

## **Did Shakespeare write Star Wars?**

### **Hamlet and Darth Vader: The parallels. Film featuring Diane Purkiss**

400 years ago our greatest storyteller, William Shakespeare, died, but his work lives on in so many ways. Not only is he being commemorated all around the world this year, but also his work is still a huge influence on many writers and filmmakers.

It's amazing to be here at the iconic Elstree Studios, the birthplace of the Star Wars films.

For a fan like me I'm thrilled to be here and especially to meet major characters like the two droids; C3PO and R2D2.

For me the plays that remind me the most of the Star Wars films are the "Henry Plays"; Henry IV Part 1, Henry IV Part 2 and Henry V, and all those plays show us the growth of a leader, just as Star Wars: A New Hope shows us, shows us Luke Skywalker becoming a leader.

When we first meet both Luke Skywalker and Prince Hal from Shakespeare's plays, it looks as though they're going to sink into the criminal classes. Hal's friend, Falstaff, is a huge fat man who's always drunk and Luke has Hans Solo, the space pirate. But as it turns out they avoid that fate by discovering the leader within themselves.

Shakespeare's Hal has to face Hotspur, the man of action that his father wishes that he was and he almost has to kill that dark version of himself. Luke has to face Darth Vader, his own father and his dark mirror image. Both of them have to defeat their mirror image in order to become the heroes they're meant to be.

We've learned how great stories flow from one inspired teller to another and how each inspired teller makes them new and makes them relevant to each generation. Because nobody really owns a story.