



# SHAKESPEARE'S THEATRE

## RENAISSANCE DRAMA

- The most relevant **cultural phenomenon** of England Renaissance.
- It celebrated England and its monarchs.
- It was a **popular entertainment**, seen by any social class.





## PLAYHOUSES

### 1. North of the City:

- The Theatre.
- The Curtain.

### 2. South of the Thames:

- The Rose.
- The Swan.
- **The Globe.**

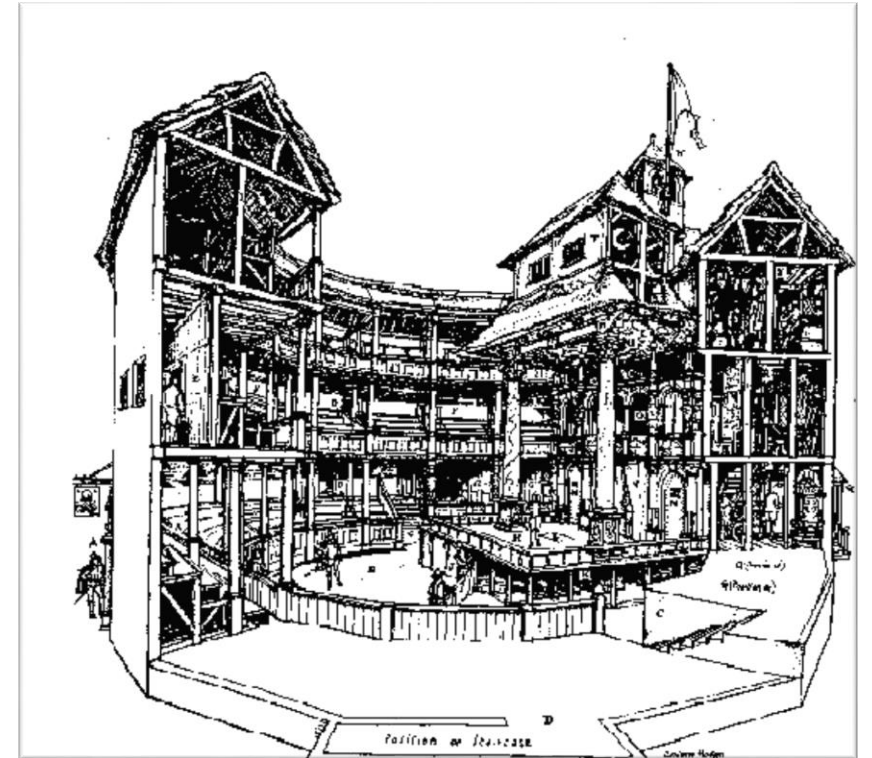


## THE STRUCTURE OF A PLAYHOUSE

There were two main areas:

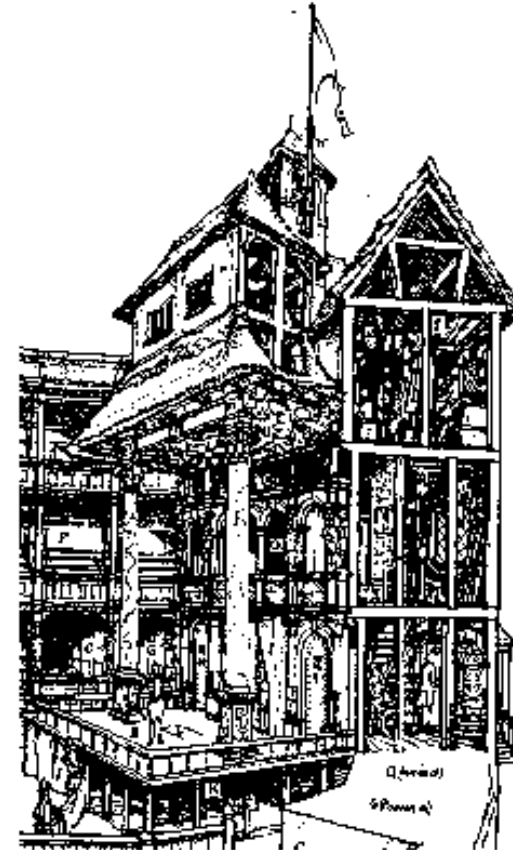
1. The stage.
2. The place for the audience:
  - a. The **arena** surrounding the stage.  
Groundlings could stand there.
  - The **galleries** around the playhouse.  
Spectators could seat there.

Different prices varied according to the position occupied by the audience



## THE STAGE

- It was an apron stage, jutting out into the arena.
- It had a high symbolical meaning.
- The upper stage was used for scenes played on different levels.
- The inner stage was used for indoor scenes.



## THE ACTORS

- Vagabonds.
- They were organised in companies under the protection of a patron.
- The most famous company was **The Lord Chamberlain's Men.**
- They were in close contact with the audience.
- All female roles were played by young boys.
- Performances took place in the afternoon.

## PLAYS

- They were written by **playwrights**.
- They were **performed** on the stage.
- They were usually divided into **acts** and **scenes**.
- Normally there were **five acts** (introduction, development, turning point, complications, denouement).
- They were expected to respect the **Aristotelian unities** of time, place and action.



## TRAGEDY

- The most popular form of drama.
- Prologues and epilogues.
- It is usually about the conflict between the individual and the society.
- Revenge tragedies.
- Poetic language.



## COMEDIES

- Their characters are usually **ordinary people** set in **everyday situations** and using everyday **prosaic language**.
- They are about the successful integration of the individual in the society.
- The plots revolve around **love** and **mistaken identities**.
- **Subplots** are used to keep the various plots in suspense.
- They can be **romantic**, **satiric** and **of manners**.

## CHARACTERS

- The main character is the **hero** or the **heroine**.
- They are described through dialogues or monologues, stage directions, types of speech and language.
- Minor characters are sometime called **villains**.
- They can be **round** or **flat**.

