with the 1930's. It is too easy to blame our racism on fascism, Shakespeare suggests a darker truth: that our pursuit of money will drive us to any and every cruelty. But this is not a dry lecture, but a vibrant piece of drama where Shakespeare approaches his major themes through the prism of comedy as well as tragedy and delights with his dramatic skills, offering, for example, perhaps the greatest courtroom scene ever written.

Music too will play its part, while Venice itself takes centre stage as the first modern city, built on shifting water, hard cash and moral blindness.

Press for TNT Shakespeare productions:

I never knew Shakespeare could be so entertaining. CNN TV

World class theatre Sueddeutsche Zeitung

TNT demonstrate that Shakespeare can be made relevant to any audience anywhere in the world. Japan Times.

True music theatre. Classical Music Magazine London