

Sunday, May 12

Burrough Market

Most of what we see in London will be on the north side of the Thames, but not today. For lunch, we'll be headed to [Burrough Market](#), a local collection of food sellers that attracts Londoners from a variety of neighborhoods. This particular market space was established in 1756, but there have been markets on this site since the 10th century, connecting locals to the world outside through merchandise that arrived from ships traveling the Thames. Here's how Mark Riddaway describes it's beginning in his book *Burrough Market: Edible Histories*:

“Borough Market began with a bridge. For hundreds of years, London was a small walled metropolis on the north bank of the Thames. Its southern neighbour, Southwark, was an altogether different place – a frontier settlement where different rules applied; a town of pubs and prostitutes, hawkers and hucksters, craftsmen and criminals. The only link between the two – in fact the only route into the City of London from anywhere south of the river – was London Bridge.



Riddaway also provides a description of the neighborhood around the market during the 16th and 17th centuries when Shakespeare was writing his plays for the Globe theatre just down the road.

Southwark [was] partly a busy commercial district, where leather, felt, pottery and soap were crafted and sold, partly a giant travel terminus, and partly a seething maelstrom of licentious behaviour, packed full of pubs, brothels and theatres. Londoners flocked across the river to let off steam – think Kavos or Ibiza, but with fewer foam parties and more Shakespeare – while farmers trundled in from the countryside with herds of cattle and sacks of grain, seeking to make a living on the heaving high street.

Today's Burrough Market is a charity, run by a board of volunteer trustees whose mission is to serve the community by linking customers with responsible traders of quality food.

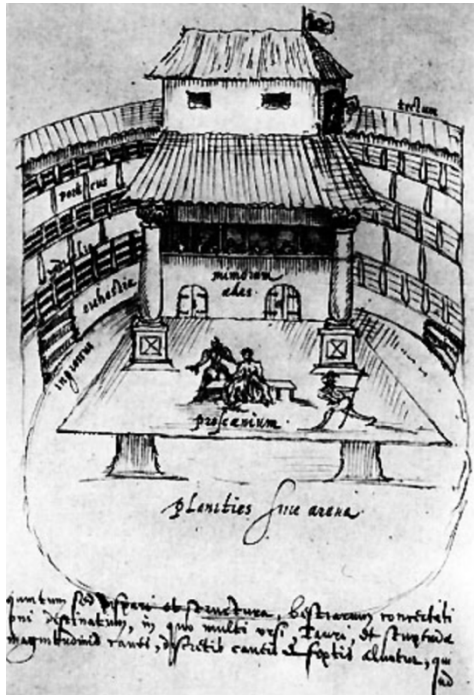


Have a good look around before deciding what you want for lunch...there's lots of options, from handmade pies to sandwiches, Persian dishes, Spanish tapas...Here's a [list of vendors](#).

#UKinMay assignment 1: Market spectatorship and consumption

1. Post a picture and caption of food you purchased for lunch, including descriptions of smells and taste.
2. Post a picture and caption that communicates your overall impression as a spectator immersed in Burrough Market

Shakespeare as Tourism



In 1596, a Dutch tourist named Johannes de Witt drew this sketch of the Swan Theatre, one of a handful of public theatres located in Southwark across the Thames from the city of London. Why does it matter that he was a tourist? Because this type of theatre was a distinctly London experience, something he couldn't experience in Amsterdam, so he drew a sketch that would help him communicate the experience to others when he returned home.

In 1888, this sketch was rediscovered, and since then, Shakespeare enthusiasts have gone above and beyond to recreate replicas of the theatre where he was an actor manager, the Globe, to discover how his plays were received by their original spectators. What was it like, these projects ask, to hear Shakespeare's language in an open-air, on a stage surrounded on three sides by spectators, some standing below and others paying more for a seat in the boxes?

Today, we will be visiting Shakespeare's Globe, which is NOT the original Globe Theatre NOR in the same location of the original (750 feet away, now a Georgian townhouse). It is both a producing venue AND a tourist attraction. Unlike the Royal National Theatre (a short walk west along the Thames) or the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford, the Globe is not state sponsored. So, it makes its money through by attracting people like us, eager to have a distinctly "English" heritage experience.

Curiously, the person who raised the money for a replica Globe Theatre in London was an American, an actor named Sam Wanamaker. He came to London as a tourist (do you see a theme emerging here?) and could not EVEN believe there was no Globe Theatre for him to visit. He merely found a plaque on a wall marking the spot, and his broken heart decided that no American tourist should ever have to endure such tragedy.

Instead, they would see Shakespeare's tragedies performed on a stage that approximates the original, with lots of emphasis on a participatory spectatorship. No darkened auditorium here, only an open air stage with a slight roof and a open pit for the "groundlings" to mingle while they heard the words of the Bard. Many historians were consulted before constructing the replica, and they came as close as they could based on what they knew. The roof is a real thatched roof, but it's been sprayed to be fireproofed (London now has



STRICT fire regulations...see the burning of the first two Globe Theatres and the Great Fire of 1666). They also made the stairwells significantly wider for the same reason.



We will arrive early for the performance after lunch at Burrow Market. Take some time to wander around the site; grab a drink. We intentionally booked tickets in sight restricted areas, not because we are cruel but because we want you to wander around and experience the performance from different places. When Elizabethan spectators (mostly men) came to the original Globe, they came to “hear” a play rather than “see” a play. It was about experiencing the language, and the dramatists were truly considered the poets of the age. This is also why modern spectators have difficulty understanding Shakespeare...because nobody talks like this! All of the metaphors and fancy words!

For sure, spend some time in the pit standing with others, and note how this experience is different from watching from the boxes. There is much more freedom of movement with this type of spectatorship. In fact, you are free to wander around, free to leave and grab another drink and return when you want. Free to leave after intermission, if you choose. But if you decide to leave early, make sure you’ve reflected on the way in which this space invites spectatorship today, the way it asks you to “time travel,” the insistence it makes on your respect for Shakespeare as an institution of British culture and history.

Also, after those drinks, note that there are lovely, clean toilets to visit before you leave. This is the rule in London...go when you can, not when you must. ;-)

#UKinMay assignment 2: Shakespeare as Tourism

1. Post two pictures spectatorship at Shakespeare’s Globe, one depicting engagement and the other disengagement.
2. Post a picture that reveals Shakespeare as Tourism.