



Shakespeare in Kabul

Stephen Landrigan , Qais Akbar Omar

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Shakespeare in Kabul

Stephen Landrigan , Qais Akbar Omar

Shakespeare in Kabul Stephen Landrigan , Qais Akbar Omar

In 2005, a group of actors in Kabul performed Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost to the cheers of Afghan audiences and the raves of foreign journalists. For the first time in years, men and women had appeared onstage together. The future held no limits, the actors believed. In this fast-moving, fondly told and frequently very funny account, Qais Akbar Omar and Stephen Landrigan capture the triumphs and foibles of the actors as they extend their Afghan passion for poetry to Shakespeare's. Both authors were part of the production. Qais, a journalist, served as Assistant Director and interpreter for Paris actress, Corinne Jaber, who had come to Afghanistan on holiday and returned to direct the play. Stephen, himself a playwright, assembled a team of Afghan translators to fashion a script in Dari as poetic as Shakespeare's. This chronicle of optimism plays out against the heartbreak of knowing that things in Afghanistan have not turned out the way the actors expected.

Shakespeare in Kabul Details

Date : Published April 1st 2012 by Haus Publishing (first published 2012)

ISBN : 9781907973208

Author : Stephen Landrigan , Qais Akbar Omar

Format : Paperback 220 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir

 [Download Shakespeare in Kabul ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Shakespeare in Kabul ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Shakespeare in Kabul Stephen Landrigan , Qais Akbar Omar

From Reader Review Shakespeare in Kabul for online ebook

Tiffany says

I love books that make you feel like your heart is completely broken and yet you can't stop smiling. This is one of those.

...

Dear Zinnia,

You asked for book recommendations. One of the best books I read in 2013 was Shakespeare in Kabul by Stephen Londrigan and Akbar Omar Qais. It's divided into 4 parts, the first is by Londrigan and most of the rest is by Qais, who is a deft, evocative writer while Londrigan is merely serviceable. The book is a non-fiction account of a crazy scheme to translate Shakespeare into Dari (& Pashtun) and tour it throughout Afghanistan after the receded in 2003. At that time women and men hadn't appeared on stage together in 30 years so no one knew if it would be okay, no one knew what would happen, no one knew if it was going to cause big problems. The director was French; she spoke nothing but French and English--the English backers kept getting their finances fouled, the ministry kept throwing shoes into the works, hotels they stayed in had no running water, travel plans were aggravated by intricate traffic detours, social pressures placed on some of the female actors caused them extreme difficulties in attending rehearsals, etc., etc. A god-awfully complicated situation it was. I'm sure the production itself was completely banal but the account is thrilling; it is told with compassion, kindness, and with decency.

One of the most compelling things is that Qais, who was telling the story from inside (he was the director's translator), witnessed all of the auditions. As many of the non-professional aspiring actors did not know what constituted "auditioning"--and virtually none of them knew about *improvisation*--when they were asked to improvise a scene inevitably they dredged up a personal narrative of war, abuse, or some other unspeakable brutality, which they related with keen tragicomedy. Reading it I cried as often as I laughed. It was very moving; it was told well and poetically by a man who loves his country and his people and language. One of the final scenes covers a 24-hour intergendered poetry competition that makes you realize cultures that are not always literate are sometimes the *most* literate. And now that I think about it it brings to mind "*Wadjda*", sure to win next year's Oscar for best Foreign Language film. "*Wadjda*" too concerns love of language and committing vast poetic forms to memory.

One of the surprising things I learned in the book is that Americans are not universally reviled by the Afghans and that everything that is wrong with in Afghanistan right now is *not* the result of American interference. The Afghans have a lengthy literary history, and much heart and soul, they see things very much big picture and most of the time Americans aren't even part of that picture. Altogether a perfect sample of negative capability.

Love, Tiffany

Kurai says

Este es un libro absolutamente necesario: la lucha de un grupo de personas por reconstruir una sociedad partiendo de la cultura, recordándonos cómo ésta tiene el poder de sanar y de unirnos.

Stephen Landrigan y Qais Akbar Omar, ambos implicados de manera directa en la acción, elaboran una detallada crónica que nos acerca a cómo surgió la idea de interpretar "Trabajos de amor perdidos" de William Shakespeare en Kabul, mostrándonos también los desafíos de los castings (el capítulo del casting de las chicas es impresionante) los ensayos, los problemas a los que se enfrentó la producción, el choque cultural entre el mundo occidental y el oriental, las representaciones y sus consecuencias (porque las hubo, oh, las hubo, muchas positivas y otras no tanto).

He disfrutado mucho conociendo otro aspecto de Afganistán y de su gente: su amor por la poesía, sus ganas de aprender, la arquitectura de sus edificios, su historia, su manera de relacionarse... todo tan diferente a lo que, tristemente, estamos acostumbrados a ver en las noticias cada día. Sin duda alguna, las personas que hicieron posible "Shakespeare en Kabul" son héroes y su historia merece la pena ser leída y recordada.

Rebekah says

Stephen Landrigan and Qais Akbar Omar's beautiful account of creating Love's Labours Lost for an Afghan audience in Kabul is one of tribulation, factions, poetry, tardiness and humour. One of the actresses working on the project (star of Osama) didn't even know the concept of theatre before starting on it, let alone Shakespeare. It is testament to the power of making 'Shakespeare' your own - not a mythical, universal Shakespeare but a particular one, here inflected with Bollywood satire and Afghan humour - taking hold of storytelling in particular global contexts and crafting a way to understand affection through his poetry.

Most of all this account is a delight to read, bringing real grace and wit to a trying process of rehearsals, and finally performance.

Mateen Manek says

This book is an incredible chronicle of a journey that a group of artists made to challenge society. It's also a book that highlights the beauty and importance of poetry. What really makes this book shine is the struggles that they went through, and the reward they receive at the end for their hard work.

At some points, the book is written with a lot of information that is not necessary. However, this book really opens you up to the culture in Afghanistan after the war. It is absolutely a beautiful and inspiring book, and is great for those who are pursuing directing, playwriting or producing.

Jod says

This is a lovely, vibrant look at a group of actors working to perform a local language version of Love's Labour lost in Afghanistan. A great read.

Francie says

Funny, heartwarming, and hopeful!

Brenda says

Wonderfully engaging story intricately weaving culture, conflict and cooperation when a Parisian director takes on the challenge of directing Shakespeare in a language other than her own. Working with an interpreter, Qais Akbar Omar, Corrine Jaber successfully directs "Love's Labours Lost." A love for theater transcends cultural and language barriers. Qais wrote "A Fort of Nine Towers: An Afghan Family" --an EXCELLENT book.

Yashi says

Anything written on Afghanistan sells tragedy. But such is the fate of this culturally rich land torn in the aftermath of decades of war. A true story on the bold initiative to revamp theatre in a conservative yet poetic country with soulful Shakespearean dramatics leaves you with an overwhelming happy yet sad feeling towards the end. Comedy, tragedy, struggle, passion - their journey to the performance in itself is a Shakespeare melodrama. Easy to read in a lively conversational format with a blend of shayari and history, this book is a must for anyone who enjoys reading about the Indian subcontinent. The missing narration from Corinne who played such a pivotal role in the entire scheme of things is an obvious gaping hole in the novel.

Anil Swarup says

It is quite an incredible story of making Shakespeare "happen" in Afghanistan and making it happen big. It also demonstrates that Shakespeare can be effective anytime, anywhere. And finally, the books brings forth the potential of changing mind-sets through "soft" power though it requires a lot of effort and patience.

Eshah Shakeel says

If you love reading, theatre and want to experience the resurrection of Afghanistan after three decades of brutality and war, this book is for you. Heart-breakingly beautiful!

Tracy Saunders says

This book would have been better as a magazine article. I am glad i read it and it does give an excellent insight into how difficult it can be to explain romance and romantic customs to a group of people who live in a Kabul a place where marriage is arranged and woman do not flirt or make any decisions when it comes to marriage.

I applaud the authors for taking on this project bringing Shakespeare to Kabul during a small opening when freedom of expression was not a sin.

Would have gotten one more star but I was as frustrated with the writing as the Director of the Play must have been whist trying to get anything done on deadline!

Evgenia says

Yesterday I was lucky enough to witness the wonderful presentation of Shakespeare in Kabul. It was organised by St Mary's college in association with the book author. Unfortunately the author was not able to come due to visa matter so the story was presented by a fantastic orator and writer Stephen Landringan. The story looks at a group of actors who are staging a play by Shakespeare in Afghanistan. This book reveals different sides about Afgan culture and shows the real beauty of Afgan people. This story is for those who think they know everything about Afganistan from the news but never even thought of this country from the point of massive culture, incredible people and unforgettable history.

Scott says

Helpful for teaching drama to students from the middle east.

Charlotte says

While not the best writing, it's a wonderful story, and a peak into modern day Afghanistan that is fascinating.
