



Othello: The Moor of Venice (Macmillan Collector's Library Book 43)

By William Shakespeare

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Othello is an intense drama of love, deception, jealousy and destruction. Desdemona's love for her husband Othello, the Moor, transcends racial prejudice; but his trusted ensign, the envious Iago, conspires to devastate their lives. In its vivid rendering of the savagery lurking within civilization, *Othello* is arguably the most topical and accessible tragedy from Shakespeare's major phase as a dramatist. The play raises uncomfortable and pertinent questions about both racial identity and sexuality, as Othello and Desdemona's relationship becomes the voyeuristic site of Iago's attempt to destroy them.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Shakespeare's legendary tragedy is revisited in this spirited and entertaining production that ran in London from November 2007 to February 2008. The flawless, talented cast features Ewan McGregor as the conniving Iago, Chiwetel Ejiofor as Othello (whose performance won him the Olivier Award as best actor) and Kelly Reilly as Desdemona. There is also excellent support from Tom Hiddleston (as Cassio) and Michelle Fairley (as Emilia). This audio production is a rousing, theatrical performance expertly guided by director Michael Grandage. Complete with a musical score as well as full sound effects and background noises, listening is so enjoyable that the play speeds by at breakneck pace. An enclosed booklet contains color photographs of the production and a well-written essay by drama professor Russell Jackson. There's also an entertaining bonus DVD disc featuring interviews with the cast and crew. Brilliantly produced in all departments, listening is the next best thing to seeing it live. (*July*)

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From School Library Journal

Gr 10 Up-Naxos AudioBooks' top-drawer Classic Drama Series blissfully continues with this exquisite rendition of Othello starring Hugh Quarshie, Anton Lesser, Emma Fielding, and a full cast of professional English actors with extensive credits in the Royal National Theatre, BBC Radio Drama Company, and the Royal Shakespeare Company. Shakespeare's most domestic tragedy is an exceedingly complex journey through jealousy, self-doubt, inadequacies, and societal acceptance. Passed over for military promotion, Iago, perhaps Shakespeare's most nefarious character, manipulates Othello's downfall, culminating in the murder of his beloved wife, Desdemona, and Othello's subsequent suicide. Under David Timson's stewardship as director, the story is beautifully and simply told, embellished only with intermittent brassy flourishes of classical music and a dramatic echo effect and throbbing heart beat to underscore Othello's chaotic descent and rage. While the entire cast is excellent, the trio of Quarshie (Othello), Lesser (Iago), and Fielding (Desdemona) are outstanding. An outline of each individual cassette, complete synopsis, full notes regarding the text, and cast biographies are included in a compact 24-page supplemental booklet. For all collections.-Barry X. Miller, Austin Public Library, TX

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From [Booklist](#)

This impressive audio is a version of a London theatrical performance featuring McGregor as Iago, Chiwetel Ejiofor in the role of Othello, and Kelly Reilly playing Desdemona. In a studio recording session, the actors "reproduced as closely as possible the stage production." Authentic sound effects and background music further enhance the presentation. Experiencing a play aurally is different than viewing a stage performance, and sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between the voices in the predominantly male cast. Nevertheless, this is an excellent vehicle for introducing the classic tragedy to students and Shakespeare fans. An accompanying DVD includes interviews with cast members. Their discussions of the characters, analyses of motivations, and decisions on delivering lines are thoughtfully presented. These fascinating commentaries add immeasurably to listeners' comprehension of the play and the acting process. --Barbara Baskin

Users Review

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