



William Shakespeare

1564-1616

William Shakespeare

Early years

- Born in Stratford-Upon-Avon, England
- Son of a prominent town official
- 3rd child of 8 children
- Received excellent education with heavy focus on grammar and literature



William Shakespeare

Marriage and Family

- Married at age 18 to Anne Hathaway (she was 26) who was pregnant with his child
- 1st child was daughter, Susanna-born in 1583
- Twins, Hamnet and Judith born in 1585
- Hamnet dies at age 11

William Shakespeare

“Lost Years”

The period between 1585 and 1592 is known as the “Lost Years” because there are no documentary records of Shakespeare’s activities

William Shakespeare

Later Years

- Moved to London around 1591 and became an actor
- Worked with the Lord Chamberlin's company of players, later known as the King's Men



William Shakespeare

Works of Literature

- Along with acting, he also wrote some of the most renowned and studied literature written in the English language
- Poems-famous for his sonnets
- Plays-Comedies, Tragedies, and Histories

William Shakespeare

Comedies

- *All's Well that Ends Well*
- *As You Like It*
- *Comedy of Errors*
- *Measure for Measure*
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
- *Taming of the Shrew*
- *Much Ado About Nothing*
- *Twelfth Night*
- *Merchant of Venice*



William Shakespeare

Tragedies

- *Julius Caesar*
- *Hamlet*
- *Macbeth*
- *Othello*
- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *King Lear*



William Shakespeare

Histories

- *King Henry V*
- *King John*
- *Richard II*
- *Richard III*



William Shakespeare

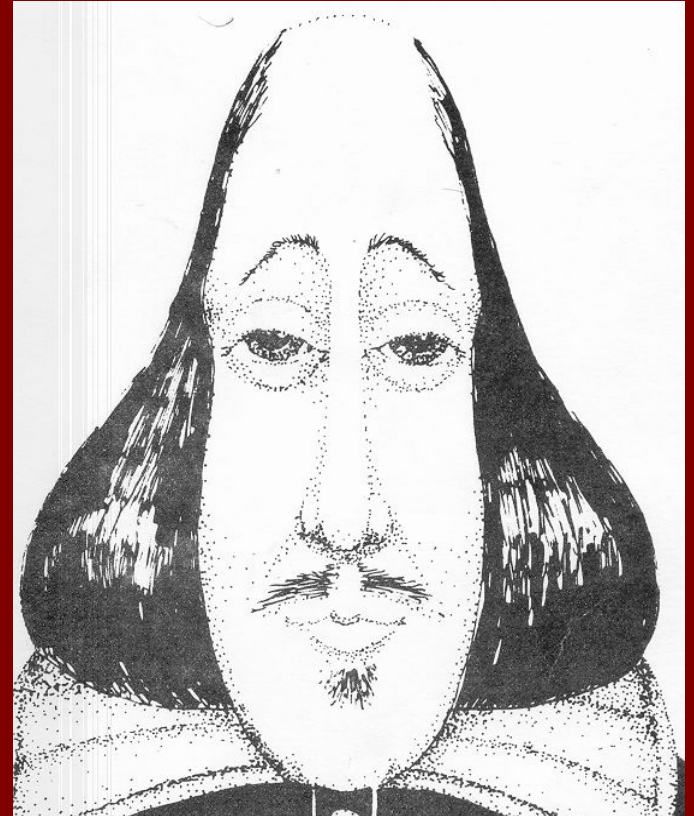
Works of Literature

- He wrote 37 very successful plays
- His vocabulary was HUGE-somewhere between 17,000 and 34,000 words!
- The estimated vocabulary of an educated person today is around 15,000 words

William Shakespeare

Works of Literature

He had an
amazing
influence on
our English
language



William Shakespeare

Have you heard these phrases?

- I couldn't sleep a wink.
- He was dead as a doornail.
- She's a tower of strength.
- They hoodwinked us.
- We'd better lie low for awhile.
- *I am constant as the Northern Star.*
- *It's all Greek to me.*

More words that first appeared in his plays

- Accommodation lonely
- Assassination gloomy
- Dexterously fretful
- Dislocate suspicious
- Obscene hurry
- Reliance
- Premeditate

William Shakespeare

Later Years

- Returned to Stratford around 1610 where he lived as a country gentleman
- Wealthy-Owned one of the largest homes in town
- Died in Stratford in 1616 at the age of 52. His death was a mystery. It is rumored that he drank too much and contracted a fever or that he died from a cerebral hemorrhage.

Elizabethan Age

- Shakespeare lived and wrote during what is known as the English Renaissance, which lasted from about 1485 through the 1660s
- Period is also known as Elizabethan Age, named after Queen Elizabeth who ruled England from 1558-1603

Queen Elizabeth



Elizabethan Age

- During the Queen's reign, society celebrated poets
- Elizabethans would be surprised to learn that their age would become best known for its theatre, as most considered drama a less distinguished form of literature than poetry

Elizabethan Age

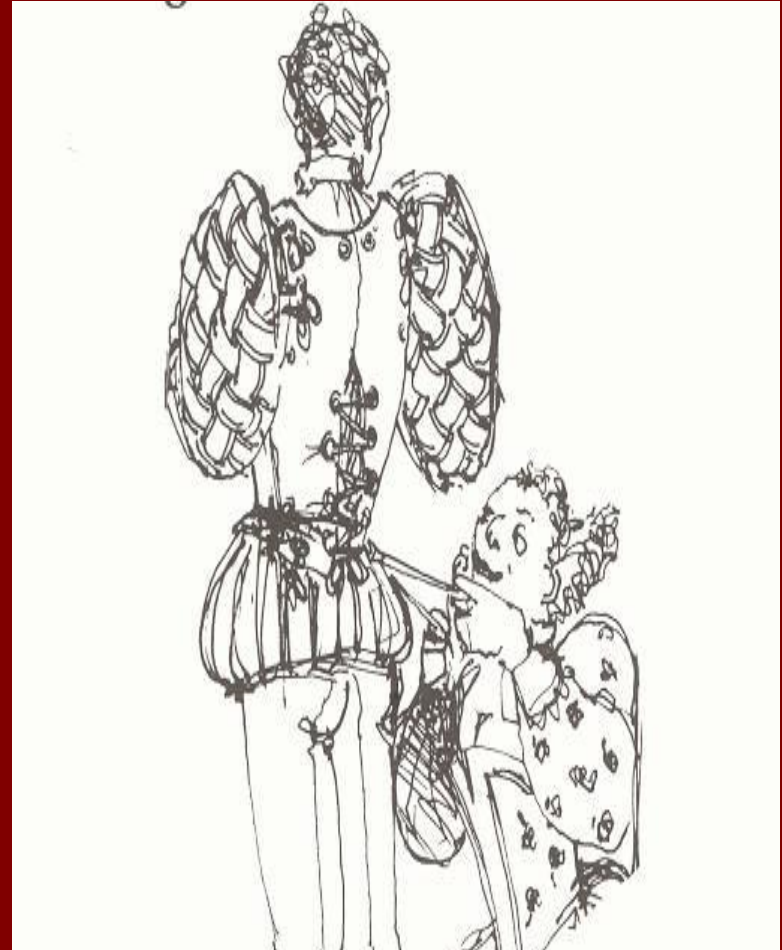
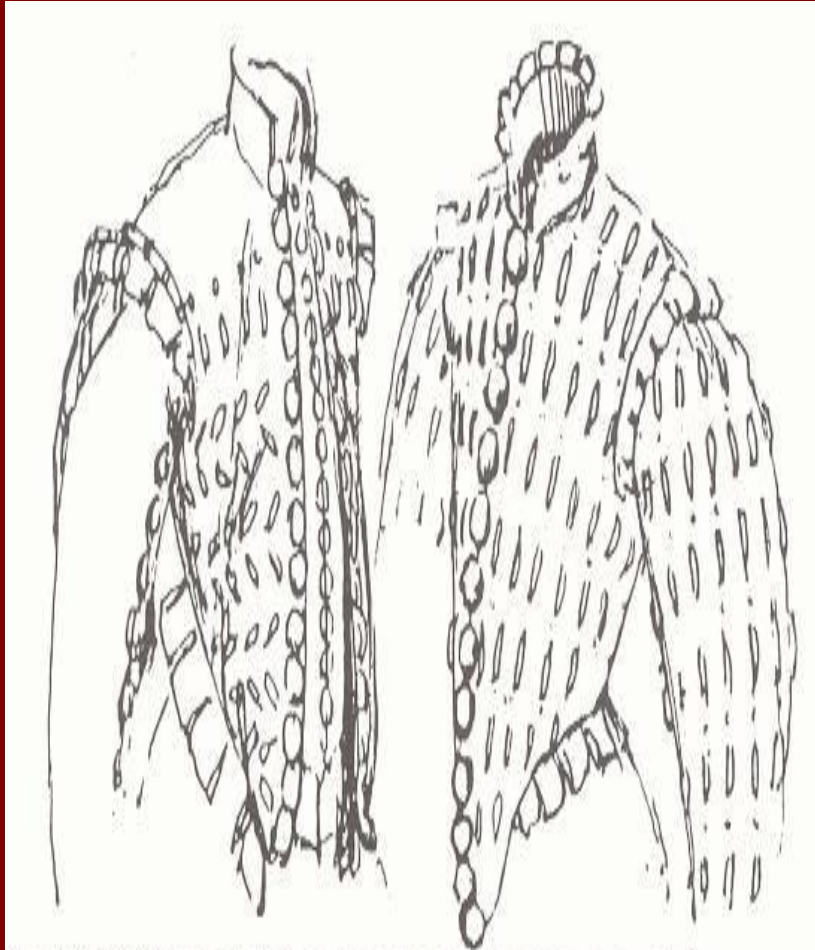
- England was flourishing and London was becoming one of largest cities in Europe; however life was not easy for everyone
- Catholics experiences religious persecution
- Women were subject to many restrictions
- Most English people endured crowded living conditions and an unsatisfactory diet

Elizabethan Age

- Rich and poor alike were defenseless against bubonic plague
- In 1564, the year Shakespeare was born, nearly one-third of his hometown died of the plague (lost many siblings to plague/son)

Elizabethan Age

Fashion



Elizabethan Age

Fashion



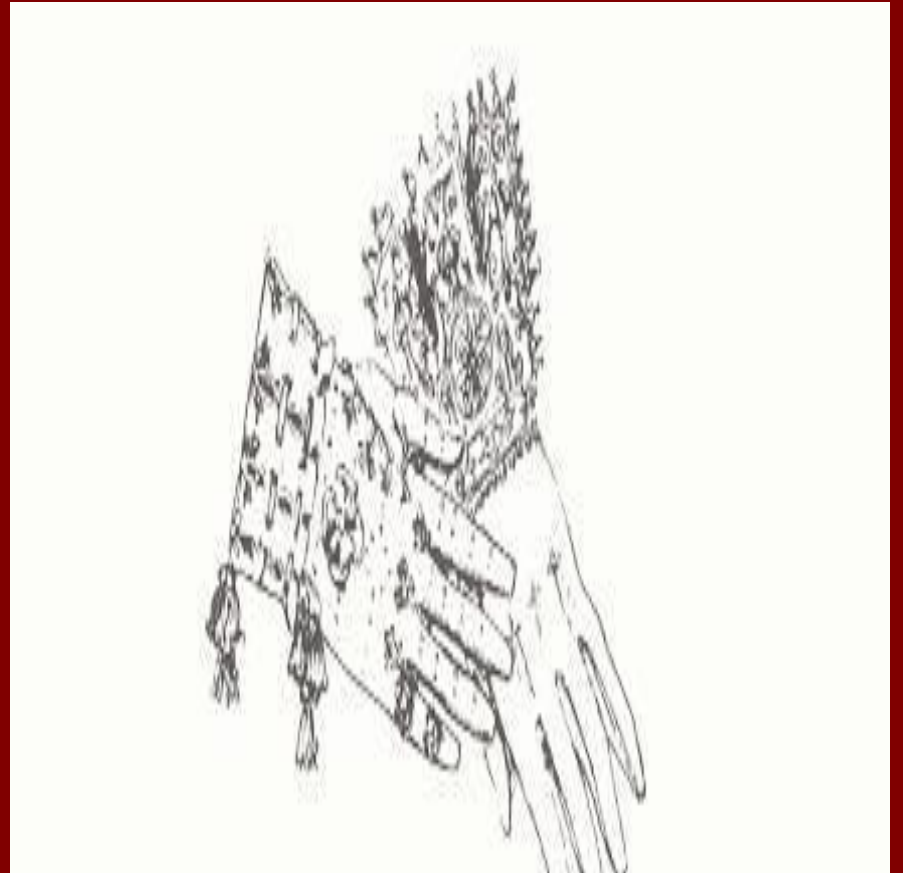
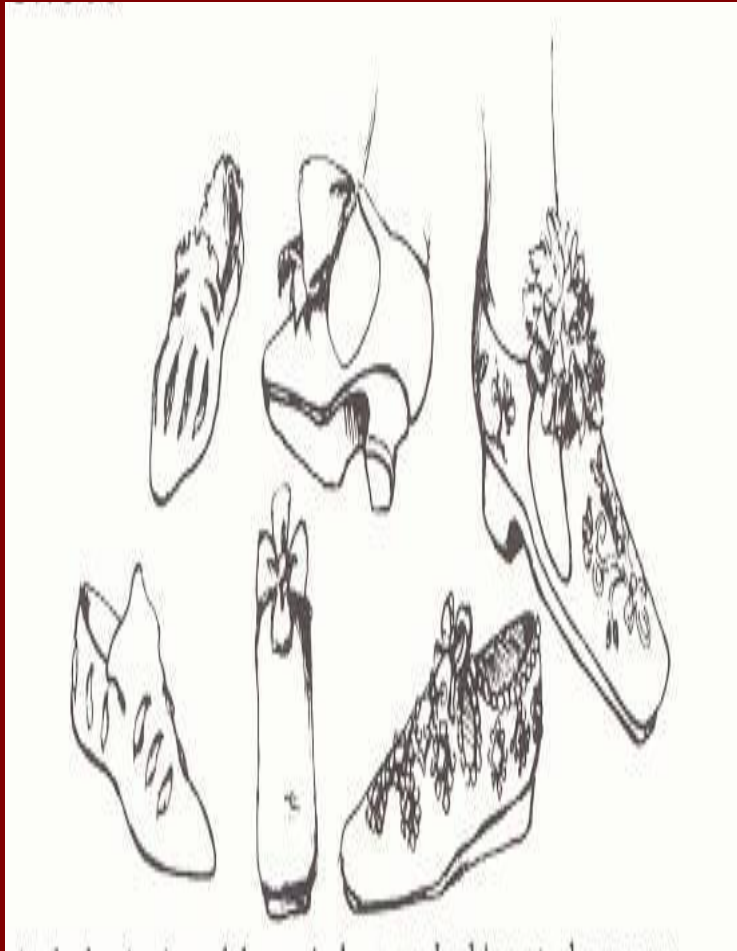
Elizabethan Age

Fashion



Elizabethan Age

Fashion



Elizabethan Age

Fashion



Elizabethan Age

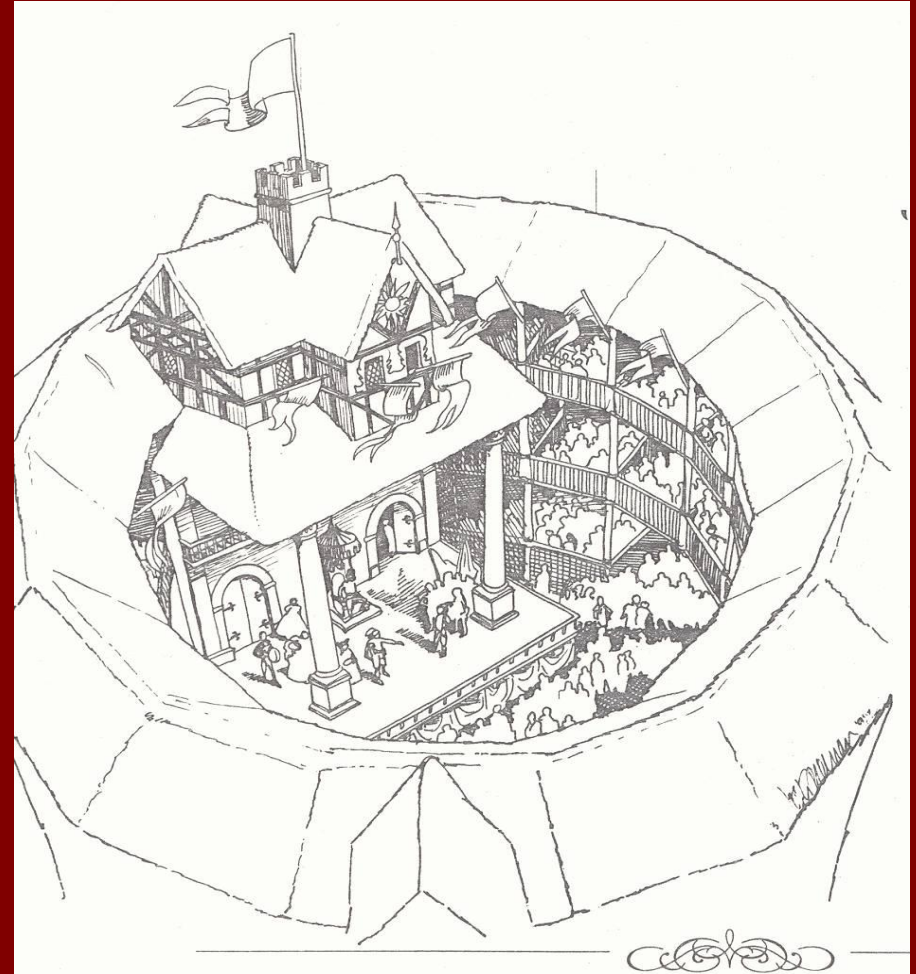
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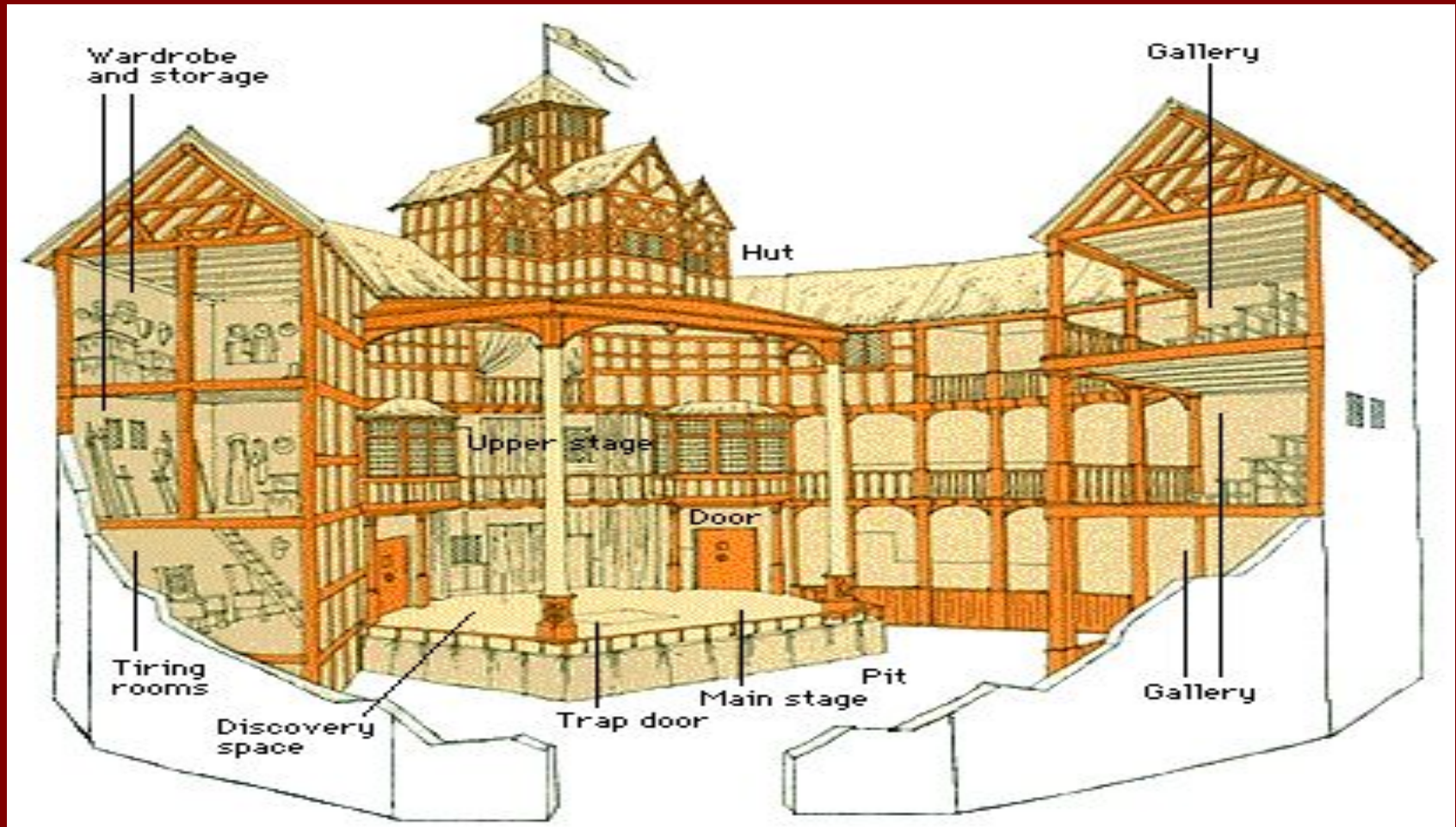
Globe Theater

- Shakespeare and the Lord Chamberlain's Men performed at Burbage's theater until 1599, when they built their own playhouse, the Globe
- Shakespeare referred to the Globe as "this wooden O," a term that led scholars to believe it was a circular building

Globe Theater

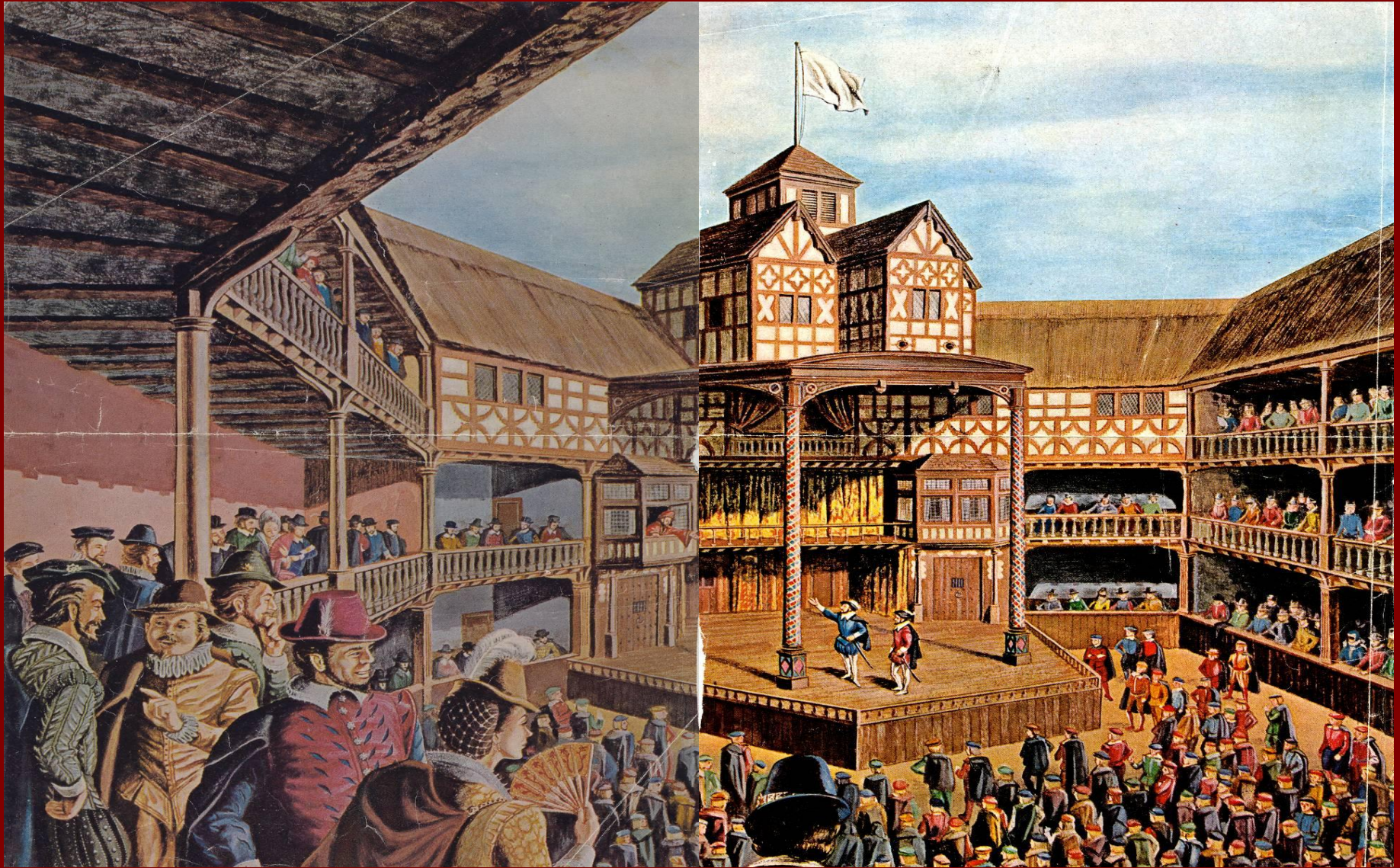


Globe Theater

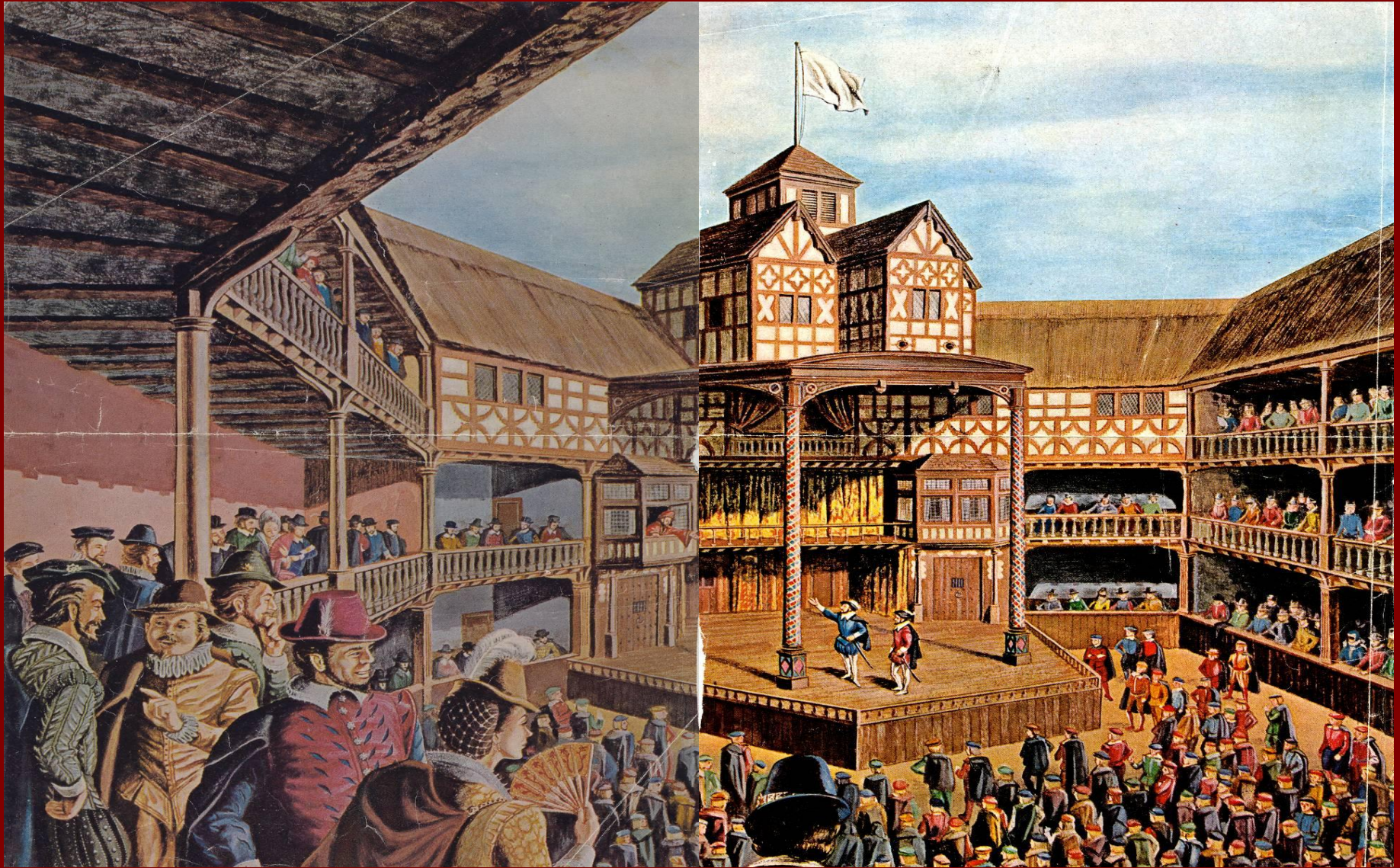


Located just outside of London

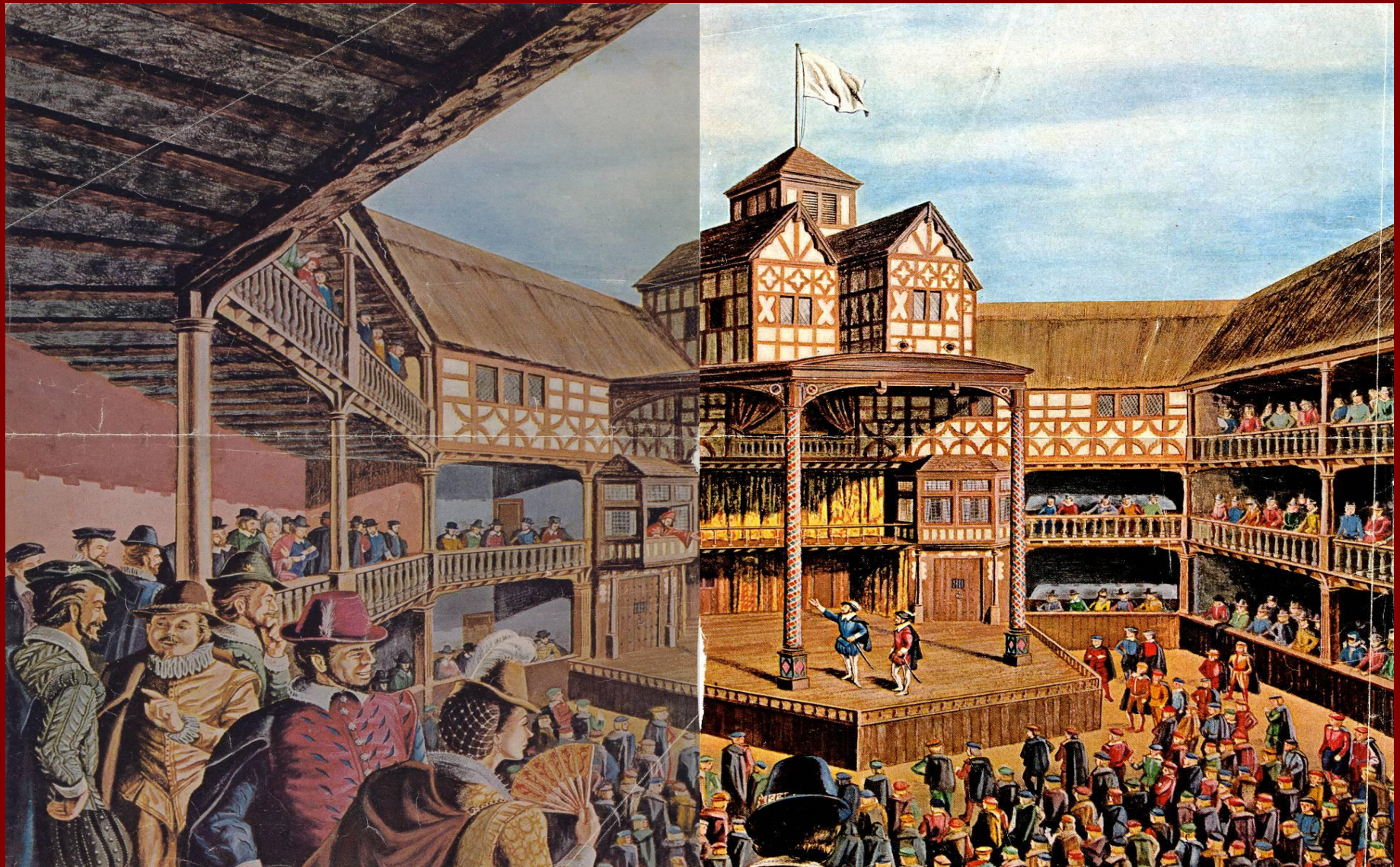
A white flag indicates that there is a play today.



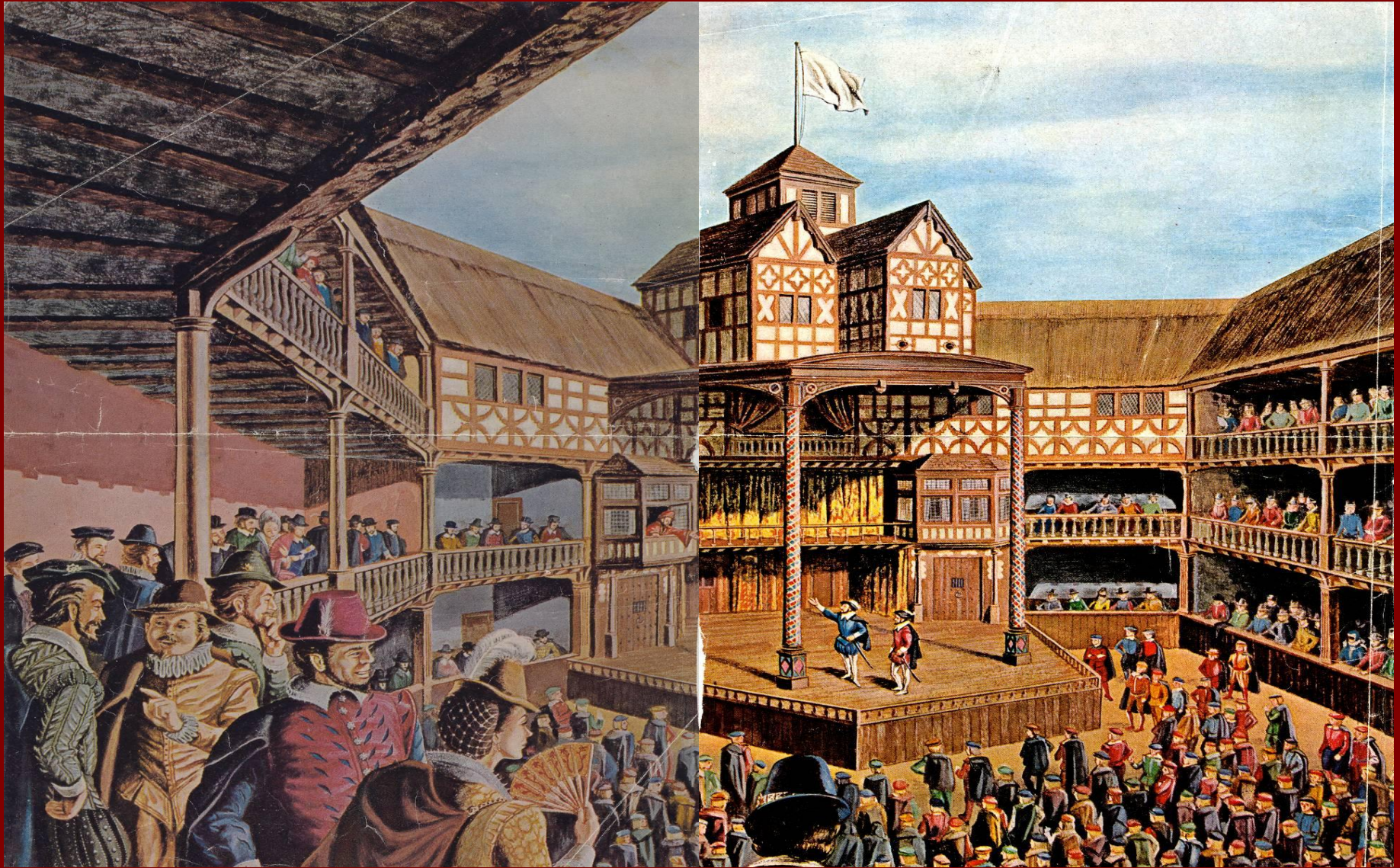
Plays were performed during the day.



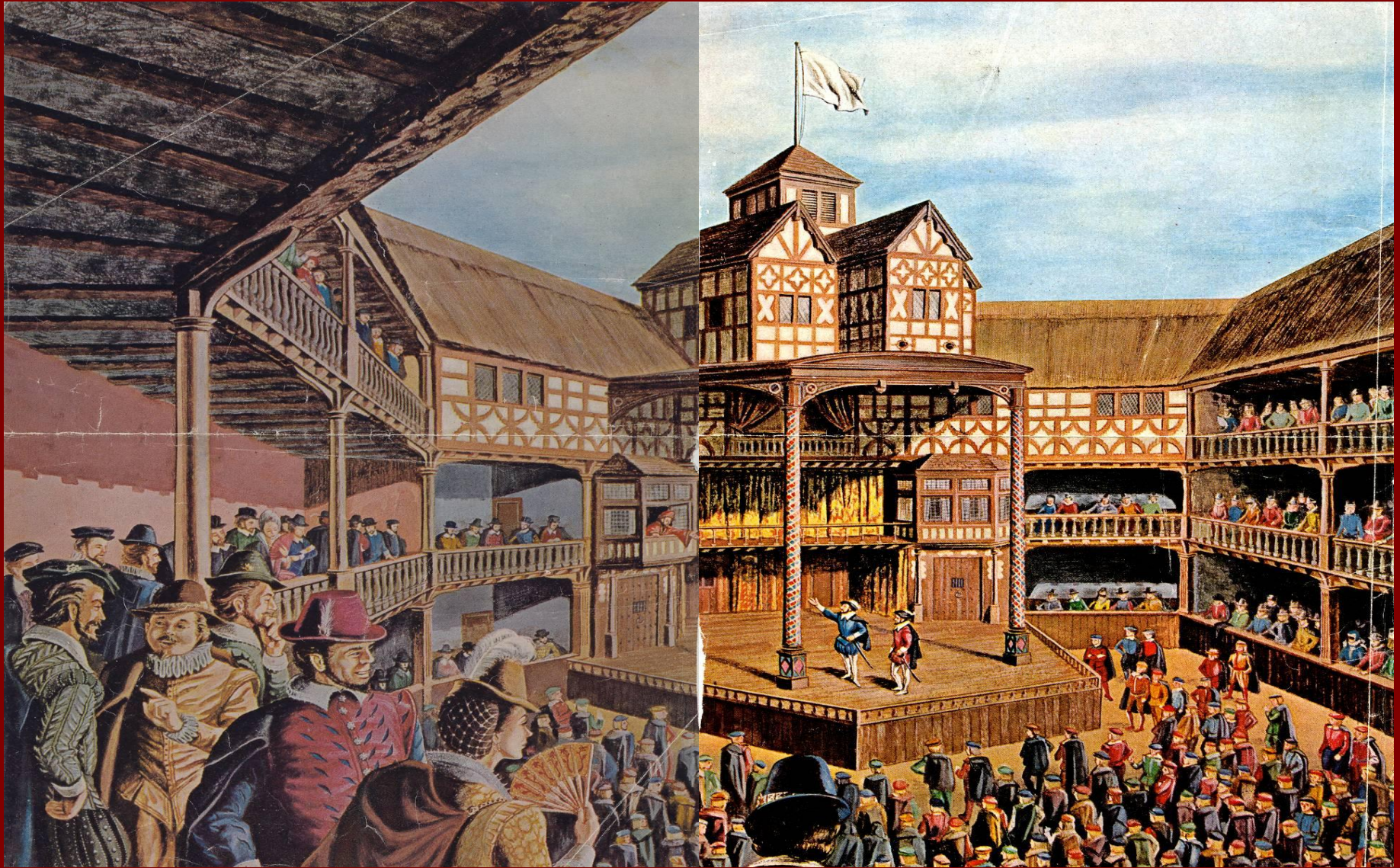
The groundlings stood by the stage.



The wealthy sat in the upper decks.



Young men dressed up to play the female roles.



Globe Theater

- Attending Shakespeare's theater was quite different from attending theater today, which is thought of as very quiet and austere
- In Elizabethan England it was a noisy, popular gathering place for people of all ages and from all walks of life

Globe Theater

- Drinking and eating were permitted in the pit, which often became very noisy
- If a spectator did not like a particular character or scene, he or she would feel free to hiss or boo or throw anything he or she might have on hand

Globe Theater

- It is possible that Shakespeare had this in mind when he included the phrase “with patient ears attend” in the Prologue of *Romeo and Juliet*
- The rowdy atmosphere of the pit also accounted for the exaggerated acting that was common at the time

Globe Theater

- To compensate for lines that the audience could not hear, the actors used exaggerated gestures and facial expressions, unlike the natural method of acting that is used today
- Nature of the crowd contributed to haste with which the lines were spoken
- Today, Shakespeare play takes almost 3 hours. Then, a play would have taken two hours or less! (“the two hours’ traffic of our stage”)

Globe Theater

- The original theater was destroyed by a fire in 1613
- It was rebuilt in 1614, closed in 1642, and demolished in 1644
- A modern reconstruction of the original Globe, named “Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre” opened in 1997

Globe Theater

- Today, audiences of this “wooden O” can sit in the gallery or stand as informally as a groundling...



Globe Theater

...just as they
would have
done 400
years ago!

