

Shakespeare's  
**HENRY**  
**FOUR**  
mehr oder weniger  
plus ou moins



Je/Do: 29.11.18 Centre Fries  
Ve/Fr: 30.11.18 Fri-Art  
Mi/MI: 12.12.18 Gutenberg Museum  
19:30 doors open/Entrée ab/ouverture à 19:15j  
Free admission/Entritt frei/Entrée libre  
[swisstagebards.weebly.com](http://swisstagebards.weebly.com)

## SYNOPSIS

After years of tension, Henry, the eloquent, recently empowered president, wants to attack and take over a foreign country. His advisers Canterbury and Ely provide him with a justification for war that Henry considers good enough for the media and his people to accept, and his generals Westmoreland, Exeter and Salisbury ensure him of their army's strength. After the enemy ambassador treats Henry with the utmost disrespect, he declares war immediately.

Three young people, Nim, Bardolph and Pistol, who until a moment ago were squabbling over a woman, suddenly and terrifyingly find themselves drafted into Henry's army. They're being led by the bossy Captain Fluellen who is often accompanied by Gower, an embedded journalist.

Henry's military campaign soon brings the president success and expands the reach of his state. In the first town he annexes, two young women named Alice and Katharine attempt to learn Swiss, in order to be able to communicate with the occupying army.

But despite military success, morale among Henry's soldiers dwindles quickly. Out of boredom, Nim, Bardolph and Pistol ruthlessly bully the incompetent Fluellen. After some frank words from Gower, even Fluellen has to realise that this war is really not living up to the stories of past heroes he worships.

Some time into the campaign, after a week without fighting, many of Henry's soldiers are dying from a wave of sickness. Henry decides to visit the camp incognito to test his soldiers' morale – it turns out to be way worse than he expected. While in the camp, Pistol picks a fight with the disguised Henry and the two exchange gloves, vowing to fight each other when they meet again. Henry, disappointed, begins to question this entire war. He is convinced that he, the president, will benefit the least from a victory, because he bears the responsibility for his entire people's wellbeing.

But his musings are interrupted by a call to arms. Henry's chances are not looking good. His army is vastly outnumbered. But he assures his

generals and his soldiers that the smaller their army, the greater their honour will be if they win. And so the battle begins...

Exeter, who was leading the charge, falls almost immediately. But Henry's army fights well enough to strike fear into their enemies' hearts. When he hears the news of Exeter's death and a rumour about the enemy burning down a field hospital, Henry orders his soldiers to kill all their prisoners of war.

After the massacre, the enemy ambassador approaches Henry and surrenders. Overjoyed, Henry comes up with another plan to impress his soldiers. He gives Fluellen Pistol's glove as a badge of honour.

Soon enough, Pistol – as usual accompanied by Nim and Bardolph – comes across Fluellen and recognises his glove. Fluellen, who has no idea that Henry and Pistol exchanged gloves so they'd recognise the man they wanted to fight, is utterly baffled when Pistol attacks him. Henry intervenes and reveals that it was actually him whom Pistol wanted to fight. Thus, Henry's scheming once again shows him in a good light – as does the low body count his army suffered during the war.

Two years later, at a permanent military base in what used to be enemy country, Alice and Katharine are preparing to see a puppet show about the battle Henry won. To their disappointment, the play does not show the battle, but only the peace treaty and Henry's marriage after he won.

Nim, Bardolph and Pistol are getting ready to act in the puppet show, but when Fluellen decides to demonstrate his yodelling skills, Pistol can't help but pick yet another fight with him. Gower separates the two and sends Pistol and all the other puppet show actors on stage.

Henry, his advisers, and his remaining generals sit down to watch the puppet show. Gower begins by addressing the audience in several languages with a message of everlasting peace...

*Alina Willi*

## ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Nach jahrelangen Spannungen will Henry, ein eloquenter Präsident, der erst kürzlich an die Macht gekommen ist, ein anderes Land angreifen und übernehmen. Seine Berater Canterbury und Ely liefern ihm eine Rechtfertigung für den Krieg, welche Henry ausreichend für die Medien und seine Bevölkerung erscheint, und seine Generäle Westmoreland, Exeter und Salisbury versichern ihm, dass ihre Armee stark genug für einen Konflikt ist. Nachdem der feindliche Botschafter Henry ausserordentlich respektlos behandelt, erklärt dieser sofort den Krieg.

Drei junge Leute namens Nim, Bardolph und Pistol, die sich bis vor Kurzem noch um eine Frau stritten, werden völlig unerwartet in Henrys Armee eingezogen. Angeführt werden sie vom rechthaberischen Hauptmann Fluellen, der oft vom Journalisten Gower begleitet wird.

Henrys Feldzug bringt dem Präsidenten rasch Erfolg ein und erweitert den Einflussbereich seines Staates. In der ersten Stadt, die er einnimmt, versuchen zwei junge Frauen namens Alice und Katharine Schweizerisch zu lernen, um sich mit ihren Besetzern unterhalten zu können.

Aber trotz ihrem militärischen Erfolg sinkt die Moral unter Henrys Soldaten rasch. Aus Langeweile schikanieren Nim, Bardolph und Pistol schonungslos den inkompetenten Fluellen. Nach ein paar deutlichen Worten von Gower muss sogar Fluellen eingestehen, dass dieser Krieg nicht mit seinen geliebten Geschichten früherer Helden mithalten kann.

Nach einer Woche ohne Kampf trifft eine tödliche Krankheitswelle Henrys Feldlager. Henry besucht es inkognito, um die Moral seiner Soldaten zu testen – sie ist schlechter als erwartet. Der verkleidete Präsident und Pistol geraten aneinander, tauschen Handschuhe und schwören, dass es ernst wird, wenn sie sich wiedersehen. Enttäuscht hinterfragt Henry den ganzen Krieg. Er ist überzeugt, dass er kaum von einem Sieg profitieren würde, da er für das Wohl der ganzen Bevölkerung verantwortlich ist.

Aber seine Grübeleien wird von einem Ruf zu den Waffen unterbrochen. Henrys Chancen sehen nicht gut aus. Seine Armee ist zahlenmässig deutlich unterlegen. Aber er versichert seinen Generäle und Soldaten,

dass sie deshalb bei einem Sieg umso mehr Ehre davontragen würden. Und so beginnt die Schlacht...

Exeter, der den Angriff anführte, fällt beinahe unmittelbar. Aber Henrys Armee kämpft gut genug um den Feind mit Angst zu erfüllen. Als Henry von Exeters Tod erfährt und ein Gerücht hört, wonach der Feind ein Lazarett niedergebrannt habe, ordert er seine Soldaten an, sämtliche Kriegsgefangene zu töten.

Nach dem Massaker sucht der feindliche Botschafter Henry auf und kapituliert. Überglücklich denkt sich Henry gleich einen weiteren Plan aus, um seinen Soldaten zu imponieren. Er gibt Fluellen Pistols Handschuh als Ehrenzeichen.

Bald schon trifft Pistol – wie üblich in Begleitung von Nim und Bardolph – auf Fluellen und erkennt seinen Handschuh. Fluellen, der keine Ahnung hat, dass Henry und Pistol ihre Handschuhe austauschten um den Mann zu erkennen, gegen den sie kämpfen wollten, ist total verwirrt als Pistol ihn attackiert. Henry schreitet ein und beweist, dass es in Wahrheit er war, den Pistol bekämpfen wollte. Henrys Tick lässt ihn erneut in einem guten Licht dastehen – doch lange nicht so gut wie die tiefe Opferzahl unter seinen Soldaten während dem Krieg.

Zwei Jahre später, in einem Militärstützpunkt in ehemals feindlichem Land, bereiten sich Alice und Katahrine darauf vor, ein Puppentheater über Henrys Sieg zu sehen. Zu ihrer Enttäuschung handelt das Stück nicht von der Schlacht, sondern nur vom Friedensvertrag und Henrys Hochzeit nach dem Sieg.

Nim, Bardolph und Pistol bereiten sich darauf vor, im Puppentheater mitzuspielen aber als Fluellen seine Jodelkünste preisgibt, kann es sich Pistol nicht verkneifen, sich erneut mit ihm zu zanken. Gower trennt die beiden und schickt Pistol und die anderen Puppenspieler auf die Bühne.

Henry, seine Berater und seine verbliebenen Generäle setzen sich ins Publikum und Gower eröffnet das Spektakel mit einer Rede. In mehreren Sprachen spricht er über den von nun an ewig währenden Frieden...

*Alina Willi*

## RÉSUMÉ

Après des années de tension, l'éloquent Henry, fraîchement élu président, veut attaquer et envahir un pays étranger. Ses conseillers Ely et Canterbury lui donnent une justification pour cette guerre qu'Henry estime suffisamment bonne pour être acceptée par les médias et par son peuple. Les généraux Westmoreland, Salisbury et Exeter le rassurent quant à la puissance de son armée. Après s'être fait insulter par l'ambassadeur étranger, Henry déclare la guerre immédiatement.

Nim, Bardolph et Pistol, trois jeunes gens qui étaient autrefois amis, se querellent à propos d'une femme. Ils se retrouvent soudainement enrôlés dans l'armée d'Henry. Ils sont à présent sous les ordres de l'autoritaire Fluellen, lui-même régulièrement accompagné par le journaliste Gower.

La campagne militaire d'Henry lui amène bientôt du succès et étend les frontières de son état. Dans la première ville qu'il annexe, deux jeunes femmes nommées Alice et Katherine essaient d'apprendre le 'suisse' pour pouvoir communiquer avec l'envahisseur ennemi.

Malgré les succès militaires, le moral des soldats d'Henry baisse rapidement. Nim, Bardolph et Pistol tourmentent l'incompétent Fluellen pour oublier leur ennui. Après une discussion franche avec Gower, même Fluellen réalise que cette guerre ne correspond pas aux histoires de héros qu'il a toujours adorées.

Après une semaine sans combattre, une épidémie se répand dans le camp, faisant de nombreux morts. Henry décide de visiter le camp incognito. Il veut tester le moral de ses soldats mais celui-ci se trouve être encore pire que ce qu'il avait imaginé. Pistol se met en colère contre Henry et tous les deux échangent leurs gants, jurant de combattre lorsqu'ils se rencontreront à nouveau. Henry, déçu, commence à remettre cette guerre en question. Il est convaincu que c'est lui qui bénéficiera le moins de la victoire car il doit assumer la responsabilité du bien-être de tout son peuple.

Ses réflexions sont interrompues par un appel aux armes. Les chances d'Henry ne sont pas bonnes, son armée est moins nombreuse que celle

de ses ennemis. Il assure cependant ses généraux que plus une armée est petite, plus l'honneur de la victoire sera grand. Ainsi commence la bataille...

Exeter, qui menait la charge, tombe rapidement. L'armée d'Henry arrive cependant à remplir ses ennemis de terreur. Lorsqu'il apprend la mort d'Exeter et la rumeur que les ennemis brûlent l'hôpital, Henry ordonne de tuer tous les prisonniers de guerre.

Après le massacre, l'ambassadeur ennemi s'approche d'Henry et se rend. Fou de joie, Henry trouve une autre idée pour impressionner ses soldats, il donne à Fluellen le gant de Pistol.

Pistol, accompagné comme d'habitude par Nim et Bardolph, rencontre bientôt Fluellen et reconnaît son gant. Fluellen, qui ne sait pas que les gants ont été échangés par Henry et Pistol pour pouvoir reconnaître l'homme qu'ils ont promis de combattre, ne comprend pas pourquoi Pistol l'attaque. Henry intervient et révèle que c'était en réalité lui que Pistol voulait combattre. Les machinations d'Henry, ainsi que le peu de morts dénombrés dans son armée après la bataille, le montrent encore une fois sous un jour favorable.

Deux ans plus tard, dans une base militaire située en pays occupé, Alice et Katherine se préparent à voir un spectacle de marionnettes racontant la bataille gagnée par Henry. Elles sont déçues d'apprendre que le spectacle ne parle pas de la bataille mais seulement du traité de paix et du mariage d'Henry après sa victoire.

Nim, Bardolph, et Pistol se préparent à jouer dans le spectacle mais quand Fluellen décide de leur montrer ses talents de yodleur, Pistol ne peut s'empêcher de se quereller de nouveau avec lui. Gower les sépare et envoie Pistol et les autres acteurs sur la scène.

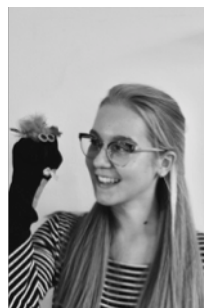
Henry, ses conseillers et ses généraux s'asseyent pour regarder le spectacle de marionnettes. Gower commence par adresser au public un discours en plusieurs langues prônant la paix perpétuelle...

*Aurélie Blanc*

# CAST / BESETZUNG / DISTRIBUTION



**KATJA ANDLAUER**  
SALISBURY  
*one of Henry's generals*  
ein General Henrys  
*un des généraux d'Henry*



**GUILLAUME BABEU**  
ORLEANS  
*an enemy commander*  
ein feindlicher Befehlshaber  
*un commandant ennemi*



**AURÉLIE BLANC**  
HENRY  
*a president*  
ein Präsident  
*un président*



**JÉRÔME CHARIATTE**  
NIM  
*one of Henry's soldiers*  
ein Soldat Henrys  
*un des soldats d'Henry*





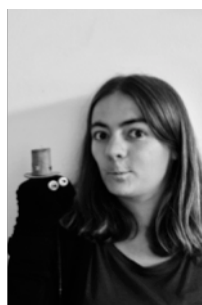
# CAST / BESETZUNG / DISTRIBUTION



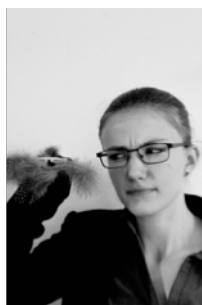
**LAURE CORMINBOEUF**  
ALICE  
*a young enemy woman*  
eine gegnerische, junge Frau  
*une jeune femme ennemie*



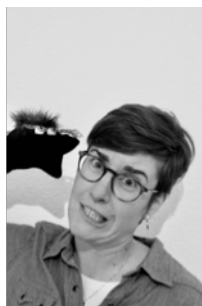
**LARA ISCH**  
BARDOLPH  
*one of Henry's soldiers*  
ein Soldat Henrys  
*un des soldats d'Henry*



**SARAH KNOEPFLI**  
ELY  
*one of Henry's advisers*  
eine Beraterin Henrys  
*un des conseillers d'Henri*



**ALESSANDRA MAIGRE**  
EXETER  
*one of Henry's generals*  
ein General Henrys  
*un des généraux d'Henry*



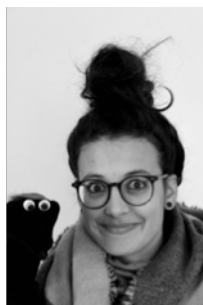
# CAST / BESETZUNG / DISTRIBUTION



**SANDY MAILLARD  
GOWER**  
*an embedded journalist*  
ein eingebetteter Journalist  
*un journaliste embarqué*



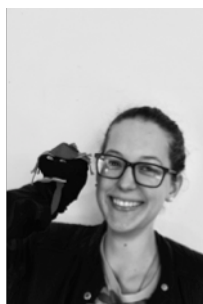
**ELISA PAGLIARO  
PISTOL**  
*one of Henry's soldiers*  
ein Soldat Henrys  
*un des soldats d'Henry*



**NORA RICKLI  
FLUELLEN**  
*one of Henry's army captains*  
ein Hauptmann Henrys  
*un des capitaines d'Henry*



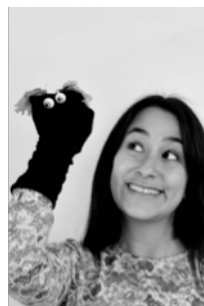
**MAGDALENA SEDLACZEK  
WESTMORELAND**  
*one of Henry's generals*  
ein General Henrys  
*un des généraux d'Henry*



# CAST / BESETZUNG / DISTRIBUTION



**SYLVIA WIEDERKEHR**  
KATHARINE  
*a young enemy woman*  
eine gegnerische, junge Frau  
*une jeune femme ennemie*



**MILENA ZIMMERMANN**  
CANTERBURY  
*one of Henry's advisers*  
eine Beraterin Henrys  
*un des conseillers d'Henri*



## PRODUCTION TEAM PRODUKTIONSTEAM EQUIPE DE PRODUCTION

Director / Regisseurin / Réalisatrice ..... ELISABETH DUTTON

Producer, Stage Manager / Produzentin,  
Inspizientin / Productrice, Metteuse en scène ..... ALINA WILLI

Music / Musik / Musique ..... CHRISTIANE PORZIG

## TRANSLATION TEAM ÜBERSETZUNGSTEAM EQUIPE DE TRADUCTION

German / Deutsch / Allemand ..... THOMAS AEPPLI

French / Französisch / Français ..... AURÉLIE BLANC

Italian / Italienisch / Italien ..... ELISA PAGLIARO

## THE TRANSLATION PROCESS

The earliest draft of the first part of our script for Henry V dates from March 2016. It consists of translations of some sequences from the first few scenes of the play which were prepared for various smaller events, always with a view to an eventual full production, but for a long time with no clear deadline in mind. The process that led from this to having a full script ready to hand over to a cast and production team then went on for some eighteen to twenty months, until late 2017. Progress was far from continuous, however: The project was taken up again and continued more than once, before something like the final version of the script came into being during a week spent by parts of the translation team either playing cards on the beach or weighing up translational variants between a considerable number of existing French and German translations. Both activities were highly enjoyable.

Given the amount of time that passed from the original conception of the project to the creation of the eventual full script, it seems quite surprising how many of the ideas which were present in a vague form at the beginning ended up finding some form of systematic realisation in the final text. The project was to translate, as well as to adapt, a play written some 400 years ago, dramatizing events which had taken place a further two centuries before that. For this, there was more to do than simply translating the words on the page from one language into either French, Italian or German. Instead, we allowed ourselves to be more adventurous – intrusive to less sympathetic observers.

We systematically took specific sets of words and phrases – those indicating the power relations of a feudal monarchy legitimised by aristocratic birth and religious institutions – to be translatable into contemporary political vocabulary. We deleted references to nationalities, and, when confronted with the question of how to represent the enemy—the French in Shakespeare's play—we decided to turn them into undefined international figures speaking English. Shakespeare's French are very much an English construction made for an English audience: they seem effeminate, cowardly and rather silly. We were intrigued by this example of one side constructing a subjective image of the other. Most of

the scenes involving the enemy were therefore modified to depict soldiers using sock puppets and imagining their own version of their enemy.

Our choices in terms of language attribution reflected the characters' regional origins but were also based on their rank and responsibilities. Henry, for instance, is fluent in all languages, as he needs to run the country efficiently and maintain control over the people around him. Common soldiers, on the other hand, might not understand everything: they ask for precisions, and speak foreign languages rather badly. We also changed some of the structure of the original text, in which the heroic figure of Henry is accompanied by a near-endless list of characters, with many figures appearing in one scene only to disappear for the rest of the play. Here, we attempted to adjust the balance by slightly reducing the prominence of the title character and, more importantly, by merging some of the smaller parts, thereby giving them and their perspectives on the action a continued presence throughout the play. It is for these figures, all taken from the original text but cast in a new light, that we also wrote some of the material which departs furthest from the lines found in Shakespeare collections.

The goal in all of this was to produce a script which takes all its cues, and not just its title, from Shakespeare's Henry V, but is at the same time a self-standing play taking up themes, some of which are less foregrounded in the original. Our script is written in different languages, but it is not about there being many languages spoken on stage. This is just something that happens. In addition, and unlike the original, our play also is not about an English military expedition into France in 1415 – why would it be? We had an outstandingly brilliant, well, Shakespearean, source text treating the intrigues of power, the hypocrisies of elite-backed militarism, the role of 'political leaders' as actors choosing their own words, but sometimes just willingly reciting the lines they are expected to say, instruments of something spinelessly called "political necessity". Why would we limit the obvious pertinence of these themes by pretending the only interesting thing about the play was what happened in 1415?

Still, and all this being said, 'being true to the original' did have a meaning during the translation process. It meant that we did our very best to

preserve the rhythm, the tone, the register and the style of Shakespeare's language throughout the various languages present in the script. Getting the rhythmic pattern of a ten-syllable blank verse wrong in a translation can ruin a line, no matter how adequately the content has been yanked from one language to the other. We hope to have succeeded...

*Thomas Aeppli*

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

Henry V, King of England 1413-22, conquered much of France, and was made heir apparent to French throne, although he died before inheriting that throne. Henry's son, Henry VI, an infant when he became King of England, lost all the advantage his father had won in France, and although successive generations of English monarchs periodically laid claim to the French throne again, they never succeeded in winning it. Henry's reign has thus represented, in the imaginations of Englishmen of a jingoistic nature, a high point in England's relationship with Europe. Shakespeare's presentation of Henry is at best ambiguously heroic, but, as always with Shakespeare, it ain't just the script, it's the way that you play it.

Shakespeare's play was filmed by Laurence Olivier during World War II as a patriotic encouragement to a struggling nation: England at the time was, of course, far from invading France, but the image of a little nation triumphing against the odds may have contributed to the film's popularity. The play was filmed again by Kenneth Branagh in 1989, and this film reflects a changed attitude to war, playing out its battles in muddy, gory desperation rather than the sunlit fields of Olivier's Agincourt. Branagh's Henry is, inevitably, a much 'muddier' hero, too. Henry V, even when

staged with its ironies and criticisms to the fore, has become, in the UK, a statement about 'Britishness.'

But neither Shakespeare's play nor, unsurprisingly, the historic Henry appear to be very important to anyone else. Shakespeare's histories are much less performed than the tragedies and comedies outside the UK; politically, now, English kings are not of much interest. What would it mean to read Henry V as Swiss?

Switzerland's 'national' history is very different from that of France or England; it has not been a unified nation-state, in its present form, for long. The Swiss in Shakespeare are mercenaries, fighting for money, not nationhood. But there is an important connection between Shakespeare's Henry and Swiss History -- a sense of the importance of language. Shakespeare's play is highly engaged with language, for example imagining the French Princess learning English so she can talk with Henry, or showing Henry's manipulation of language in his call to arms, which uses only Anglo-Saxon words, with no French loans. Indeed, in Shakespeare's play it is Henry's skill with language that enables him to inspire his audiences as well as his soldiers. We have concentrated on this theme, creating a Henry who can say whatever people need to hear, in whatever language they need to hear it.

Shakespeare's play presents, in the ranks of Henry's army, an Englishman, a Scotsman and a Welshman who argue for their individual nations and their national symbols: these we have presented in *Helvetic Henry* as the French-, German- and Italian-speaking Swiss soldier. The French enemies, in Shakespeare's play, are merely a parody of Frenchness, comical stereotypes who worry more about how they look than how they fight. How could we translate this in our Swiss context? In modern conflict, the enemy may also be stereotypically presented, or constructed in our fearful imaginations by the rhetoric of governments or the press: this is the meaning of our sock puppets. The Swiss *Henry V*, with its comic ironies, seeks to expose the drive to power in which 'nations' are simply convenient concepts by which to manipulate others, using the powers of language.

*Elisabeth Dutton*

# THANK YOU / DANKE / MERCI

Janine Barrett  
Raphael Berthele  
Jirina Clark  
Jeremy Franklin  
Maud Fasel  
Diana Helfer  
Cléo Lurman-Lange  
Daniela Lurman-Lange  
Jasinta Lurman-Lange  
Dinah Marti  
Christoph Mayer  
Anas Sareen  
Madeleine Wheare  
  
Centre Fries  
Fri-Art  
Gutenberg Museum  
Lausanne Shakespeare Festival  
University of Fribourg

