The articles in this study guide are not meant to mirror or interpret any productions at the Utah Shakespearean Festival. They are meant, instead, to be an educational jumping-off point to understanding and enjoying the plays (in any production at any theatre) a bit more thoroughly. Therefore the stories of the plays and the interpretative articles (and even characters, at times) may differ dramatically from what is ultimately produced on the Festival’s stages.

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Synopsis: *Pride and Prejudice*

Causing immediate excitement among Mrs. Bennet and her five daughters, Mr. Bingley, a wealthy young gentleman, has rented a nearby country estate, Netherfield. He arrives in town accompanied by his fashionable sister and his good friend, Mr. Darcy. While Bingley is well-received in the community, Darcy begins his acquaintance with smug condescension and proud distaste for all the “country” people. Bingley and Jane Bennet begin to grow close despite Mrs. Bennet’s embarrassing interference and the opposition of Bingley’s sister, who considers Jane socially inferior. Elizabeth is stung by Darcy’s haughty rejection of her at a local dance and decides to match his coldness with her own wit.

Elizabeth begins a friendship with Mr. Wickham, a militia officer who has a history with Darcy. Wickham claims that Darcy seriously mistreated him. Elizabeth immediately seizes upon this information as another reason to hate Darcy. Ironically, but unbeknownst to her, Darcy finds himself gradually drawn to Elizabeth.

Just as Bingley appears to be on the point of proposing marriage to Jane, he moves away from Netherfield, leaving Jane confused and upset. Elizabeth is convinced that Bingley’s sister has conspired with Darcy to separate Jane and Bingley.

Mr. Collins, a distant relative of the Bennets, makes an unexpected visit. He is a recently ordained clergyman employed by the wealthy Lady Catherine de Bourgh. On his way to visit his patron, Collins makes a visit, intending to find a wife from among the Bennet sisters. At first, he pursues Jane; however, when Mrs. Bennet mentions she is involved with Mr. Bingley, he turns to Elizabeth. He soon proposes marriage to Elizabeth, who refuses him, much to her mother’s distress. Collins quickly recovers and proposes to Elizabeth’s close friend, Charlotte Lucas, who immediately accepts him. Their marriage takes place soon after.

In the spring, Elizabeth joins Charlotte and Mr. Collins at his parish in Kent. The parish is adjacent to Rosings Park, the grand manor of Mr. Darcy’s aunt, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, where Elizabeth is frequently invited. While calling on Lady Catherine, Mr. Darcy encounters Elizabeth. She discovers from Darcy’s cousin that it was he who separated Bingley and Jane, as she suspected. Soon after, Darcy admits his love of Elizabeth and proposes to her. Elizabeth refuses him. When he asks why she should refuse him, she confronts him with his sabotage of Bingley’s relationship with Jane and his history with Wickham. Darcy responds with a long letter justifying his actions.

Thus, everything is set up to bring to conclusion the various love affairs—happily, or perhaps unhappily. Whatever the various resolutions, Darcy, Bingley, Jane, Elizabeth, as well as others, will need to overcome their pride and prejudices if they are to find love in the midst of these uncertain and complex relationships.
Characters: *Pride and Prejudice*

**Mr. Bennet:** The patriarch of the Bennet family, Mr. Bennet is a gentleman of modest income with five unmarried daughters. He has a sarcastic, cynical sense of humor that he uses to purposefully irritate his wife. Though he loves his daughters, he often fails as a parent, preferring to withdraw rather than offer help.

**Mrs. Bennet:** Mr. Bennet’s wife, Mrs. Bennet is a foolish, noisy woman whose only goal is to see her daughters well married. Because of her low breeding and often unbecoming behavior, she often repels the very suitors whom she tries to attract for her daughters.

**Miss Jane Bennet:** The eldest and most beautiful Bennet sister, Jane is more reserved and gentler than Elizabeth. The easy pleasantness with which she and Mr. Bingley interact contrasts starkly with the encounters between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy.

**Miss Elizabeth Bennet:** The second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet, Elizabeth is the most intelligent and sensible of the five Bennet sisters. She is quick-witted, with a tongue that occasionally proves too sharp for her own good, especially as she spars with Mr. Darcy.

**Miss Mary Bennet:** The middle Bennet sister, Mary is bookish and pedantic.

**Miss Catherine Bennet:** The fourth Bennet sister, Catherine, like Lydia, is girlishly enthralled with the soldiers stationed nearby.

**Miss Lydia Bennet:** The youngest Bennet sister, Lydia is gossipy, immature, and self-involved. Unlike Elizabeth, Lydia flings herself headlong into romance and ends up running off with Mr. Wickham.

**Mr. Charles Bingley:** Darcy’s considerably wealthy best friend, Mr. Bingley is a genial, well-intentioned gentleman, whose easygoing nature contrasts with Darcy’s initially discourteous demeanor. He is blissfully uncaring about class difference.

**Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy:** A wealthy gentleman and the nephew of Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Mr. Darcy is intelligent and honest, but his pride causes him to look down on his social inferiors. Over the course of the play, he tempers his class-consciousness and learns to admire and love Elizabeth for her strong character.

**Mr. George Wickham:** A handsome, fortune-hunting militia officer, Mr. Wickham initially attracts Elizabeth. However, she soon suspects his motives; and he in the end runs off with Lydia.

**Miss Charlotte Lucas:** Daughter of Sir William and Lady Lucas and friend of the Bennet girls, Charlotte marries Mr. Collins after a very quick courtship.

**Mr. Collins:** A pompous clergyman and cousin to the Bennets, Collins stands to inherit the Bennet property. He takes great pains to let everyone know that Lady Catherine de Bourgh serves as his patroness.

**Miss Caroline Bingley:** Mr. Bingley’s snobbish sister, Caroline bears inordinate disdain for the Bennet family’s middle-class background.

**Lady Catherine De Bourgh:** A rich, bossy noblewoman and aunt to Mr. Darcy, Lady Catherine epitomizes class snobbery, especially in her attempts to order the middle-class Elizabeth away from her well-bred nephew.
Anne de Bourgh: Daughter of Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

Georgina Darcy: Sister of Mr. Darcy, Georgiana is immensely pretty and just as shy.


Mrs. Reynolds: Darcy’s housekeeper.

Sir William Lucas: An affable knight and friend to the Bennets.

Colonel Fitzwilliam: A cousin of Mr. Darcy and nephew of Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

Mr. Gardiner: The brother of Mrs. Bennet.

Mrs. Gardiner: Mr. Gardiner’s wife.
Pride and Prejudice: The Culmination of a Trio of Writers

By Rachelle Hughes

Jane Austen's iconic *Pride and Prejudice* never got the attention it deserved in her lifetime. But in the almost 200 years since she first published her novel, authored by “A Lady,” *Pride and Prejudice* has never been out of print, and it has been adapted and broadcast innumerable times for television and the stage. Her fans simply cannot get enough of her witty, saucy romance. So what do playwrights J.R. Sullivan and Joseph Hanreddy bring to their new adaptation for the stage?

“There are a couple of very good stage versions. However, we succeeded in telling the story without a narrator and without literally presenting the many letters that are in the novel. This gives the play a theatricality that plays very well,” says Hanreddy.

Like the original author, Hanreddy and Sullivan know their audience and their craft. Austen was a prolific writer. Both Hanreddy and Sullivan have an illustrious career in theatre. The combination of this trio’s work on the stage is a seductive draw for every Jane Austen fan.

**Jane Austen**

Austen was born in Steventon, Hampshire England on 16 December 1775 to George and Cassandra Austen. Like her fictional *Pride and Prejudice* family, she was familiar with the lifestyle of a large middle-class family. She was the seventh child of eight, and her father, a vicar, provided a reasonable income for his family of six boys and two girls. Austen’s brother Edward was adopted and raised by a rich relative. Later, as heir to the Chawton estate, Edward was able to provide a home for his two spinster sisters and widowed mother. In fact, it was at Chawton that Austen was at her most prolific, producing some of her greatest novels.

Austen’s family also afforded her rich fodder for her works. Through the lives of her brothers she acquired a knowledge of current events, social situations, and military life. Two of her brothers served in the Navy, and one brother served in the militia and later became a banker. Her brother, Henry, who was one of the greatest champions of Austen’s literary work, became a clergymen. Austen often visited him in London where she was able to attend the theatre, art exhibits, and social events. After Austen’s death it was Henry that brought her published works out of anonymity and had them published under her name, something that didn’t happen in her lifetime. Austen’s relationship with her sister Cassandra can often be seen mirrored in her novels. She was both her best friend and confidante. Neither one married, although Cassandra was engaged at one time and knew the great heartache of being “widowed” before she was ever married.

Austen was always a writer; at around the age of twelve she began writing comic stories, known collectively as the *Juvenalia*. Her first mature work, composed when she was about nineteen, was a novella, *Lady Susan*, written in epistolary form (as a series of letters). This first piece of longer fiction remained unpublished until after her death (http://www.jasna.org/info/works.html).

In her early twenties, Austen began work on *Pride and Prejudice*, originally titled *First Impressions*. Upon its completion, Austen’s father offered it to a publisher but it was promptly rejected. Fifteen years later it was finally published anonymously. Four of Austen’s six novels were published anonymously during her lifetime and although her novels were
published under the pen name “A Lady” her work developed a following.

One of her strongest supporters, Sir Walter Scott said of her work: “That young lady has a talent for describing the involvements of feelings and characters of ordinary life which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with” (http://www.biographyonline.net/writers/jane-austen.html).

Like her sister Cassandra, Austen never married, although she had a few fleeting love interests according to the surviving letters between her and her sister and other family members. These snippets of penned conversation offer up some of the most intriguing mysteries of Austen’s life. In 1816, she completed her final novel, *Persuasion*. Her health was beginning to fail and on July 18, 1817 she died. The cause of her death is yet another mystery and has been attributed to Addison’s disease, lymphoma, or possibly tuberculosis.

Austen left a legacy of six novels, one novella and a couple of unfinished novels. Her work has resonated throughout two centuries perhaps because like her literary heroine, Emma, says, her work was based “on which the daily happiness of private life depends.”

The adaptation of Hanreddy and Sullivan’s *Pride and Prejudice* is a young play. It made its debut on the Milwaukee Repertory Theater’s stage during the 2008/2009 season. Both Hanreddy and Sullivan had aspirations to do a *Pride and Prejudice* for the stage, and when they discovered each other’s intentions they started writing in earnest in 2008. Both of them have a love for Austen’s works and especially *Pride and Prejudice*.

**Joseph Hanreddy**

Joseph Hanreddy’s upbringing could not have been more different than Jane Austen’s. He was born in Los Angeles to a longshoreman and a receptionist. His family moved to San Francisco Bay during his middle school years, and Hanreddy says, “My teens and twenties were spent in and around Berkeley and San Francisco in the 1960s. I felt very privileged to live in a place where there was such creativity and energy.”

Hanreddy realized his theatre aspirations a little later after high school. As a youth, he had the notion that he would play sports in school—then go into the trades as a carpenter or furniture maker. But one day Hanreddy was given tickets by an employer to go to a play at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. “The play was *Tartuffe* with Rene Auberjonois in the title role. I was enthralled with everything about it—the humor, the athleticism and the language. I had an instinct that I could be good at it. I saw every play the company did for years after that and took classes in the education department of the theatre.”

While Hanreddy has taken to the stage as an actor several times, his true passion is directing and writing. “My next instinct was that whatever gifts I possessed might be better suited to directing. The first full-length play I directed was *The Matchmaker* for a community theater in the Bay Area.”

For the past seventeen seasons, Hanreddy has served as the artistic director for the Milwaukee Repertory Theater where he directed over thirty productions, including *King Lear*, *Twelfth Night*, *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, *The Seagull*, *The Playboy of the Western World*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Arcadia*, *The Crucible*, and *Dancing at Lughnas*. Before that he held the position of artistic director at Madison Repertory Theater. In addition, he was the founder and former artistic director of Ensemble Theater Company, Santa Barbara, California.

In 2009, he directed the Utah Shakespearean Festival production of *Private Lives*. This year (2010) he is directing *Macbeth*.

Next year he will be joining the faculty of the theatre department at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee to head a new graduate fellowship program for directors and design-
ers. He will keep his directing career honed at the Milwaukee Rep as well as other theatres around the country. Next season he is directing plays for the Milwaukee Rep, The Pearl Theater in New York, and the PCPA in California (*Pride and Prejudice*)

Hanreddy has been married “for many years” to his wife Jami; they have one daughter and a granddaughter.

**J. R. Sullivan**

J.R. Sullivan shares one similarity to Jane Austen. He too came from a large family. He was born in Oak Park, Illinois as the oldest of eight children. Of those eight children, he and his brother Daniel both went into theater.

Sullivan had his eye on the stage from a young age. Both of his parents were involved in the Civic Theatre amateur group.

“I always thought of the theatre as exactly what I wanted to do once my high school experiences in it happened,” says Sullivan. “Before then I had the usual boyhood dreams. At one stage of life I was absolutely sure playing shortstop for the Chicago White Sox would be a dream come true. But in high school I found out I was not a good enough ball player—and that I might be a good enough actor. So that became the dream. And I guess I’d have to gratefully say that I’ve been living it.”

Indeed, Sullivan has lived his dream. As a freshman in college he directed his alma mater high school’s production of *Damn Yankees*. After graduating from Beloit College in Wisconsin with a double major in theatre and English composition he was given the opportunity to start a theatre company in his hometown of Rockford, Illinois. The New American Theater was yet another successful endeavor for Sullivan; it stayed in business with Sullivan as the director for twenty-two seasons.

“When you start a theater, you end up directing most of the plays, especially in the beginning; and I think that this certainly determined me as a director first, an actor second.”

In fact, his directing credits are extensive. He has directed seventeen plays just for the Utah Shakespearean Festival. His involvement with the Festival extends further and he has was the associate artistic director for the Festival from 2002 to 2009. He was recently appointed the artistic director of the Pearl Theater in New York City.

The adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* was in many ways a labor of love for Sullivan. He has read the book three or four times and admits he could read it again “at the drop of a hat.” Although he and Hanreddy have included some innovations in their stage adaptation, Sullivan was adamant about maintaining many of the story’s original themes.

“Well, the love story is all, and we certainly knew that our focus was going to be Elizabeth and Darcy. Humor was important, from the delicious wit of Elizabeth herself to the situational comedy created by Mrs. Bennet, the Bennet girls, Mr. Collins, etc. Finally, the epic sweep of the story is important to the rhythm and flow of the performance.”

Sullivan continues to pursue his theatrical dreams. He just opened a production of Charles Dickens’s *Hard Times* with the Pearl Theatre in New York City. And he has big plans and ideas for additional adaptations of classic literature that will hopefully include some of his favorite writers: Austen, Chekhov, and Shakespeare.
Pride and Prejudice:  
The Play’s the Thing  
By Diana Major Spencer

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a work of art composed in a compatible genre, must be in want of remaining that way. “I loved the movie,” beams the viewer, “but the book was so-o-o-o much better!” “They left too much out!” “It’s good, but nothing like the book.” Innumerable judgments of genre-swapping oeuvres imply that transmogrification diminishes the original work. Thus, with a 345-page Oxford World’s Classics paperback of Jane Austen’s masterpiece on my right (old enough, by the way, to have cost a mere $3.95) and a 114-page typescript of the Joe Hanreddy and J. R. Sullivan adaptation for the 2010 Utah Shakespearean Festival on my left, I set out, if not to demonstrate the validity of that implication, at least to assess which parts of Austen’s leisurely romantic novel would be sacrificed to three “hours’ traffic on the stage.”

Sacrificed turns out to be the wrong word. For example, my first momentary disappointment was the absence of Austen’s incomparable opening line: “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife”—the lightly ironic observation of an omnipotent narrator introducing readers to the world of Mrs. Bennet, nervous and unfortunate mother of five brother-less daughters, whose only hope in life is to marry well, given that a thoughtless ancestor has locked away the family estate from female heirs in perpetuity. No mystery here about the major theme of the novel or of Mrs. Bennet’s obsession with it. The ensuing three-page chapter introduces—in addition to the news that Netherfield Park is let to a “single man of large fortune”—Mrs. Bennet’s nerves, Mr. Bennet’s “odd . . . mixture of . . . sarcastic humour, reserve, and caprice,” and the fact of their five daughters.

But in lines 5-7, motifs from Austen’s opening emerge (“of large fortune!” “A single man?” “Of large fortune!”), and Elizabeth utters the sentence topic as her first speech at line 10: “[Smiling] A single man in possession of a good fortune.” Ultimately, Austen’s sentence, in its entirety, is declaimed as Mr. Darcy’s first speech at the beginning of the Meryton ball. Rather than simply announcing the intentions of the women of Hertfordshire to take aim at the newcomers to Netherfield, Austen’s words now also embrace the aloofness of a thoroughly eligible, handsome, and wealthy aristocrat among strangers—largely female—of quite another social class. Expressing eagerness among the women and reticence from Darcy, our playwrights use Austen’s exact words to crystallize the essential conflict from differing viewpoints.

Encouraged, I followed the kaleidoscope of dances early in the novel that introduces us to the characters and the social and gender contrasts among them. The Meryton Ball merges into Lucas’s. In the script, conversations shrink to one line from each speaker; scenes contract to one or two salient lines and occasionally appear in altered order. Still, the whirlwind of couples dancing in and out of the spotlight captures the essence of courting season, and I recognized Austen’s narrative detail as costume, setting, lights, music, blocking, movement, acting.

It was Mr. Collins who clarified that literature and theatre are not the same and that my exercise would reveal more pleasant surprises than not. Collins’s lengthy introductory conversation with Mr. Bennet supplies ample background about his present state, but, mercifully, a lighting change indicates the passage of time, supplanting seven pages of Collins’s “pompous nothings,” copious narrative commentary on his utter lack of
desirability, and the interior critiques of Lizzy and her father. His tedium can be portrayed
without itself becoming tedious. A paragraph—

Mr. Bennet’s expectations were fully answered. His cousin was as absurd as he had
hoped, and he listened to him with the keenest enjoyment, maintaining at the same
time the most resolute composure of countenance, and except in an occasional
glance at Elizabeth, requiring no partner in his pleasure—

turns into stage directions, performed concurrently with the pomposities of Mr. Collins.
Thus, Austen’s sequential sentences become simultaneous layers of sensory stimuli.

Theatre, after all, requires action. Austen’s techniques of indirect discourse and interior
monologue grow into dialogue and action in the script. Lengthy letters become live action;
long scenes are condensed to vignettes; and Austen’s descriptions, interior monologue, and
ironic commentaries convert to the business of designers and actors. For lovers of Austen’s
language, moreover, the overwhelming preponderance of the script is from Austen’s pen.

Be aware, dear Reader, that *Pride and Prejudice* is all there—except for two or three
small scenes. Near the end of the novel, the morning after Lady Catherine’s visit to
Longbourn, Mr. Bennet calls Elizabeth to his library to share a letter he has received from
Mr. Collins, urging against Lizzy’s pretensions toward Mr. Darcy. In his quirky way, Mr.
Bennet teases Lizzy with the absurdity of it all, given that she so despises Mr. Arrogance;
but, given that THE conversation with Darcy had not yet occurred, she is only bewildered
that Cousin Collins shares Lady Catherine’s assumptions that an engagement—now Lizzy’s
fondest desire—is imminent. In essence, this scene is a status report of the affair’s progress,
with three distinct viewpoints represented. Collins’s view, of course, merely repeats Lady
Catherine’s—though with more words.

Curled up in the cushions of the sofa with a cup of tea at hand, the reader sees Mr.
Collins as Mr. Bennet reads his words from a page and sees Lady Catherine as Mr. Bennet
reads Mr. Collins’s account of her dismay; sees Mr. Darcy’s early aloofness as Mr. Bennet
applauds Lizzy’s rejection of him; sees Darcy’s growing warmth and his generosity in the
Wickham affair; sees Lizzy’s confusion, not daring to hope what all these rumors imply;
and sees, simultaneously, the now inevitable joyous outcome. The mental stage is plentifully
populated; but on a physical stage, two characters, a paper prop, and a lot of words read
and spoken by Mr. Bennet to Lizzy’s almost silent inner turmoil do not constitute engaging
drama.

During this exercise, I belatedly remembered the many times I’ve searched Plutarch,
Hollinshed, Ovid, and other sources for Shakespeare’s inspiration and his treatment thereof.
Only one of thirty-seven extant plays lacks an identifiable, or at least projected, source. Last
year I wrote about the few characters Shakespeare created for *As You Like It*; the others the
Bard borrowed (stole), edited, chopped, rearranged. So, in reality, Hanreddy and Sullivan
emulate the Bard. Someday, as their treatment of *Pride and Prejudice* outlasts all other stage
versions, might there be a footnote to remind the reader that their primary source was a
once popular—though minor—British author, Jane Austen, who contributed to their work?