Insights
A Study Guide to the Utah Shakespeare Festival

Around the World in 80 Days
The articles in this study guide are not meant to mirror or interpret any productions at the Utah Shakespeare 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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Cover photo: Sam Stewart in *Around the World in 80 Days*, 2001
# Around the World in 80 Days

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Synopsis: *Around the World in 80 Days*

Around the World in 80 Days begins at the Reform Club with Phileas Fogg, Thomas Flanagan, Samuel Fallentin, and John Sullivan sitting by a fireplace reading newspapers. Passepartout, who is seeking employment, enters and Fogg begins to interview him for the position of servant. Passepartout is hired and is expected to begin work immediately.

At the Reform Club, Fogg, Flanagan, Fallentin, and Sullivan are talking about a recent bank robbery. This conversation leads to a wager. Fogg is quite sure he can travel around the world in eighty days, while Sullivan doesn't believe it can be done. Sullivan, Flanagan, and Fallentin think Fogg is not considering the unexpected; all of the men accept the wager for twenty-thousand pounds. Fogg is to get on the train and start his expedition at 8:45 p.m. that evening.

Passepartout (unaware of the bet) is polishing shoes and wondering where Fogg got his money. Fogg surprises Passepartout; tells him to get ready for they are leaving to go around the world. Fogg tells Passepartout to pack only a few things; everything else will be bought on the trip. Fogg gives Passepartout a carpet bag filled with twenty-thousand pounds.

Fogg and Passepartout arrive at the Charing Cross Station to get on the train, Passepartout is responsible for reserving a compartment. Fogg gives a short speech about being charitable, and then he gives a beggar twenty guineas.

Within a few days all of London knows about Fogg’s adventure. The public talks about the voyage, and the press prints stories about an Englishman attempting to travel around the world in eighty days.

The first stop is the Suez Harbor. Detective Fix and Consul are waiting for the arrival of Mongolia (the name of the ship). Fix is looking for the bank robber who took twenty-thousand pounds from the Bank of England. The ship docks, and Passepartout disembarks and talks to Fix. Fix begins to ask Passepartout about his master, Fogg. Passepartout tells Fix that Fogg is wealthy, and they are going around the world on a bet. Fix decides that Fogg is the bank robber and he sends a telegram to the police commissioner. In the meantime, Fix is trying to convince the Consul not to stamp their passports because he believes that Fogg is a criminal. Fogg rents an elephant and gets his passport stamped; Fogg and Passepartout are on their way to Bombay.

The elephant stops in the middle of the jungle, but Fogg and Passepartout still manage to arrive in Bombay two days earlier than expected. Passepartout wants to use the time to rest. Fogg insists they continue going; the two extra days should be saved.

On the train to Calcutta, a conductor enters and tells Fogg that the tracks have ended. Fogg must continue on foot to the Allahabad station. Fogg meets the elephant owner again, and offers to purchase the elephant. Fogg discovers that he has twelve extra hours, and he dedicates those hours to rescuing a widow, Mrs. Aouda. Everyone hops on the elephant; and they ride to the Allahabad station where they catch the train to Calcutta.

Fix is waiting at the Calcutta train station; he calls a policeman to arrest Fogg. During the trial Passepartout is found guilty of desecrating the pagoda of Malebar Hill and sentenced to fifteen days imprisonment; the judge thinks Fogg should be sentenced for being Passepartout’s master. Fogg offers to pay bail, and they leave.

Due to a storm, the ship to Hong Kong is anticipated to arrive twenty hours late. On deck of the ship Mrs. Aouda questions Passepartout about Fogg. They get to Hong Kong twenty-four hours late, and Fix is there waiting. While on his way to tell Fogg that the steamer to San Francisco has been delayed (so they don’t have to wait a week for the next one), Passepartout meets a Chinese man who gives him opium.
Passepartout is carried on to the S.S. General Grant by two police officers, and Fogg is never told about the steamer. The steamer leaves without Fogg.

John Bunsby agrees (for a large sum of money) to take Fogg and Mrs. Aouda to San Francisco via Yokohama. Fogg offers Fix two hundred pounds to assist on the boat. Meanwhile, Passepartout wakes up on the S.S. General Grant and realizes that he left without Fogg and Mrs. Aouda. A few miles from Yokohama the S.S. General Grant lowers a ladder for Fogg, Mrs. Aouda, and Fix.

Passepartout attacks Fix for setting him up and making Fogg miss the boat to San Francisco. Fix explains to Passepartout that he is a detective and he believes that Fogg is a criminal. Passepartout agrees not to tell Fogg about the detective.

On the way to New York, the train is attacked by Indians. Fogg, Mrs. Aouda, Fix, and Passepartout arrive in New York in the handcar. Fogg notices a ship getting ready to leave; he goes over to the captain and asks him to take them to Liverpool. Captain Andrew Speedy says that the S.S. Henrietta is going to Bordeaux, and Fogg offers to pay him to take them.

Fogg bribes the ship’s crew with three hundred pounds to take him to Liverpool; the captain still refuses, so his crew locks him in his cabin. They arrive in Liverpool, and Fix arrests Fogg.

Fogg misses his train to London, but a hot air balloon takes Fogg, Passepartout, and Mrs. Aouda to London twenty-four hours ahead of schedule. Fogg wins his wager and gains a wife, Mrs. Aouda.
Characters:

*Around the World in 80 Days*

**Phileas Fogg:** A wealthy Englishman, Phileas Fogg is tall and blond and has a mustache and blue eyes.

**James Forester:** Fogg’s ex-servant/valent

**Passepartout:** Fogg’s new servant/valent, Passepartout is a Frenchman.

**Detective Fix:** A stuffy detective from Scotland Yard, Fix is looking for a bank robber who took twenty thousand pounds from the Bank of England.

**Mrs. Aouda:** A beautiful Indian woman, Aouda falls in love with Fogg when he rescues her.

**Foley Artist:** Creates the world of sounds for the expedition

**Gauthier Ralph:** A member of the Reform Club, Flanagan is of the men who wagers twenty-thousand pounds.

**Andrew Stuart:** A member of the Reform Club, Fallentin is one of the men who wagers twenty-thousand pounds.

**John Sullivan:** A member of the Reform Club, Sullivan is one of the men who wagers twenty-thousand pounds.

**Newspaperman:** An English newspaper reporter.

**Tally Master:** Tracks Fogg’s journey around the world.

**A Beggar:** At the Charing Cross Station where Fogg begins his journey, the Beggar receives twenty guineas from Fogg.

**The British Consul at Suez:** A British consul/clerk, he stamps passports and give information.

**Chinese Broker:** A tradesman at the Hong Kong Silk Exchange.

**Ship Clerk:** Steamer ticket seller in Hong Kong.

**Director of Police:** At Bombay Police headquarters.

**Three Priests:** In Bombay, the priests attack Passepartout.

**Young Parsi:** Very lower class Indian guide

**Sir Francis Cromarty:** An English army officer, Cromarty is slightly pompous but friendly.

**Two Train Conductors:** In India

**An Elephant Owner:** An elephant owner/salesman in India.

**Judge Obadiah:** The formidable English judge in Calcutta who hears the case against Fogg

**Oysterpuff:** Young Indian policeman/court clerk

**Bunsby:** Spunky captain of the Tankadere between Hong Kong and Yokahama.

**Conductor:** A red-blooded American train conductor

**Engineer:** A U.S. train engineer.

**Proctor:** Feisty western pioneer/cattleman

**Mudge:** A western prairie curmudgeon.

**Conductor in Chicago:** A U.S. train conductor.

**Clerk:** A ticket clerk for New York to London steamers.

**Ship Engineer:** A practical Yankee seaman.

**Captain Speedy:** Captain of the S. S. Henrietta, Speedy refuses to take Fogg to Liverpool.

**Train Clerk:** In Liverpool

**Reverend Wilson’s Servant:** A chatty servant in London.
About the Playwright:  
Mark Brown

Mark Brown was seen this summer at the Utah Shakespeare Festival as Trinculo in The Tempest and Dr. Einstein in Arsenic and Old Lace.

Around the World in 80 Days is Brown’s third produced play. His first two, an adaptation of The Little Prince and a one-man show Poe: Deep into That Darkness Peering were produced at the Orlando Shakespeare Festival, the Hippodrome Theatre, and the Orlando Theatre Project.

He has appeared at such theatres as the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Orlando Shakespeare Festival, and Asolo Theatre, and for five years was a member of the resident acting company at the McCarter Theatre. Television appearances include Ally McBeal, Providence, Diagnosis Murder, From the Earth to the Moon, The Cape, Pointman, Lawless, and SeaQuest. His film appearances include Out of Sight, Holy Man, Saved by the Light, Murder in the Mirror, Gold Coast, Clover, and the 2001 Santa Barbara Film Festival winner for best feature Amy’s Orgasm.

Brown is a member of Actors’ Equity Association.
Discovering More than Just the World
By Whitney L. Lawhon
Insights, 2001

It is a quarter before nine on Wednesday the 2nd of October 1872. A train's whistle screams into the chilly evening air as civilians hustle about in confusion. Many people in the Charing Cross train station are excited about leaving on holiday or going to visit loved ones. It is here that a most thrilling and daring adventure is about to begin, Phileas Fogg's expedition around the world in eighty days.

The story is possibly the most successful and popular of Jules Verne's "extraordinary voyages," beginning when the hero, Phileas Fogg, makes a wager with fellow Reform Club associates that he can make a journey around the world in just eighty days. Reassuring his friends he is not joking, as "a true Englishman doesn't joke when he is talking about so serious a thing as a wager," Fogg departs with Passepartout, his servant, that very evening, taking with them only two shirts, three pairs of stockings, and two pairs of underclothing.

Many of Verne's adventurous stories were about traveling into the unknown. He was very creative and imaginative growing up and loved to sail with his younger brother whenever possible. Verne is said to be the first "consistent and conscious" science fiction writer. Writing and predicting the future, "opening our eyes to the romance of science" (Biography "Jules Verne" [Greystone Communications, Inc. for A & E Network, 1995]).

After struggling as a writer for fifteen years, Verne became a success with Five Weeks in a Balloon. But it would be Around the World in 80 Days that would make him wealthy. Written during a time when people knew very little about other cultures or races, Around the World in 80 Days brought a new idea to the world. People became interested in travel, and wanted to explore what else there was beyond what they already knew. Jules Verne loved exploring and wrote about it in all of his books, yet it wasn't until the popular novel Around the World in 80 Days was published that exploring the world became a fascination. It was a hit all over, there were games created based on the novel, and fans tried duplicating Phileas Fogg's journey. The story was printed in American newspapers one chapter at a time, keeping fans across the sea waiting to find out what their hero would do next.

In 1875 Verne was making plans for a stage version of Around the World in 80 Days. He was working with the famous Adolphe Philippe Dennery, who was known for his previous stage adaptations of novels, and for working with the original authors of the books (Herbert R. Lottman, Jules Verne: An Exploratory Biography [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996], 177-178). It would be this stage adaptation that would bring Verne his greatest prosperity (Brian Taves and Stephen Michaluk, Jr., The Jules Verne Encyclopedia: “Jules Verne: An Interpretation” [London: The Scarecrow Press Inc, 1996], 7). Throughout the story Fogg encounters many foreign cultures and people; this causes him to look at life differently, viewing other cultures with more respect and interest. His relationship with Passepartout grows from "servant/master," into a friendship of trust and camaraderie. Fogg even meets a lovely Indian woman who falls in love with him and joins the two men on their journey. The presence of a woman in a Verne story is odd enough, but a romantic relationship between one of Verne's heroes and a woman is almost unheard of. Verne once said, “My heroes need all their wits about them, and the presence of a young lady might, sadly, interfere with what they have to do” (A&E Biography: “Jules Verne”). So when Phileas Fogg falls in love it comes as quite a shock to Jules Verne fans, but it adds an unexpected twist and a welcome outcome.

Shortly after Fogg's departure, all of London knows of his quest. He makes headline news, although most say the odds are against him. Fogg finds comic adventure at every stop, from
trouble getting his passport visaed, to realizing that his only means of transportation from India to Allahabad is to buy an elephant. But Fogg is determined to reach his goal, letting nothing stand in his way, and risking any amount of money to get where and what he needs. Yet unknown to Fogg, Detective Fix of Scotland Yard is following close behind, mistaking him for a bank robber. The detective is set on the idea of catching Fogg, even if it means following him around the world.

As the plot unfolds, Phileas Fogg finds a different means of transportation for almost every scene. Buying a ship and burning it for fuel while it’s sailing, just to meet his deadline. Fogg discovers more than just the world during his voyage, he finds friendship, romance, and himself while he races against the odds to travel around the world in eighty days!

(From Insights, the Study Guide of the Utah Shakespeare Festival, 2001)
Inspiring Pleasure and Awe
By Kelli Frost-Allred
Midsummer Magazine, 2001

A roulette wheel, a hummingbird, a shooting star, and Around the World in 80 Days all share one common thread: Each inspires pleasure and awe, and each moves so quickly the human eye can scarcely track it. Entertainment in the twenty-first century moves at a fast pace, and this play is no exception. If you plan to visit the Utah Shakespeare Festival with children this summer, consider this stage adaptation of the Jules Verne novel, Around the World in 80 Days. All family members, adults and older children alike, will surely find the fun in this globetrotting adventure. (Remember, however, younger children, under age five, are not allowed in Festival theatres.)

“Misadventure” better describes the trek of Philias Fogg, an English aristocrat bent on winning a gentlemen’s bet that he can set a new and unthinkable record by circumnavigating the globe in just eighty days. The wager is sizable, the outcome is doubtful, and the risks are great. What, then, would possess Philias Fogg to enter into such a wager? In short, he’s an arrogant know-it-all who insists that with the completion of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway, “one would only need eighty days.”

A time machine might be needed to transport the audience back to 1873, the year in which Verne penned the story, when Victorian England was more a land of do’s and don’ts than of imagination and adventure. The visionary Verne created a vehicle (excuse the pun!) that showcased nineteenth century modes of transportation that revolutionized travel: train and steamboat.

Around the World in 80 Days will be presented in Utah’s most prestigious and sophisticated indoor theatre, the Randall L. Jones Theatre. But don’t come to this play expecting extravagance and flourish, because playwright Bengt Ahlfors designed the play as a minimalist piece. Few elaborate elements will adorn the plot; few set pieces, scant costume changes, and suggestive props provide the side dishes to the play’s main course.

The play moves Philias Fogg and his manservant from one location to the next, introducing new characters at each stop around the globe. These supporting characters are the seasonings that make this theatre piece a satisfying meal. As characters enter the play, they turn to the audience and introduce themselves, giving colorful descriptions of their own unique circumstances.

When Fogg finds himself in India without transportation, he offers to buy an elephant. The elephant’s owner asks if Fogg needs “a riding elephant or a fighting elephant?” When Fogg says he needs a riding elephant, the owner responds: “So you want to buy a fighting elephant for riding? It is very important for you to reach Allahabad? And there are no other means of conveyance? Then the price is very high.” Fogg’s lesson in supply and demand continues, to the audience’s amusement.

Philias rescues a woman from becoming a human sacrifice in the jungle, sealing his fate as her savior. And while Mrs. Aouda falls in love with Fogg, the audience follows suit, and the stuffy protagonist becomes, in fact, the hero of the play.

The secondary plot involves a London detective (Fix) who is on the trail of Fogg. Detective Fix suspects the gentleman of having stolen a large sum of money that turned up missing on the very day Fogg embarked upon his odyssey. Half the fun of the play is seeing Fix fall victim to his own mean-spirited devices.
The music of Chopin—a contemporary of Jules Verne—woven throughout the story and serves to connect what might otherwise be disjointed scenes. “Fantasie impromptu,” a polonaise, a nocturne, a rhapsody, and more become the aural setting for each new horizon. The music lends depth, humor, emotion, and vibrancy to the play.

The British once claimed that the “sun never sets on the Union Jack.” Audiences are invited to re-visit the world-according-to-Queen-Victoria. Representing an era characterized by repression, stodginess, and rules, the director and cast of Around the World in 80 Days invite you to join in the fun of uncovering the humor, warmth, creativity, daring, and adventure of the same era.

(From Midsummer Magazine, the Official Magazine of the Utah Shakespeare Festival, 2001)