



Shakespeare: An Introduction: Ideas in Profile

By Paul Edmondson

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Shakespeare is the world's greatest writer. In this lively and authoritative introduction, Paul Edmondson presents Shakespeare afresh as a dramatist and poet, and encourages us to take ownership of the works for ourselves as words to be spoken as well as discussed. We get a wide sense of what his life was like, his rich language, and astonishing cultural legacy. We catch glimpses of Shakespeare himself, how he wrote and see what his works mean to readers and theatre practitioners. Above all, we see how Shakespeare tackled the biggest themes of humanity: power, history, war and love.

Shakespeare scholar Paul Edmondson guides us through the most important questions around Shakespeare and in the process reminds us just why he is so celebrated in the first place.

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Editorial Review

Review

I cannot imagine a better introduction to the whole Matter of Shakespeare - learned, elegant, highly original and endlessly entertaining too. -- Jan Morris Paul Edmondson's new book has all the virtues you look for in a first-rate introduction to Shakespeare's life and work. Informed, witty, up-to-date, and beautifully written, it's packed with the sort of information about Shakespeare's plays that readers care about most. -- James Shapiro, author of 1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare Lively and highly accessible, Paul Edmondson's little book is a terrific introduction to Shakespeare, notable for its attunement to the theatre and full of valuable advice in such areas as reading Shakespeare aloud - something we should all do much more often. .? -- Jonathan Bate, author of The Genius of Shakespeare Edmondson covers the biographical ground succinctly, as well as discussing the plays and poetry in a style that's discreetly authoritative ... his writing is witty and humane. Spectator A great introduction Catholic Herald In this engaging little book Paul Edmondson tells us just about everything we ever wanted to know about Shakespeare and his writing, and then some more. His survey of the dramatist's life is succinct and instructive. He deftly marshals the main known faces while keeping an open mind about some of the more authentic-sounding 'anecdotes'. He has an unerring eye for tantalizing might-have-beens of the Shakespeare life story ... Illuminating ... It should be recommended reading for all who want to know more about Shakespeare as well as for those who think they already know him well. -- Rene Weis Around the Globe Paul Edmondson's small but perfectly formed Shakespeare is a charming and splendidly illuminating beginner's guide, not without some recondite gems ... Edmondson's playful fluency certainly convinced me that the pursuit of Shakespeare "is a justifiable hedonism". -- Peter J Smith Times Higher Education Excellent Church Times

About the Author

Paul Edmondson is Head of Research and Knowledge and Director of the Stratford-upon-Avon Poetry Festival for The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. He has published numerous articles and books on Shakespeare and speaks at academic conferences and other Shakespeare related gatherings around the world. He is a trustee of The Rose Theatre and Chair of The Hosking Houses Trust for women writers.

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