

NORTHLIGHT THEATRE



STUDY GUIDE

The beloved characters from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* live on in an all-new holiday story!

Georgiana Darcy is an accomplished pianist but wary of romance. Kitty Bennet is a bright-eyed optimist and a perfect best friend. These two younger sisters are ready for their own adventures in life and love, starting with the arrival of an admirer and secret correspondent. Meddlesome families and outmoded expectations won't stop these determined friends from forging their own way in a holiday tale filled with music, ambition, sisterhood, and love!

[Click here for a full show synopsis!](#)



Click to find an article and learn more.



Click to watch a video and expand learning.



Find discussion questions to ask students.

Created by Northlight Staff and Teaching Artists

The Playwrights and The Author



Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon

Lauren is a playwright, screenwriter and short story author from Atlanta, GA. She has been one of the most produced playwrights in America (American Theatre Magazine) since 2015, topping the list thrice including 22/23. Read more about Lauren [on her website!](#) Watch an interview with [Lauren Gunderson here.](#)

Margot is an arts administrator, dramaturg, and playwright. She was the Director of New Play Development at Marin Theatre Company for seven years and has developed plays with TheatreWorks.



Jane Austen. Six novels. Millions of fans.

Georgiana and Kitty is the third of three plays written by Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon that are inspired by the events of Jane Austen's popular novel ***Pride and Prejudice***.

Jane Austen was one of England's foremost novelists, yet she was never publicly acknowledged as a writer during her lifetime. Her six completed novels are still popular today and have spawned dozens of stage, film, and book adaptations. Most recently one of her unfinished novels "Sanditon" has been turned into popular TV show entering its 3rd Season. Read more Jane on the [Jane Austen Society website.](#)

The Cast



**Janyce
Caraballo**

Georgiana
Darcy

**Samantha
Newcomb**

Kitty
Bennet

**Erik
Hellman**

Henry
Gray

**Andrea San
Miguel**

Mary
Bennet

**Preeti
Thaker**

Lydia
Wickham



**Emma Jo
Boyden**

Jane
Bingley

**Amanda
Drinkall**

Elizabeth
Darcy

**Nate
Santana**

Thomas
O'Brien

**Yousof
Sultani**

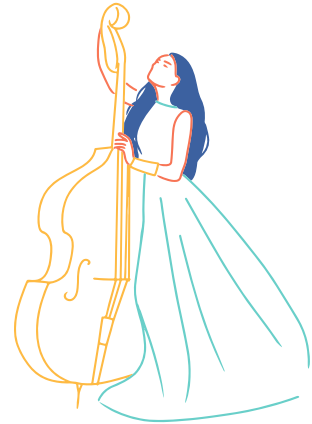
Fitzwilliam
Darcy

Historical Background

Royal Society of Female Musicians

In the early 19th century new social, educational, and professional opportunities made it possible for women musicians to achieve levels of financial success and professional status which they could not attain in other occupations. However, they continued to face obstacles and exclusion from all-male organizations like the Royal Society of Musicians.

By the late 1830s the first generation of female students at the Royal Academy of Music were entering the London musical scene just as stories of destitution among once-famous women singers and debates over women's role and rights were becoming more publicized. These circumstances led the singer, Elizabeth Masson, who had tried unsuccessfully to gain admittance to the all-male RSM, to found a comparable society for women. Founded in 1839, the Royal Society of Female Musicians included many of the leading female musicians of the time.



For the next 25 years, the RSFM was extraordinarily successful in amassing funds from individual contributions and proceeds from annual benefit concerts. By 1866, the two societies merged. The Royal Society of Musicians still exists today and provides financial assistance to professional musicians unable to work.

Pseudonyms in Literature and Beyond



WARNING: SPOILERS BELOW!

A pseudonym is a fake name that a person or group assumes for a particular purpose. Most people who use a pseudonym do so to remain anonymous. Female writers and artists have used pseudonyms in the past over concerns that their work is considered more valid or "professional" if they are a man. Think of a modern day Mulan.

This is exactly what Georgiana is doing in the show when she creates music under the name George Williams. Some examples of female writers who have gone under pseudonyms to avoid bias or personal danger are:

- [Harriet Jacobs](#) (Author) aka Linda Brent
- [The Bronte Sisters](#) (Authors) aka Currer (Charlotte), Ellis (Emily) and Acton (Anne)
- [Louisa May Alcott](#) (Author) aka A.M. Branard



- **Can you think of examples of artists today who use pseudonyms to avoid bias or personal danger?**
- **Are there ever instances when an artist should NOT use a fake name?**

Activities

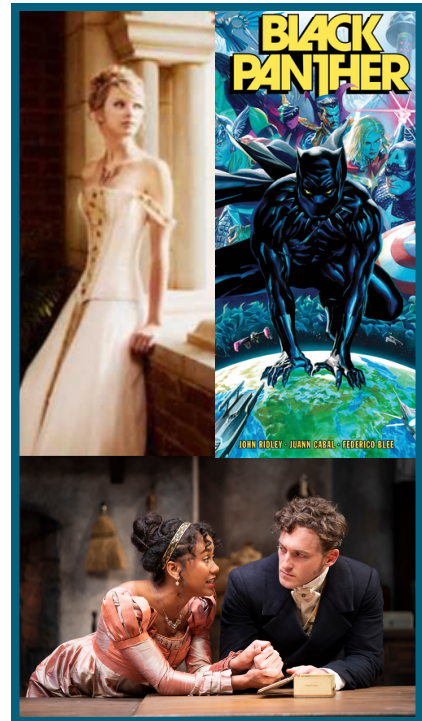
Adaptation Pitch

Adaptations, spoofs, and spin-offs are all around us. From Taylor Swift's "Love Story" with its roots in William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" to the mountain of Marvel and comic book film and TV adaptations, we love seeing stories we know brought to life on the screen and on the stage.

Imagine you are a screenwriter. Pick a piece of literature or art you've studied this past year. Write a pitch paragraph for a modern day version of this piece of art (Ex: TV show, rap, song, etc.)

In your pitch you should describe:

- What is the piece of art you are adapting?
- What are the major similarities and differences between your piece and the original source?
- Why do you think modern audiences would enjoy your adaptation?



From top right: Taylor's Swift Shakespearean inspired album art, the cover of a Black Panther comic, a photo from Northlight's "The Wickhams"

Guess Who?

We've already begun to explore what it means for a writer or artist to have a pseudonym. Now it's your turn to try out a pseudonym.

Write a short piece of creative writing and create a pseudonym for yourself to be the author of the piece. (feel free to use the activity above for this!)

Your classroom teacher will collect all the pieces of writing, mix them up, and everyone will receive a piece of writing that is not their own. Try to guess which classmate of yours wrote the piece now in front of you.



Teacher Note: An alternative activity is to pick a few authors that your students have read before. Select sample of their work that the students have NOT yet read and have students try to guess the author.

- What informed their guesses?
- What assumptions might have been made based on the perceived voice of the author?