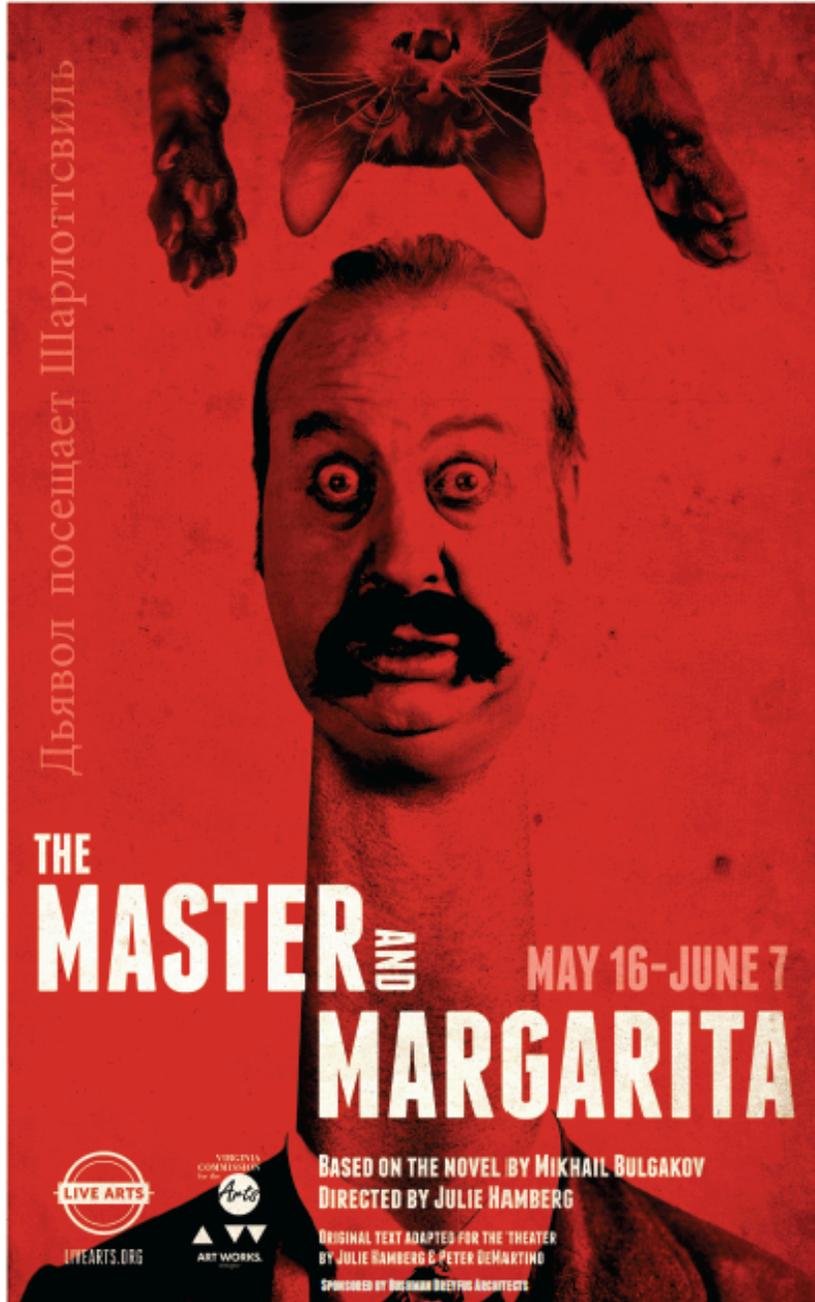


MASTER AND MARGARITA



STUDY GUIDE

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY MIKHAIL BULGAKOV

MAY 17TH-JUNE 7TH 2014

IN THE GIBSON THEATER

A WELCOME FROM YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD DRAMATURGS

(ANNIE AND NICO)

**THANK YOU FOR PICKING UP THIS STUDY GUIDE ON MASTER AND MARGARITA.
WE HOPE THE CONTENT ENLIGHTENS YOU TO THE HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF
THE PLAY AS WELL AS THE INNER WORKINGS OF MIKHAIL BULGAKOV'S MIND
AND THE PURPOSE OF HIS ABSURDIST STYLE TO CONVEY THE TRAILS AND
TRIBULATIONS FACED BY THE POPULOUS OF STALINIST RUSSIA.**

PLAY SUMMARY

MIKHAIL BULGAKOV BEGAN WRITING *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA* IN 1928 AMIDST THE TURMOIL OF STALINIST RULE IN THE SOVIET UNION. THE NOVEL PROVIDES A CRITICAL VIEW OF SOVIET LIFE THAT RAISES QUESTIONS AROUND ISSUES SUCH AS TOTALITARIANISM, HUMAN NATURE, AND ATHEISM. THE VARIOUS ADAPTATIONS OF THIS NOVEL CONTINUE TO RAISE THESE VERY SAME ISSUES, AS DOES THE ADAPTATION YOU WILL SEE PERFORMED TODAY.

THE PLAY TAKES PLACE IN TWO DIFFERENT SETTINGS. THE FIRST SETTING IS 1930s MOSCOW, WHERE THE ANTAGONIST, THE DEVIL HIMSELF, APPEARS WITHIN THE PATRIARCH PONDS DISGUISED AS A FOREIGNER AND PRACTITIONER OF THE BLACK ARTS BY THE NAME OF PROFESSOR WOLAND (PRONOUNCED VOLAND). THROUGHOUT THE PLAY WOLAND IS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS SET OF HENCHMEN: HIS VALET KOROVIEV, HIS SINISTER CAT BEHEMOTH, HIS MESSENGER AZAZELLO, AND HIS WITCH HELLA. WOLLAND AND HIS DEVIUS BUNCH RAISE HELL WITHIN THE WORLD OF THE LITERARY ELITE OF MOSCOW, DRAGGING BOTH THE MASTER AND HIS MISTRESS MARGARITA INTO THE ENSUING CHAOS.

THE MASTER, A RESENTFUL AUTHOR REJECTED BY HIS OWN LITERARY COMMUNITY, SUFFERS DUE TO THE CRITICAL FAILURE OF HIS HISTORICAL NOVEL ABOUT PONTIUS PILATE AND JESUS OF NAZARETH. MARGARITA, A MARRIED WOMAN IN A DISPASSIONATE MARRIAGE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THIS WOEFUL AUTHOR, ENDEAVORS TO NURTURE AND SUPPORT HER LOVER BUT ULTIMATELY FAILS AS MASTER REJECTS SOCIETY AND SEQUESTERS HIMSELF WITHIN AN INSANE ASYLUM. MARGARITA IN TURNS SUFFERS AS SHE SEPARATED FROM HER GREATEST LOVE.

THE SECOND SETTING IS JERUSALEM AT THE TIME WHEN PONTIUS PILATE CONFRONTS YESHUA (JESUS OF NAZARETH) OF HIS ACCUSED CRIMES. THE HAPPENINGS OF THIS SETTING ARE TOLD PRIMARILY THROUGH WOLAND'S RECOLLECTION OF THE TIMES AND THROUGH THE VERY PAGES OF MASTER'S NOVEL, WHICH TURNS OUT TO ACCURATELY DESCRIBE EVENTS OF THE PAST THAT NO MAN SHOULD HAVE MEMORY OF.

THE PLAY ITSELF CAN BE LOGICALLY DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS. THE FIRST PART INCLUDES THE VARIOUS INTRODUCTIONS OF WOLAND AND HIS MOTELY CREW, MASTER WITH HIS LOVER MARGARITA, AND PONTIUS PILATE'S TRIAL OF YESHUA. PART ONE ALSO INCLUDES WOLAND'S EFFORTS TO DRIVE RUSSIAN POET AND LITERARY CRITIC IVAN INSANE, THE DEATHS AND SUFFERINGS OF VARIOUS RUSSIAN CITIZENS PLAGUED BY WOLAND AND HIS KING, PONTIUS PILATE'S TRIAL OF YESHUA, AND WOLAND'S ESTABLISHMENT OF A BASE OF OPERATIONS WITHIN MOSCOW.

PART TWO INCLUDES WOLAND'S MAGIC SHOW SATIRIZING SOVIET SOCIETY, WOLAND'S INTERACTIONS WITH MARGARITA AND SUBSEQUENT INVITATION TO HER TO HOST THE DEVIL'S MIDNIGHT BALL, AND FINALLY MARGARITA'S REUNION WITH HER LOVE THE MASTER.

MORE ON MIKHAIL BULGAKOV



PICTURE FROM: [HTTP://WWW.CC.UTAH.EDU/~ERL4739/BULGAKOV.HTML](http://www.cc.utah.edu/~ERL4739/BULGAKOV.HTML)

MIKHAIL BULGAKOV WAS BORN IN 1891. HE STARTED ON THE PATH OF MEDICINE, BUT AFTER TWO YEARS IN A MEDICAL COLLEGE, HE DECIDED HIS TRUE LOVE AND VOCATION WAS TO BE A WRITER. HE THEN IMMERSSED HIMSELF IN THE WORLD OF LITERATURE AND THEATER AND NEVER TURNED BACK, EVEN WHEN HIS WORKS WERE CENSORED, BANNED AND HE WAS STARVING FROM LACK OF INCOME.

MIKHAIL WAS PART OF A RUSSIAN WRITER GROUP THAT DID NOT LEAVE RUSSIA AFTER THE REVOLUTION. THIS GROUP BECAME KNOWN AS THE “FELLOW TRAVELERS”. THOSE WHO STAYED LATER MAY HAVE REGRETTED THEIR CHOICE DUE TO THE TIGHT RESTRAINTS ON WRITING THAT CAME ABOUT IN THE 1920’S, BULGAKOV DID. BULGAKOV REQUESTED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY MULTIPLE TIMES, BUT WAS NEVER PERMITTED TO LEAVE.

AS POINTED OUT BY MIRRA GINSBERG IN HER TRANSLATION OF THE NOVEL BULGAKOV WROTE STALIN A BRAVE LETTER REQUESTING TO LEAVE. HE CITED THAT IN TEN YEARS OF WRITING HE HAD 301 REVIEWS IN THE PRESS, OF WHICH ONLY 3 WERE FAVORABLE. “THE ENTIRE SOVIET PRESS AND THE AGENCIES IN CONTROL OF REPERTORY HAD THROUGHOUT THE YEARS “UNANIMOUSLY AND WITH EXTRAORDINARY FEROCITY ARGUED THAT BULGAKOV’S WORK CANNOT EXIST IN THE USSR. AND I DECLARE THAT THE SOVIET PRESS IS ENTIRELY RIGHT.” (P VIII).

MUCH OF HIS LIFE WAS FACED WITH STRUGGLE. HE DEALT WITH AN OPPRESSIVE ENVIRONMENT AS AN ARTIST, WITH HIS MAJOR WORKS BEING PUBLISHED AND WELL RECEIVED AFTER HIS DEATH. HE ALSO STRUGGLED WITH POVERTY AND ILLNESS. MIKHAIL WAS ADAMANT ABOUT THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS ART TO HIS OWN SURVIVAL. HE DIED AT THE AGE OF 49 AND HIS WIFE WAS THE PRIMARY REASON HIS WORKS SURVIVED AND WERE LATER PUBLISHED AND CHERISHED WORLDWIDE.

HISTORY OF THE PLAY

***THE MASTER AND MARGARITA*, ORIGINALLY A NOVEL WRITTEN BY MIKHAIL BULGAKOV NOT OFFICIALLY PUBLISHED UNTIL 1966 IN *MOSKVA MAGAZINE*, ALBEIT A CENSORED VERSION, IS A HUMOROUS BUT CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF SOVIET SOCIETY BETWEEN THE YEARS OF 1920 AND 1940. BULGAVOK FIRST BEGAN WRITING THE NOVEL IN 1928, AT THE TIME WHEN HE WAS A LITERARY SUCCESS FOR HIS SATIRICAL PLAYS FOCUSING PRIMARILY ON THE WHITE ARMY, THE OPPOSITION TO THE COMMUNIST EFFORT DURING THE REVOLUTION. HE LATER BURNED AND DESTROYED HIS ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT IN 1930 OUT OF FEAR OF PERSECUTION FOR HIS EARLIER BOLD AND CONTROVERSIAL WRITINGS, BUT LATER RETURNED TO *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA* ONCE AGAIN IN 1931 AT THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF HIS WIFE. THE NOVEL WAS FINALLY COMPLETED IN 1941, REMAINING UNPUBLISHED FOR 25 YEARS.**

TO THIS DATE *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA* HAS BEEN ADAPTED TO STAGE BY MORE THAN 500 THEATER COMPANIES ACROSS THE GLOBE. THE PLAY FIRST REACHED A THEATRICAL AUDIENCE IN 1971 IN POLAND, FIVE YEARS AFTER THE NOVEL WAS OFFICIALLY PUBLISHED. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE FIRST FOUR ADAPTATIONS, PERFORMED EXCLUSIVELY IN POLAND, AVOIDED USING THE SAME TITLE AS THE NOVEL. THE ORIGINAL POLISH ADAPTATIONS USED NAMES SUCH AS *BLACK MAGIC AND ITS UNMASKING*, *BLACK MAGIC*, AND *PATIENTS*. IN 1977, THE PLAY REACHED A RUSSIAN AUDIENCE AT MOSCOW'S *TAGANKA THEATRE* WITH AN ADAPTATION BY DIRECTOR YURI LYUBIMOVE. THIS VERY ADAPTATION CONTINUES TO BE SOLD TODAY. THE PLAY OFFICIALLY CROSSED THE BORDERS OF POLAND AND THE SOVIET UNION IN 1977, WHERE AT THE *EDINBURGH FRINGE FESTIVAL*, THE *UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD DRAMA GROUP* PERFORMED *SATAN'S BALL*, AN EARLY ADAPTATION WRITTEN BY RICHARD CRANE AND DIRECTED BY FAYNIA WILLIAMS. IT WASN'T UNTIL 1978 WITH THE *NEW YORK PUBLIC THEATER* THAT THE PLAY WAS ABLE TO REACH AMERICAN SOIL. THE *NEW YORK PUBLIC THEATER* HAD 24 PERFORMANCES FROM NOVEMBER 15 TO DECEMBER 3, 1978, DIRECTED BY ROMANIAN ANDREEI ȘERBAN.

IN THE 1980S, THE NOVEL TURNED PLAY CONTINUED TO REACH A LARGER AUDIENCE, WITH A PRIMARY FOCUS ON WHAT WAS THEN THE EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES. WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION, THE CITY OF MOSCOW CONTINUED TO SHOW THE MOST REPRESENTATIONS OF THE PLAY. IN THE 1990S, *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA* EXPERIENCED A SIGNIFICANTLY LARGER REPRESENTATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THANKS TO DIRECTORS FROM THE EASTERN BLOC SHOWING PERFORMANCES ACROSS THEIR OWN COUNTRIES' BORDERS. THE NOVEL TURNED PLAY GOT AN INJECTION OF NEW LIFE IN 2001, WHEN RUSSIAN DIRECTOR ROMAN VIKTYUK STAGED HIS OWN ADAPTATION THAT SPARKED NEW REPRESENTATIONS BOTH WITHIN RUSSIAN AND ABROAD. IN 2010 ALONE, *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA* WAS STAGED MORE THAN 1,500 TIMES, WITH A STRONG PRESENCE AT INTERNATIONAL FESTIVALS. IN 2011, THE YEAR MARKING THE 120TH ANNIVERSARY OF MIKHAIL BULGAKOV, THE PLAY SPREAD ACROSS THE WORLD WITH RENEWED GUSTO ALONGSIDE MANY OF BULGAKOV'S OTHER WORKS IN TRIBUTE TO HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE LITERARY WORLD.

WHY SO ABSURD?

MASTER AND MARGARITA IS WRITTEN IN A VERY ABSURD STYLE PLAYING ON THE TRAGEDY AND COMEDY FOUND IN AN ILLOGICAL TIME AND PLACE OF STALINIST RUSSIA.

THIS STYLE EMPHASIZES HOW NONSENSICAL REALITY AND USES SATIRE TO MAKE LARGER POLITICAL AND THEMATIC POINTS.

THREE STORIES, ONE PLAY

MASTER AND MARGARITA WEAVES THREE STORIES TOGETHER BEAUTIFULLY. AS YOU WATCH THE PLAY TAKE NOTICE OF THE OVERLAPS IN SYMBOLS, CHARACTERS, THEMES AND SETTINGS IN THE FOLLOWING THREE (SOME CONSIDER IT FOUR) STORYLINES.

- 1. THE DEVIL'S VISIT TO CONTEMPORARY MOSCOW**
- 2. MASTER AND MARGARITA'S STORY OF LOVE AND THE MANUSCRIPT**
- 3. THE JERUSALEM STORY WITH YESHUA AND PILATE**

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A FUN LOOK AT WHERE THE NAMES IN MASTER AND MARGARITA ORIGINATE FROM
(LISTED ALPHABETICALLY)

AZAZELLO

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHAL BOOK OF ENOCH, AZAZEL IS THE FALLEN ANGEL WHO TAUGHT PEOPLE TO MAKE WEAPONS AND JEWELRY AND MAKE UP. FITTING THEN THAT AZAZELLO BRINGS THE MAGICAL CREAM TO MARGARITA THAT MAKES HER YOUNG AGAIN AND TURN INTO A WITCH.

BANGA

BANGA IS THE NAME OF PILATE'S DOG, AND ALSO THE NAME OF MIKHAIL BULGAKOV'S SECOND WIFE.

BEHEMOTH

LARGE CAT AND A MEMBER OF WOLAND'S ENTOURAGE AS THE GRAND CUP BEARER. THE WORD BEHEMOTH (BEGEMOT) MEANS HIPPOPOTAMUS IN RUSSIAN. ALSO FROM THE BIBLE, BOOK OF JOB AND BOOK OF ENOCH. "ACCORDING TO BULGAKOV'S SECOND WIFE, LIUBOV' EVGEN'EVNA BELOZERSKAIA, THE REAL PROTOTYPE OF BEGEMOT WAS THEIR PET FLYUSHKA, A HUGE GRAY CAT.

BERLIOZ

BERLIOZ IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF MASSOLIT. HE SHARES HIS NAME WITH THE COMPOSER HECTOR BERLIOZ WHO COMPOSED SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE WHERE THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL CHARACTER ALSO LOSES HIS HEAD.

FREIDA

FRIEDA COMBINES THE BIOGRAPHIES OF SEVERAL WOMEN. TWO WERE CASE STUDIES. BULGAKOV'S NOTES HAVE AN EXCERPT FROM FOREL'S BOOK: "FRIEDA KELLER--

KILLED HER BOY. KONIECKO--SUFFOCATED HER BABY WITH A HANDKERCHIEF" FRIEDA KELLER WORKED AS A SEAMSTRESS AND WAITRESS IN ST. GALLEN. SHE WAS RAPED BY THE OWNER OF THE CAFE AND GAVE HER BABY UP TO AN ORPHANAGE. BUT WHEN THE BOY WAS RETURNED TO HER AT AGE 5 SHE STRANGLER HIM WITH A STRING AND BURIED HIM IN A SHALLOW GRAVE. SHE WAS SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON. BECAUSE OF HER MODESTY AND GOOD BEHAVIOR, PUBLIC OPINION TURNED IN HER FAVOR, AND FOREL HIMSELF WROTE THAT HE HOPED "POOR FRIEDA KELLER" WOULD SOON BE RELEASED. HE ALSO WROTE OF KONIECKO, WHO GAVE BIRTH TO A CHILD AND SUFFOCATED IT BY STUFFING A HANDKERCHIEF IN ITS MOUTH IN 1908. LIKE MARGARITA, FOREL SUGGESTS THAT THE REAL MURDERER IS NOT THE MOTHER, BUT THE FATHER WHO ABANDONED THE PREGNANT WOMAN.

GRIGORY DANILOVICH RIMSKY

THE FINANCIAL DIRECTOR OF THE VARIETE THEATER. RIMSKY'S LAST NAME MEANS "ROMAN," WHICH CONNECTS HIM WITH THE PILATE STORY, AND IT ALSO REMINDS THE READER OF YET ANOTHER COMPOSER, NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV.

HELLA

THE VAMPIRE-GIRL WITH RED HAIR IN WOLAND'S BAND. THE NAME COMES FROM THE BROKGAUZ-EFRON ARTICLE ON MAGIC (CHARODEISTVO), WHICH MENTIONS THAT IT WAS A NAME GIVEN ON THE ISLAND OF LESBOS TO GIRL-VAMPIRES WHO DIED BEFORE THEIR TIME.

IVAN NIKOLAEVICH PONYRYOV (BEZDONNY)

YOUNG POET INTRODUCED AT THE NOVEL'S BEGINNING WHO LATER HAS A BREAKDOWN AND IS TAKEN TO A CLINIC WHERE HE IS DIAGNOSED AS SCHIZOPHRENIC. HIS PEN NAME, BEZDONNY, MEANS "HOMELESS". THE FIRST NAME MAY LINK HIM TO THE RUSSIAN FOLKLORIC CHARACTER "IVAN THE FOOL".

KOROVYEV FAGOT

ONE OF WOLAND'S BAND. KOROVIEV'S PROFESSION AS (EX-) CHOIRMASTER CONNECTS HIM WITH E. T. A. HOFFMAN'S CHARACTER, KAPPELLMEISTER KREISLER. FAGOT-- KOROVYEV'S SECOND NAME MEANS "BASSOON," WHICH CONNECTS HIM TO THE MUSICAL THEMES OF THE NOVEL.

MARGARITA

THE MAIN SOURCE FOR THIS CHARACTER WAS BULGAKOV'S THIRD WIFE. LIKE THE MASTER AND MARGARITA, BOTH WERE MARRIED WHEN THEY MET, AND THEY FELL IN LOVE IMMEDIATELY.

MASTER

THE PRIMARY PROTOTYPE FOR THE WRITER-HERO OF BULGAKOV'S NOVEL IS THE AUTHOR HIMSELF. IN CHAPTER 13 WE ARE INTRODUCED TO THE MASTER AS A MAN OF ABOUT 38, WHICH WAS BULGAKOV'S AGE IN 1929, WHEN HE BEGAN THE NOVEL. THE FIRST DESCRIPTION OF THE MASTER ALSO REFLECTS A LITERARY PROTOTYPE GOGOL. LIKE THE MASTER AND BULGAKOV, GOGOL BURNED THE MANUSCRIPT OF HIS MASTERPIECE.

PILATE

PILATE WAS THE ROMAN PROCURATOR OF THE PROVINCE OF JUDEA FROM 26-36 AD. THE PROCURATOR WAS THE HIGHEST ROMAN AUTHORITY IN THE PROVINCE, SUBJECT TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE PROVINCE OF SYRIA. PILATE'S NAME MAY BE DERIVED FROM "PILUS" MEANING "SPEAR".

STRAVINSKY

DOCTOR STRAVINSKY RUNS THE CLINIC MANY CHARACTERS END UP IN. HIS NAME IS ALSO SHARED BY A FAMOUS RUSSIAN COMPOSER, IGOR STRAVINSKY.

RUNNING THEMES

GOOD AND EVIL

IN THE NOVEL, BULGAKOV REPEATEDLY BRINGS UP THE THEME OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOOD AND EVIL IN EACH PERSON. THERE IS A LITTLE WOLAND IN EVERYONE AND A LITTLE YESHUA AS WELL, OR IN OTHER WORDS, EVERYONE HAS A “SHADOW SELF”. HERE IS A TELLING QUOTE FROM MASTER AT MARGARITA.

“BUT WOULD YOU KINDLY PONDER THIS QUESTION: WHAT WOULD YOUR GOOD DO IF EVIL DIDN'T EXIST, AND WHAT WOULD THE EARTH LOOK LIKE IF ALL THE SHADOWS DISAPPEARED? AFTER ALL, SHADOWS ARE CAST BY THINGS AND PEOPLE. HERE IS THE SHADOW OF MY SWORD. BUT SHADOWS ALSO COME FROM TREES AND LIVING BEINGS. DO YOU WANT TO STRIP THE EARTH OF ALL TREES AND LIVING THINGS JUST BECAUSE OF YOUR FANTASY OF ENJOYING NAKED LIGHT? YOU'RE STUPID.”

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS QUOTE?

SANITY AND INSANITY:

DURING THE COURSE OF THE PLAY MANY CHARACTERS ARE ACCUSED OF, OR ARE DIAGNOSED WITH SOME TYPE OF MENTAL IMPEDIMENT OR INSANITY EVEN THOUGH THE AUDIENCE KNOWS EACH OF THEM TO BE SANE. THIS INCLUDES WOLAND, IVAN, THE MASTER, STYOPA, YESHUA, AND MARGARITA. WHY WOULD BULGAKOV CHOOSE TO DO THIS? HOW MUCH IS MADNESS PROJECTED ON OTHERS VERSUS STEMMING FROM THE CHARACTER'S OWN MENTAL STATE?

HOW MANY REFERENCES CAN YOU FIND TO MADNESS IN THE PLAY? WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THE CLINIC?

FORGIVENESS AND REDEMPTION:

DURING THE PLAY, WOLAND AND PILATE BOTH HOLD ROLES WHERE THEY ARE ABLE TO CARRY OUT JUDGMENTS AND ACT AS EXECUTIONERS. YESHUA AND MARGARITA ARE THE CHARACTERS THAT HELP SHOW ACTS OF FORGIVENESS AND REDEMPTION. WHY DO YOU THINK MARGARITA HELPS FRIEDA AT THE DEVIL'S BALL?

HOMELESSNESS:

IVAN, ONE OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS, IS ALSO KNOWN AS HOMELESS. IN ADDITION MANY CHARACTERS ARE WANDERING WITHOUT A SINGLE PLACE TO CALL THEIR HOME. THIS TREND MAY BE IN RESPONSE TO THE RUSSIAN HOUSING SHORTAGE FACED AFTER THE REVOLUTION AFTER ALL PRIVATE OWNERSHIP WAS ABOLISHED AND ALL HOUSING BECAME HIGHLY REGULATED AFTER A MASS MOVE OF MANY PREVIOUS LANDOWNERS TO THE CITIES.

FATE:

ONE OF THE MOST POIGNANT MOMENTS WHERE FATE IS INTRODUCED IS NEAR THE BEGINNING OF THE PLAY AND NOVEL WHEN WOLAND MAKES HIS ENTRANCE AS A PROFESSOR TO BERLIOZ AND IVAN. BERLIOZ IS A STRONG ATHEIST AND BELIEVER THAT MAN GOVERNS HIMSELF, WHEREAS WOLAND, BEING THE DEVIL HIMSELF, KNOWS THAT YESHUA EXISTED AND THAT HE EXISTS AND THAT MAN CANNOT IN FACT, GOVERN HIMSELF. WOLAND, WITHOUT GIVING AWAY HIS TRUE IDENTITY OFFERS THE SEVENTH PROOF IN THE NOVEL.

**“– BUT HERE IS A QUESTION THAT IS TROUBLING ME: IF THERE IS NO GOD, THEN, ONE MAY ASK, WHO GOVERNS HUMAN LIFE AND, IN GENERAL, THE WHOLE ORDER OF THINGS ON EARTH?
– MAN GOVERNS IT HIMSELF, – HOMELESS ANGRILY HASTENED TO REPLY TO THIS ADMITTEDLY NONE-TOO-CLEAR QUESTION.
– PARDON ME, – THE STRANGER RESPONDED GENTLY, – BUT IN ORDER TO GOVERN, ONE NEEDS, AFTER ALL, TO HAVE A PRECISE PLAN FOR A CERTAIN, AT LEAST SOMEWHAT DECENT, LENGTH OF TIME. ALLOW ME TO ASK YOU, THEN, HOW CAN MAN GOVERN, IF HE IS NOT ONLY DEPRIVED OF THE OPPORTUNITY OF MAKING A PLAN FOR AT LEAST SOME RIDICULOUSLY SHORT PERIOD, WELL, SAY, A THOUSAND YEARS, BUT CANNOT EVEN VOUCH FOR HIS OWN TOMORROW? AND IN FACT, – HERE THE STRANGER TURNED TO BERLIOZ, – IMAGINE THAT YOU, FOR INSTANCE, START GOVERNING, GIVING ORDERS TO OTHERS AND YOURSELF, GENERALLY, SO TO SPEAK, ACQUIRE A TASTE FOR IT, AND SUDDENLY YOU GET ...HEM ... HEM ... LUNG CANCER ... – HERE THE FOREIGNER SMILED SWEETLY, AND IF THE THOUGHT OF LUNG CANCER GAVE HIM PLEASURE – YES, CANCER – NARROWING HIS EYES LIKE A CAT, HE REPEATED THE SONOROUS WORD –AND SO YOUR GOVERNING IS OVER! YOU ARE NO LONGER INTERESTED IN ANYONE’S FATE BUT YOUR OWN. YOUR FAMILY STARTS LYING TO YOU. FEELING THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG, YOU RUSH TO LEARNED DOCTORS, THEN TO QUACKS, AND SOMETIMES TO FORTUNE-TELLERS AS WELL. LIKE THE FIRST, SO THE SECOND AND THIRD ARE COMPLETELY SENSELESS, AS YOU UNDERSTAND. AND IT ALL ENDS TRAGICALLY: A MAN WHO STILL RECENTLY THOUGHT HE WAS GOVERNING SOMETHING, SUDDENLY WINDS UP LYING MOTIONLESS IN A WOODEN BOX, AND THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM, SEEING THAT THE MAN LYING THERE IS NO LONGER GOOD FOR ANYTHING, BURN HIM IN AN OVEN. AND SOMETIMES IT’S WORSE STILL: THE MAN HAS JUST DECIDED TO GO TO KISLOVODSK – HERE THE FOREIGNER SQUINTED AT BERLIOZ – A TRIFLING MATTER, IT SEEMS, BUT EVEN THIS HE CANNOT ACCOMPLISH, BECAUSE SUDDENLY, NO ONE KNOWS WHY, HE SLIPS AND FALLS UNDER A TRAM-CAR! ARE YOU GOING TO SAY IT WAS HE WHO GOVERNED HIMSELF THAT WAY? WOULD IT NOT BE MORE CORRECT TO THINK THAT HE WAS GOVERNED BY SOMEONE ELSE ENTIRELY?”**

HOW DOES WOLAND'S SEVENTH PROOF PLAY OUT IN THE PLAY? WHAT EFFECT DOES HEARING THIS ARGUMENT HAVE ON IVAN?

CENSORSHIP:

BULGAKOV, LIKE THE MASTER, LIVE IN THE POST REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA WHERE CENSORSHIP AND REGULATION ARE FELT IN NEARLY ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE. THIS OPPRESSIVE ENVIRONMENT IS FOUGHT BY BULGAKOV AS HE WRITES THE NOVEL, AND BY THE MASTER AS WELL. CENSORSHIP OF FAITH AND SPIRITUALITY ALSO COMES UP THROUGHOUT THE NOVEL AND PLAY.

A QUOTE FROM BULGAKOV ON CENSORSHIP:

“IT IS MY DUTY AS A WRITER TO FIGHT AGAINST CENSORSHIP, WHATEVER ITS FORMS AND UNDER WHATEVER GOVERNMENT IT EXISTS, AN TO CALL FOR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS...ANY WRITER WHO TRIES TO PROVE THAT HE HAS NO NEED FOR THIS FREEDOM IS LIKE A FISH THAT PUBLICLY DECLARES IT NEEDS NO WATER.” (MORRIS, P VIII).

PILATISM:

PILATISM IS ONE WAY OF ANALYZING THE NOVEL AND PLAY LOOKING AT ALL THE CONNECTIONS TO THE CHARACTER PONTIUS PILATE. THERE ARE 5-6 TIMES MORE REFERENCES MADE TO PILATE THROUGHOUT THE NOVEL THAN TO YESHUA. HIS OVERLAPPING REFERENCES WITH WOLAND AND MARGARITA ARE PLENTIFUL. THERE ARE ALSO MANY IMPORTANT LINKAGES BETWEEN THE MASTER AND MARGARITA WITH YESHUA. MARGARITA SEEMS TO UNIFY GOOD AND EVIL OPPOSITES AND THIS MAKES HER AN INCREDIBLY COMPELLING CHARACTER. WITHIN THE PLAY, PILATISM IS TALKED ABOUT IN REGARDS TO THE MASTER'S MANUSCRIPT.

ONE INTERESTING CONNECTION BETWEEN YESHUA AND THE MASTER AS MENTIONED BY DONALD M. FIENE IN HIS ARTICLE ABOUT PILATISM IS THAT, “...JUST AS YESHUA IS JUDGES AND EXECUTED BY A ROMAN POWER (IN THE PERSON OF PILATE) , SO THE MASTER IS JUDGED (AND IMPRISONED) BY SOVIET POWER.” (P 148).

DREAMS:

DREAMS, HALLUCINATIONS AND ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS PERMEATE THROUGHOUT THE NOVEL AND PLAY. HERE ARE A COUPLE OF QUOTES IN REGARDS TO BULGAKOV'S USE OF DREAMS FROM THE ARTICLE RIITTA H. PITTMAN , *DREAMERS AND DREAMING IN M.A. BULGAKOV'S THE MASTER AND MARGARITA*.

"...IN BULGAKOV'S CREATIVITY DREAMING IS PRIMARILY CONNECTED WITH THE IMAGINARY ASPECTS OF THE CHARACTERS' LIVES AND IT FREQUENTLY SERVES TO ILLUMINATE THE TWILIGHT ZONE BEYOND THEIR CONSCIOUS EXPERIENCE." (PG 178).

"IN THE MASTER AND MARGARITA DREAMS PERFORM MANY CONFLICTING FUNCTIONS: THEY SERVE BOTH TO INFORM AND CONFUSE, TO BEWILDER AN BEWITCH, AND TO FRIGHTEN AND INSPIRE THE CHARACTERS. THEY PROVIDE ACCESS INTO "OTHER WORLDS". THEY HELP TO OUTLINE THE DREAMERS' PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS, TO DEFINE THEIR SPIRITUAL QUALITIES, AND EVEN TO MEASURE THE DEGREE OF THEIR MORAL MATURITY." (PG 179).

ONE INTERESTING NOTE IS THAT EVERY ENTRANCE OF THE MASTER IN THE NOVEL IS MARKED BY DREAMING, MEMORY, SLEEP OR THE NIGHT TIME. DO YOU THINK BULGAKOV'S USE OF DREAMLIKE STATES IS EFFECTIVE? WHY OR WHY NOT?

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

1. WHAT SYMBOLS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH SATAN (WOLAND) WHEN HE APPEARS?
2. HOW DO THE SUN OR MOON PLAY A PART IN THE PLAY?
3. DOES SATAN/WOLAND IDENTIFY VICTIMS AT RANDOM?
4. WHAT ROLE DOES MUSIC PLAY IN *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA*?
5. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF "PILATISM" IN *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA*?
6. ARE THERE ANY REOCCURRING DISCIPLES WITHIN THE PLAY?
7. WHAT IMPORTANCE DOES THE SPARROW PLAY IN *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA*?
8. IN WHAT WAYS DOES CENSORSHIP APPEAR WITHIN THE PLAY?
9. HOW DO CHARACTERS BRING ABOUT THEIR OWN FATE IN *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA*?
10. HOW DOES REDEMPTION PLAY A PART IN THE PLAY?
11. WHAT VALUE DOES PONTIUS PILATE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH YESHUA HAVE IN THE PLAY?
12. WHAT SIMILARITIES DOES THE PLAY HAVE WITH THE STORY OF FAUST?
13. HOW DO THE RATIONAL ATHEISTS RESPOND TO THE DISPLAYS OF DARK MAGIC?
14. WHAT PART DOES RESURRECTION PLAY WITHIN *THE MASTER AND MARGARITA*?
15. WHAT SPECIFIC EVENTS WITHIN THE PLAY CAN BE SEEN AS SATIRICAL OF SOVIET SOCIETY?

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