

Hamlet

by William Shakespeare



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Study Guide by Elise Osorio Haines, *dramaturg*

Cover Art by Hannah Liberatore, *costume designer*

Meet the Skaters of Hamlet



Horatio

Hey skaters! Horatio here—I've been sent by my best friend Hamlet to tell his story, so I made you this map of our skatepark to help you get to know his family and friends . . . and enemies, I guess. Follow me! (Don't forget to check out my YouTube Channel in the lobby or scan the QR Code to the right to see behind-the-scenes footage of the show!)



First let me introduce you to my best friend Hamlet. He is the Prince of Denmark and is kind of a jokester! He's pretty good on a skateboard too.



Hamlet



Gertrude

His dad, the King, died just two months ago, and it's been pretty hard on him—especially since his mom, Queen Gertrude, decided to already marry that guy Claudius.



Claudius

Oh, and did I mention that Claudius, the new King, is Hamlet's uncle? Yep . . . Gertrude married her dead husband's brother. Big oof.





Laertes

This is her brother Laertes. He recently has gotten into cosplay and sword duels—so that's been kind of fun!



Ophelia

This is Ophelia! She is Hamlet's girlfriend and a great skater! She also has a thing for flowers lately.



Polonia

Meet Polonia. She is Ophelia's & Laertes's mom. She also happens to be Claudius's trusted advisor. Interesting . . .



Bringing the Skatepark to the Stage



Mary-Michal Carrigan

Meet Mary-Michal Carrigan, the set designer of *Hamlet!* Carrigan is from Lake Forest, California, and started her BYU career as an engineer major. She later switched over to theater arts studies with an emphasis in scenic design. She recently worked as the set designer for *With Two Wings* and as assistant set designer on *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.



1. Can you tell us more about your process of designing and building the skateboard ramp?

It really started when the director said that she didn't want a set! So I thought, maybe I can design something small that can serve multiple purposes. I found a YouTuber named John Hill, a professional skateboarder in New York, who tested out some plastic ramps. After looking at many more pictures, I went straight to building a model to play around with—exploring how the ramp could become a bench. Then I drew some rough plans before making bigger models that addressed more details. See pictures of my process of building a transformable bench/ramp on the next page. I took four ideas to show the technical director, Travis Coyne. I knew he would be able to help me with the details. After showing the director my ideas in person, we chose the one we liked most.

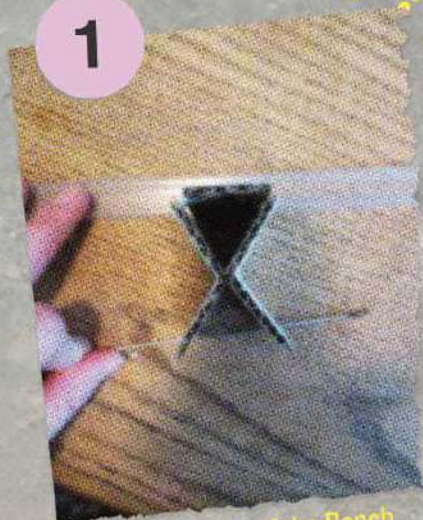
2. What are some things from the show to consider that affect the design of the ramp?

The ramp had to be easy and quick to use, leaving more time for the actors to play with it in a one-hour show. The ramp needed to be compact enough to travel in a van to different schools. I wanted the ramp to be able to transform into a bench. I knew that it needed to be small and not be a jump, because the actors would not be professional skateboarders.

3. Any tips for future designers out there?

Designing is not very different from being an engineer. Engineers take a problem and use math to solve it, ultimately improving the product. Designing for theatre uses similar steps. You have the “problem” of coming up with a backdrop for a show within a budget, and you use trial and error until you come up with a “product” that you are satisfied with. Both designers and engineers need to talk to others in the business, capitalizing on their knowledge and expertise. It's important to keep all options open, and not be afraid to throw out the first idea when the second or third turns out to be better.

1



First Mini Model of the Bench

THEATER
DEPARTMENT

2



First Mini Model of the Ramp

3



Ramp Process Model

4



Folding Bench Model

5



Larger Model of the Bench

6

Final Model of the Ramp



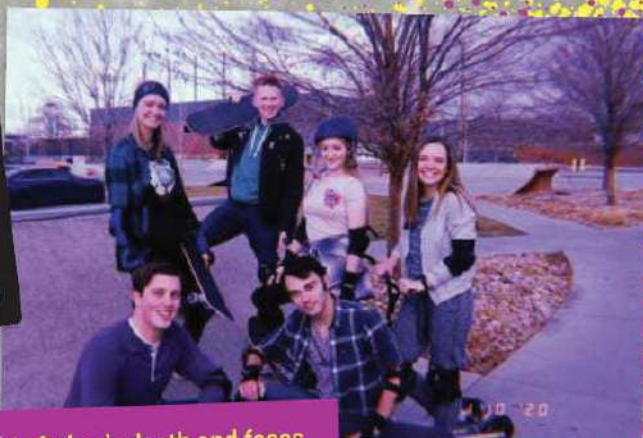
Learning How to Skateboard

Just like any other sport, skateboarding takes practice and experience! To help our cast members learn how to combine these important Shakespearean themes with the skateboarding world, we brought in two local skateboarders, Ashlyn and Brandon. They taught the cast about skateboard culture and helped them learn the basics on the board. A few weeks later the cast spent time at the Provo Recreation Skate Park practicing, hanging out, and filming themselves for Horatio's YouTube channel. Check out Horatio's YouTube Channel in the lobby or scan the QR Code below to watch behind-the-scenes footage on your phone! All of this training helped us create a skateboarding world where the youth of the play grapple with their new realities.

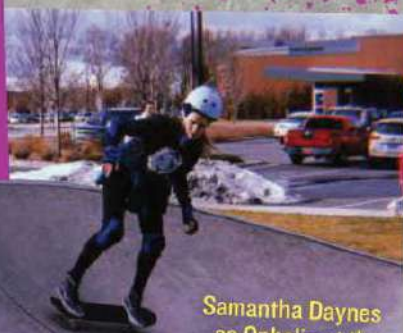


Ashlyn & Brandon with the cast of *Hamlet*

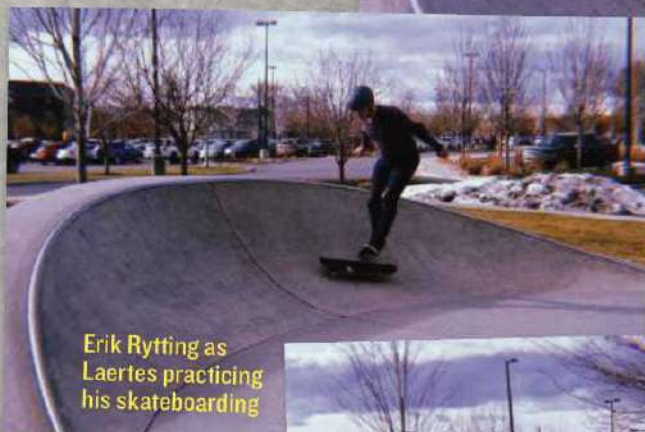




Hamlet is grappling with his father's death and faces questions about identity, death, life, choices, and self-expression. Skateboarding may have had a reputation of rebellion in the past, but currently it is thought of as a sport where you can learn about your own identity and express yourself athletically and even artistically. Hamlet has many choices to make about his life path, and we find that a skatepark is an ideal setting to reflect on the different paths and directions one can take throughout life.



Samantha Daynes
as Ophelia at the
skatepark



Erik Rytting as
Laertes practicing
his skateboarding



Soupreme



Sara Prior as
Ophelia practicing
on her skateboard

Design Your Own Deck

Design your own deck on this page to fit your personal style!

The back of the skateboard, underneath the deck, is the area of the skateboard that is used for artistic expression, often a personalized signature.

Keep an eye out for the designs on Hamlet's, Ophelia's, and Laertes's decks, and also check out the lobby where stickers can be found to decorate your board.

