

SIX



THE MUSICAL



CANADIAN CAST PHOTOS BY RYAN PARKER

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

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KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

From Tudor Queens to Pop Princesses...

the SIX wives of Henry VIII take the mic to remix five hundred years of historical heartbreak into an exuberant celebration of 21st century girl power! This new original musical is the global sensation that everyone is losing their head over. Inside this Resource Guide, you'll find materials on the development and context of SIX, including insights from creators Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss, a timeline and background information on the Tudor family, profiles on each of the six wives of Henry VIII, and activities to support reflection and action after you see the show. All of the information in the guide has been written and organized for anyone hoping to learn more about the world of SIX.

Enjoy the show!

SIX CAST



JAZ ROBINSON
Catherine of Aragon



JULIA PULO
Anne Boleyn



MAGGIE LACASSE
Jane Seymour



KRYSTAL HERNÁNDEZ
Anna of Cleves



ELYSIA CRUZ
Katherine Howard



LAUREN MARIASOOSAY
Catherine Parr

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

SIX CREATIVE

Written by
Toby Marlow & Lucy Moss

Directed by
Lucy Moss & Jamie Armitage

Choreography by
Carrie-Anne Ingrouille

Scenic Design
Emma Bailey

Costume Design
Gabriella Slade

Lighting Design
Tim Deiling

Sound Design
Paul Gatehouse

Orchestrations
Tom Curran

Music Supervision
Joe Beighton

Music Supervision (U.S.)
Roberta Duchak

Music Direction
Elizabeth Baird



Photo: Joan Marcus

CANADA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BRITISH MONARCHY (THE CROWN)

Canada is an independent country with a parliamentary system of government. This means that Canadians elect a prime minister. Why then, is the King the monarch and head of state? The reason is that Canada used to be a colony of the British Empire before transitioning to an independent realm of the Commonwealth. Like Canada, all Commonwealth countries have the monarch - the reigning king or queen of England - as their head of state. Therefore, Canada has a long history and relationship with the British monarchy or "The Crown". As a constitutional monarchy, Canada's political identity remains tied to the monarchy. For example, the face of the reigning monarch continues to be on the face of bills and coins. Read more about this relationship and how the Canadian parliamentary system of government is connected to the Crown on canada.ca. Students in grades 4 - 8 can watch this [video](#) "King Charles, the monarchy and Canada's ties to it all" from the Canadian Broadcasting System (CBC) to understand Canada's relationship to the British monarchy.

Adults can learn about the history of the country we now call Canada from an Indigenous perspective through [Indigenous Canada](#), a course offered free of charge through the University of Alberta.

THE ROYALEST OF FACTS



Monarchy is the oldest form of government in the United Kingdom.



In a monarchy, a Queen or King is Head of State. The British Monarchy is known as a constitutional monarchy. This means that, while The Sovereign (Queen or King) is Head of State, the ability to make and pass legislation resides with an elected Parliament.



Although The Sovereign no longer has a political or executive role, she or he continues to play an important part in the life of the nation. In all these roles, The Sovereign is supported by members of their immediate family.



The Monarchy has existed for centuries but has had to evolve and modernize with time.

Did you know that there is still royalty in the UK?

Do you know who the current King of England is? What do you know about him?

SO HOW DOES THIS CONNECT TO SIX ?

SIX is a British musical with book, music, and lyrics by Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss. The musical is a modern retelling of the lives of the six wives of Henry VIII presented as a pop concert, as the Queens take turns singing and telling their stories to see who suffered the most due to Henry and should, therefore, become the group's lead singer. Henry VIII was King from April 22, 1509 until his death in 1547, but the musical takes inspiration from modern day.

A TOTALLY TUDOR TIMELINE

The following timeline tracks the six wives of King Henry VIII and his marriages. As you read through, what do you notice? What questions does it bring up for you?

1501

Catherine of Aragon marries Arthur Tudor (Henry's older brother). Anne Boleyn is born.

1502

Arthur Tudor dies.



1522

Anne Boleyn moves into Henry's court.

1509

Henry VII dies and Henry VIII is crowned king. Catherine of Aragon and Henry are married.

1516

Mary (later Queen Mary I) is born to Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon.

1525

Henry VIII blamed Catherine for "not giving him a son" and as a result, he was determined to end his marriage and find a new wife who could give him what he wanted. Catherine refused to agree to divorce and Pope Clement VII denied Henry's requests to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon.

1533

January:
Anne Boleyn and Henry are married.



1527

Jane Seymour moves into Henry VIII's court.

May:
Henry finally broke with Rome in 1533 and declared himself the head of a new church, the Church of England. Henry and Catherine of Aragon's marriage is finally annulled. Five days later, Henry and Anne's marriage is declared valid.

1535

January:
Catherine of Aragon dies.



1537

Edward (later King Edward VI) is born to Henry and Jane Seymour. Jane dies soon after from complications related to childbirth.

September:
Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth I) is born to Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

May:
Anne Boleyn is beheaded on charges of incest, witchcraft, adultery and conspiracy against the King (the first English Queen to be publicly executed); Jane Seymour and Henry are married.



1547

Henry dies and Edward is crowned King Edward VI, at the age of nine.



1543

February:
Catherine Parr becomes a part of the Tudor household.

July: Catherine Parr and Henry are married.

1542

February:
Katherine Howard is beheaded.



1540

January:
Anna of Cleves and Henry are married; Katherine Howard moves into Henry's court.

July:
Anna of Cleves and Henry are divorced; Katherine Howard and Henry are married.

Even more context

Henry's driving desire for a male heir led him to divorce two wives and have two wives beheaded; it led to religious revolution and the creation of the Church of England, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the Reformation. The decisions that Henry made during his reign were to shape modern Britain.

All three of Henry VIII's legitimate children – Mary, Elizabeth and Edward – became Queens or Kings of England. They played an important role in both British history and the history of the royal palaces. However, none of them had children themselves, and on Elizabeth's death, the Tudor dynasty ended.



LIFE IN THE 1500S - HOW DOES IT COMPARE?

The Queens were alive in the 1500s (a little over 500 years ago) and were considered royalty. Royalty only made up around 15% of the population - what was life like for the other 85% of the population?

POPULATION

In 1500, the population of England was about 3 million (in 2022 the population will be over 56 million)! Due to yearly outbreaks of plague and sickness, the population stayed at about this number.

LIFE EXPECTANCY

If you did manage to avoid sickness and plague, the average life expectancy was 50 years old.

HYGIENE

Bathing was a rarity, even for the rich. It was said that a peasant could expect to be fully bathed just twice in their life; once, when they were born, and when they had died! Face and hand washing were more common, but knowledge of hygiene was non-existent. No one knew that germs could be spread by dirty hands!

CHILDHOOD

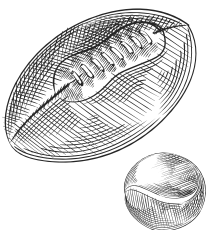
Most children would not attend school and very many would have died before they were six months old as disease would have been very common. As soon as possible, children joined their parents working on the land. They could not do any major physical work but they could clear stones off the land and they could be used to chase birds away during the time when seeds were sown.

HOUSING

Peasants lived in housing called "cruck houses". They had a wooden frame that was plastered with a mixture of mud, straw and manure.

ENTERTAINMENT

Football, hockey and handball were popular sports. Annual fairs were held in the city where outdoor entertainers, mummers, minstrels and puppeteers performed. Professional gamblers, minstrels and players could be found in the taverns.

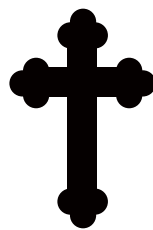


TRAVEL

Travel was not easy because most of the roads were dirt tracks which only remained visible and free from growth because of frequent use. Travel was most hazardous in the winter months when rain or snow could obliterate the dirt tracks. Villages were few and far between and signposts a rarity.

EDUCATION

Education was extremely limited and only available to the wealthy. Lessons started at sunrise and often did not finish until sunset. Pupils that did not complete their studies to the teacher's satisfaction were punished, usually by being whipped.



RELIGION

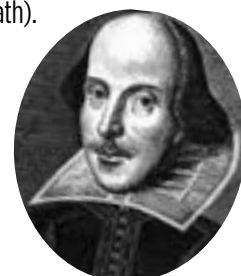
It was law that everyone attend church on Sundays and Holy days unless they obtained special dispensation. It was forbidden to eat meat, butter or cheese on Fridays, Saturdays, during Lent, during Advent or on the eve of Holy days.

PUNISHMENTS

Most people tried to obey the law since punishments for breaking laws were harsh. If they were found guilty of treason they would be hung, drawn and quartered. Women of any class could expect to be burned at the stake if found guilty of either treason or the murder of their husbands.

HISTORICAL FIGURES

Shakespeare was born in 1564 and wrote a play about Henry VIII in 1613 (66 years after Henry VIII's death).





KEY TERMS

Here are some key terms that you may hear in the lyrics of the show.

Before going to see *SIX*, familiarize yourself with this vocabulary to gain a better understanding of the world of the show.

TUDOR

The House of Tudor was an English royal house of Welsh origin. Tudor monarchs ruled the Kingdom of England and its realms from 1485 until 1603, with five monarchs in that period: Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I.

POPE

The head of the Roman Catholic Church. Religion was considered one of the most important features of modern European life, so the Pope was incredibly powerful.

VATICAN

The authority and government of the Pope.

LADIES-IN-WAITING

A female personal assistant at a Court, attending on a royal woman or a high-ranking noblewoman.

CORONATION

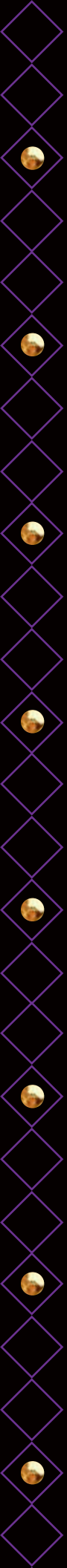
The act of placement or bestowal of a crown upon a monarch’s head. The term also refers not only to the physical crowning but to the whole ceremony wherein the act of crowning occurs.

BEHEADED

A mode of executing capital punishment by which the head is severed from the body. Considered an “honourable” form of death.

HANS HOLBEIN

Hans Holbein the Younger was a German painter and printmaker who worked in a Northern Renaissance style, and is considered one of the greatest portraitists of the 16th century.





MEET THE CREATORS OF SIX



Photo: Bruce Glikas

SIX was created by two friends.

“Lucy and I were at Cambridge together. We ended up working on a lot of the same shows—she directed and I acted. We talked about writing a musical together some day. In 2017 the Cambridge University Musical Theatre Society asked for applications to take an original musical to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, so I applied. When I got the gig I asked Lucy to write it with me. I said, “I have an idea for a pop concert musical with the six wives of Henry VIII. Do you want to write it with me?” – Toby Marlow, Co-Creator

The Queens are influenced by three things: the historical Queens, pop icons, and the performers playing them.

“SIX is told by the wives of Henry VIII—but as a girl group performing a pop concert for an audience. They’re sick and tired of everyone arguing over who’s the most important wife, and the Queens decide to hold a competition between them: whoever had the worst time in her marriage to Henry VIII will be crowned the leading lady of the girl group! The pop concert consists of each Queen singing a solo in order to stake a claim for the spotlight—but, without wanting to give too much away, not everything goes according to plan...”

“So much of the show is shaped by the individual six Queens performing onstage—and what each brings to her role and to the group dynamic. Even though each Queen had a palette of pop stars who inspired their character, the actual interpretation of them is super malleable. The performers have really made these roles their own—even taking inspiration from artists who weren’t around when we were first writing SIX. We have been so excited to see all these incredible performers’ versions of the Queens.” –Lucy Moss, Co-Director & Co-Creator

What makes SIX so special?

“Toby and Lucy are telling a story that has to do with their history. Their friendship leaps off the pages. You can see and smell and taste the collaboration when you’re reading the score and the script.”

–Brittney Mack (Anna of Cleves, SIX Original Broadway cast)

On the following pages, learn more about the influences for each Queen and reflect on these questions:

- After learning more about the making of SIX and facts about each Queen - what do you expect to see? What do you hope to see?
- Do you have a friend that you like to make things with? What do you like to create? What is special about your relationship?
- If you were to write a pop song about a person in history, who would it be? Who would be your Queenspiration?

“My name’s Catherine of Aragon

Was married 24 years, I’m a paragon
Of royalty, my loyalty is to the Vatican

So if you try to dump me you won’t try that again...”

Catherine of Aragon



Photo: Joan Marcus

Birth and death:

December 15, 1485 – January 7, 1536

Place of birth: Palace of Alcalá de Henares, near Madrid, Spain

Education: Embroidery, dancing, history, poetry, religion, law, Latin, French. Not English.

Marriage 1: to Arthur (Henry’s older brother) November 14, 1501 (aged 15).

Marriage 2: to Henry June 11, 1509 (aged 23)

Children: Mary, born February 18, 1516 (later Queen Mary I); 3 stillborn children; 2 died as babies; further miscarriages

Interests: Religion, sewing, dancing, a bit more religion

Cause of death: Probably a type of cancer

Remembered for: Her refusal to accept that her marriage was invalid; her faith; her dramatic speech to Henry at the court to judge the annulment of their marriage

Did you know? Catherine was Regent (whilst Henry fought in France in 1513) during the Battle of Flodden; when James IV of Scotland was killed in the battle she wanted to send his body to Henry as a present...

Queenspiration: Beyoncé and Shakira

PERFORMED BY: JAZ ROBINSON

Instagram: @officiallyjaz

School: All Saints Catholic Secondary School, George Brown College, Centennial College, Durham College.

Name three words that describe you.

1. Tenacious
2. Caring
3. Honest

Personal motto? What’s for me won’t pass me.

Favourite quote? “Failure is success in progress.” - Albert Einstein

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? I knew I wanted to be a performer around the age of 7. I started singing in the cherub choir at the church I was raised in at the age of 4. I also used to spend my spare time learning dances from the music videos of popular artists, and making up my own dances with friends from school to perform at the talent shows.

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? I am excited to be a part of SIX because it is one of my dream shows! It’s amazing to be able to be a part of a show that showcases woman empowerment as a leading lady! I grew up singing and dancing pop and commercial styles, and to be able to bring that to my Queen onstage is going to make me feel right at home. Lastly, I’m embarking on this SIX adventure with one of my good friends, Maggie Lacasse which makes it extra special for me!

Who is your Queen? My mum.

“I’m that Boleyn girl, and I’m up next
 See, I broke England from the Church, yeah I’m that sexy
 Why did I lose my head?
 Well my sleeves may be green, but my lipstick’s red...”



Anne Boleyn



Photo: Joan Marcus

Birth and death: Probably 1501 – May 19, 1536

Place of birth: Blickling Hall, Norfolk, England

Education: In the Netherlands and also France; reformation thinking and debate, French

Marriage: January 25, 1533 (aged 31)

Children: Elizabeth, born September 7, 1533 (later Queen Elizabeth I), at least two miscarriages

Interests: Fashion, dancing, flirtation, collecting evangelical works

Queen Links: Lady-in-waiting to Catherine of Aragon

Cause of death: Executed on Tower Green, London

Remembered for: Headlessness; bringing about the break with the Pope; having a sixth fingernail

Did you know? Anne was fluent in French and would have acted as a translator during the visit of Emperor Charles V to court in 1522...

Queenspiration: Lily Allen and Avril Lavigne

PERFORMED BY: JULIA PULO

Instagram: @_juliapulia

School: St. Joan of Arc Catholic Secondary, Sheridan College.

Name three words that describe you.

- 1.Honest
- 2.Determined
- 3.Silly

Personal motto? I don't really have one but an affirmation I've been giving myself recently is when something is stressful or out of your control or scary, try to make it fun for yourself or find the fun in it because things work out way better for you that way.

Favourite quote? I do not collect quotes. However, if we're talking favourite quote from the show I think it would have to be from Get Down: "Some boys make an advance I ignore them/Cos my jam comes on the lute/Looking cute/DAS IST GUT"

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer?

I've been performing and singing since I was 8 but the moment I decided it would be my career was after I watched *Wicked* at the CAA Ed Mirvish Theatre with my mom when I was 13. Like- it blew my mind. That was it for me.

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? The more I learn about SIX, the more I see how much of a community it cultivates - which is something that is so much more important now that we are coming out of a period of so much divide and isolation. Also, it is an extremely beloved show and for a lot of people like me, singing these songs in the mirror and watching these women SLAY vocals as well as dance like a KPOP group does something to people!! It is empowering!!! Even just practising the songs for auditions, I feel more confident as a person and performer. I've never played a part like Anne Boleyn and I'm really excited to learn from her and the rest of the girls and see how I grow. Also, I am very excited to put on that costume, girl!! I cannot tell a lie 🤪

Who is your Queen? Cynthia. Erivo.

“Jane Seymour, the only one he truly loved

When my son was newly born
I died, but I’m not what I seem

Or am I? Stick around, and you’ll suddenly see more...”

Jane Seymour

Birth and death: 1507 or 1508 – October 24, 1537

Place of birth: Wulf Hall, Wiltshire, England

Education: Very conventional; running a household, needlework

Marriage: 30 May 1536 (aged 28 or 29)

Children: Edward, born 12 October 1537 (later King Edward VI)

Interests: Religious faith, obedience

Queen Links: Lady-in-waiting to Anne Boleyn

Cause of death: Hemorrhage after birth of Prince Edward

Remembered for: Being the “only one he truly loved”; having two troublesome brothers who fought over the regency of the young Prince after King Henry’s death

Did you know? While Anne Boleyn was still alive, Henry sent Jane a gift of money, which she refused, apparently saying there “was no treasure in this world that she valued so much as her honor”...

Queenspiration: Adele and Sia



Photo: Joan Marcus

PERFORMED BY: MAGGIE LACASSE

Instagram: @maggielacasse_

School: Collège Charles-Lemoyne, Randolph College for the Performing Arts

Name three words that describe you.

1. Curious
2. Intuitive
3. Caring

Personal motto? Yolo surpasses the rule!

Favourite quote? “Do the earth a favour, don’t hide your magic!” - Yung Pueblo

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? I started dancing at the age of five and my parents were both in the field and met in musical theatre school, so I definitely bathed in music from a young age. However, I NEVER wanted to sing. I was wayyyy too shy! Then when I joined Randolph college, (I thought I was going to be a dancer who can sing on pitch) I quickly realized I had more abilities than I thought. But getting over those singing nerves was a big challenge in my career! I felt the imposter syndrome until very recently. (Still have to pinch myself sometimes that I sing for a living.)

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? When the show came out a few years back I immediately fell in love with the music / overall concept and thought to myself ... maybe one day in my wildest dreams if the stars align kinda thing. Actually, my friend Jaz (Aragon) and I were working together during the pandemic on a ship in Singapore and would listen to the original cast recording and dream of being in the show. We both flew in from abroad to audition and we both will get to perform this show together...stars aligning is an understatement!!

Who is your Queen? My granny! She’s the wisest person I know!



“Ich bin Anna of Cleves, Ja

When he saw my portrait, he was like ‘Ja!’

But I didn’t look as good as I did in my pic

Funny how we all discuss that, but never Henry’s little pr-...”



Anna of Cleves

Also known as: Anne of Cleves (the Anglicisation of her name) She is referred to as Anna here to distinguish between the two Annes & to honor the name she would have called herself in her own language.

Birth and death: 1515 – July 16, 1557

Place of birth: Schloss Berg, near Solingen, Germany

Education: Minimal, raised to become a minor Duchess; only spoke German

Marriage: January 6, 1540 (aged 24)

Children: None

Queen Links: Anna visited Katherine Howard once she became queen and bowed down to her.

Cause of death: Probably cancer

Interests: Staying alive

Remembered for: Being chosen from her portrait and then rejected when Henry met her.

Did you know? When Henry first met Anna of Cleves he disguised himself, possibly imagining some sort of romantic reaction. When he kissed her, she is said to have turned away coldly at this hideous stranger molesting her; according to a witness, Lord Russell, he ‘never saw His Highness so marvelously astonished’...

Queenspiration: Nicki Minaj and Rihanna



PERFORMED BY: KRISTAL HERNÁNDEZ

Instagram: @krystalhernandezofficial

School: Waltham High School (Go Hawks!), Salem State University

Name three words that describe you.

1. Hungry
2. Sleepy
3. Clumsy

Photo: Joan Marcus

Personal motto? What’s meant for you will not pass you! Also, I’m a lucky girl and everything (that’s meant for me) works out for me!

Favourite quote? “What’s meant for you will not pass you!”

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? When I was 7 years old, I saw my brother in his middle school production of *Guys and Dolls* as Sky Masterson. I only sang in my church choir up until that point and it was the first time I saw theatre and felt that butterfly adrenaline in my stomach thinking “I want to do that!”. When I was in school, I was in every play/musical I could get my hands on and didn’t really think about anything else. My parents were always super supportive although naturally they had some doubts that I wanted to pursue it as a career. My mother told me “You’d be a great nurse because you’d have a wonderful bedside manner.” And I just thought, “I’d love to be on *Grey’s Anatomy!*” And the longer I thought about all of the professions my personality could be good for, I can do them all with acting. That’s when it clicked for me.

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? I’m excited to be a part of SIX because it’s been a dream show of mine since I saw it on the West End back in 2019. It was unlike anything I had ever seen before, and I wanted to be a part of something that didn’t fit into any category. SIX is one of a kind!

Who is your Queen? My Queens are my mom and my sister. Both unapologetically themselves and I’m constantly inspired by them.

“Prick up your ears,
I’m the Katherine who lost her head

For my promiscuity outside of wed
Lock up your husbands, lock up your sons
K-Howard is here, and the fun’s begun...”



Katherine Howard



Birth and death: Probably 1523 – February 13, 1542

Place of birth: Norfolk House, Lambeth, London

Education: Brought up in Sussex as part of a large group of aristocratic young girls

Marriage: July 28, 1540 (aged 17)

Children: None

Queens Links: Lady-in-waiting to Anna of Cleves; cousin to Anne Boleyn.

Cause of death: Executed on Tower Green, London

Interests: Religious faith, obedience

Remembered for: Being completely used (and abused) by those with more power

Did you know? From her arrest on November 8, 1541 to her execution three months later, Katherine stayed under house arrest at Syon House; in late January 1542, an Act was passed in parliament that made it treason for a woman to become the king’s wife without “plain declaration before of her unchaste life,” meaning Henry could have her killed...

Queenspiration: Ariana Grande and Britney Spears

PERFORMED BY: ELYSIA CRUZ

Instagram: @elysiacruz

School: North Peace Secondary School, Sheridan College

Name three words that describe you.

1. Shy
2. Playful
3. Passionate

Personal motto? “If it’s for you, it’s for you” – Daddy Cruz. I guess it’s my dad’s way of saying to remember that you are enough and to trust that everything happens for a reason, what is meant to come will come!

Favourite quote? “I am the one thing in life I can control, I am inimitable, I am an original” – Aaron Burr, HAMILTON

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? When I first joined community theatre in Fort St. John, and played Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz*. I’ve always wanted to be a performer but ever since this moment, I knew I wanted to pursue it.

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? This show screams fierce and fun, the pop music is so awesome and exciting, and it uplifts and speaks to all the girlies in the audiences!! My little sister and I were one of those girlies, which is the main reason I’m very excited to be a part of SIX. We obsessed over these queens and their songs, so it truly feels like a dream come true to be a part of this production.

Who is your Queen? My mom forever and always.

Photo: Joan Marcus

“Five down, I’m the final wife

I saw him to the end of his life

I’m the survivor - Catherine Parr

And I bet you wanna know how I got this far...”

Catherine Parr

Birth and death:

Probably 1512 – September 5, 1548

Place of birth: Blackfriars, London

Education: Traditional ‘female’ accomplishments; French, Italian, Latin

Marriage:

1. to Sir Edward Burgh, a courtier 1529-1533
2. to John Neville, Lord Latimer 1534-1543
3. to Henry VII, July 12, 1543
4. to Thomas Seymour May 1547 in secret

Children: A daughter (to Thomas Seymour) who died as a baby

Queen Links: Her mother was lady-in-waiting to Catherine of Aragon; friendly with her daughter Princess Mary

Cause of death: Childbirth

Interests: Writing books; encouraging education; Reformation

Remembered for: Surviving

Did you know? Catherine was the first woman in England to publish books under her own name and in English.

Queenspiration: Alicia Keys and Emeli Sandé



Photo: Joan Marcus

PERFORMED BY: LAUREN MARIASOOSAY

Instagram: @laurenmariasoosay

School: Millennium High School, Cal State Fullerton

Name three words that describe you.

1. Determined
2. Goofy
3. Optimistic

Personal motto? Fake it till you make it, honey!

Favourite quote? “If you were born with the weakness to fall you were born with the strength to rise” - Rupi Kaur “Milk & Honey”

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? I was very young when I started dancing and acting; about 3 years old. I didn’t start truly singing until I was in my late teens, but I fell in love with it just the same! I think I’ve always known in my heart that this was what I wanted to do.

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? I’m so excited to be part of a tight knit cast of female-identifying peoples! I think it is such a rare experience and I am so honoured to be a part of it. Not to mention getting to sing this incredible music and be a part of this queendom legacy.

Who is your Queen? Oh, I’d definitely say it’s a tie between Raveena and Simone Ashley. Both queens I very much look up to and aspire to be like one day.



HAILEY LEWIS (Standby + Dance Captain)

Instagram: @haileyalexislewis

School: Nelson High School & Robert Bateman High School, Sheridan College

Name three words that describe you.

1. Passionate
2. Stubborn
3. Kind

Personal motto? What's for me won't pass me.

Favourite quote? "I am enough. I nothing to prove to anyone"(Maya Angelou) and "Our Deepest Fear" (Marianne Williamson).

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? I think from the age of 3 when I started dance, I said I wanted to be a superstar. It later shifted to wanting to be a dancer and specifically a back-up dancer for Beyonce and Janet Jackson. And now it's back to being a superstar.

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? We get to be pop stars! How cool is that?!? Also, getting to be a part of a show that is all about female empowerment is the most exciting. To stand on a stage amongst talented female artists and use our voices and be inspirations, gives me goosebumps just thinking about it. Also heels. Also pop singing. Also dancing, in heels while pop singing. Dream come true.

Who is your Queen? My mama!



JULIA McLELLAN (Standby)

Instagram: @juliaemilymclellan

School: Cobequid Educational Centre, Sheridan College

Name three words that describe you.

1. Curious
2. Determined
3. Eccentric

Personal motto? Be of benefit.

Favourite quote? "Find out who you are and do it on purpose." -Dolly Parton

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? I always call myself a music theatre misfit because I grew up in a small remote town and didn't know anything about this career or business growing up. I've danced and sung my whole life but I definitely didn't grow up like some of my peers listening to musicals non stop, seeing professional shows and dreaming of being on Broadway. It all came together more holistically than that. In Nova Scotia they basically hand you an instrument or a microphone out of the womb so I was always in bands and in little shows here and there. I did my high school musicals and some great mentors and teachers urged me to consider a career in music theatre. I'm so thankful to them all to this day.

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? I think it's pretty rare to hear stories about female friendship. We talk a lot about women related to romance or their trauma, but the idea of six women coming together on stage to celebrate each other and ultimately uplift each other feels special. It's going to feel great to channel that vibe in the company and onstage in the show.

Who is your Queen? In another life I'd be a flower farmer, and Erin Benzakein from Floret Farms is a hero of mine. She made a beautiful life full of flowers and is determined to share all her knowledge for free. She really uplifts other women and I just love her.



ABIGAIL SPARROW (Standby)

Instagram: @abigailsparrowofficial

School: Brethren High School, California State University

Name three words that describe you.

1. Zany
2. Pensive
3. Hard-working

Personal motto? Just be a good person.

Favourite quote? What doesn't kill you makes you stronger!

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? I knew I wanted to perform from a very very young age. I got my start in the arts actually with classical piano training (I wanted to go to Juilliard for piano!). I was competing in classical piano for a long time when I was younger, and then started classical ballet training as well at a young age. I was sort of split between those two loves for a long time before I discovered singing in high school, and then it sort of shifted to theatre where all three of my loves, music, dance and voice, all came together in a neat little package! And just the magic of theatre HOOKED me immediately. I wasn't sure I would be able to pursue this career long term however because I grew up a very sick kid. I have a genetic disability called Cystic Fibrosis, which meant that I was in and out of the hospital a lot when I was younger. Towards the beginning of my college career when I was choosing to get a degree in theatre I had a lot of doubt that I would be able to sustain a career in this field because my health was such a barrier. There was a period where I was really struggling in school to keep up with the rigorous course load while being in and out of the hospital and keeping up with my health treatment regiments (breathing treatments, doctors visits, pills, therapies, etc). However, about three years ago now I was put on a new miracle drug called Trikafta that was a breakthrough medication for CF patients, and it changed my life. It's been essentially a cure for me and has made it possible for me to pursue my dreams in full force. I want to make a difference in the arts and advocate for performers with disabilities and make sure they know they have a place in the arts and they have a unique voice that needs to be shared!

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? Gosh, so many reasons. SIX is just such a special show, and it resonates so deeply with so many people. I think the JOY and the unapologetic challenging of the norm is what I love about the show. It's just such a beautiful display of women lifting each other up and fixing their crowns, and taking back a narrative that has been spun a particular way about them for centuries. I think it's a really powerful thing that there are so many different shapes and sizes and colors of queens that come through the SIX universe. It's just a celebration of the beauty in diversity and amplifying women's voices in a beautiful package with insanely good music and killer choreography.

Who is your Queen? My queen is my momma. She is one of the strongest, funniest, most compassionate people I know. She truly is the reason I am who I am today and I wouldn't have gotten this far without her. I owe everything to her and my family, my dad, sister Grace, brother Max.



DARCY STEWART (Standby)

Instagram: @darcellas

School: Alexander Mackenzie High School, Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts

Name three words that describe you.

1. Confident
2. Outgoing
3. Energetic

Personal motto? Whatever it is, I'm in.

Favourite quote? "I'll try anything twice." (It might be from my friend Everett but who knows. I think it's amazing.)

When did you know you wanted to be an actor/singer/performer? I really don't have one specific moment. It's always been the thing I feel most comfortable doing. I didn't even know it was a career option- as a kid I didn't know the adults in professional shows were actually at WORK. Because it doesn't feel like work. It's the best "job" in the world.

Why are you excited to be a part of SIX? Because the SIX team is extremely supportive and so fun to work with. And the cast is amazing.

Who is your Queen? All of my best friends. Seriously. They rock my world.



SIX THE MUSICAL – AUTHORS’ NOTES

It’s actually WILD thinking back to “how it all began” and really, there are a whole load of potential origin stories for this show.

There’s one wherein the concept of “the six wives as pop stars” suddenly came to Toby in a vision in the back of a poetry class at our uni. He frantically scribbled down the idea, along with the phrase “need Lucy,” and the rest is...history ;) Then there’s another version that goes further back to an evening spent drinking wine, despairing over the gender disparity in meaty theatrical parts, and joking about writing a musical called “Live and Let Dido.” And then there’s another that goes even further back still to the formation of our friendship: when we went out on the town together and discovered that we are both aggressively enthusiastic dancers.

But the origin story that hopefully gives the best sense of where this piece has come from actually took place much later than these, during our first proper writing session together in January 2017. We already knew we had a slot at the Edinburgh Fringe to fill with an original show, thanks to the musical theatre society at our university. We also had the basic concept of “the six wives of Henry VIII, but - like - a pop group.” And we had some other criteria outlining the kind of show we wanted to write: e.g. it had to have an experimental form, it had to be full of pop bangers. We had very little else.

So in that initial meeting, we did two things. We first spent an inordinate amount of time thinking up increasingly obscure potential titles for the show - the first of which was “SIX.” But we also decided to write a kind of manifesto of what we were trying to achieve - a ‘six point plan’ (hehe) that we hoped could act as a guidepost to check ourselves against during the writing process.

We definitely fell short of our aims in some ways. For instance, it’s still up for debate whether or not the show actually passes the Bechdel test (oops). And in other ways, this manifesto feels like a relic of our own individual journeys discovering the discourse surrounding gender - a snapshot of a very specific moment in our lives in early 2017. Indeed, if we were to write this kind of document now, we’re sure the outcome would be considerably different. Nonetheless, this plan was essential in shaping our writing process and hopefully goes some way to explaining why the show exists in the way it does.

It reads as follows...



Photo: Jenny Anderson





SIX'S 'SIX-POINT PLAN'

(WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO)

I. We want to provide a different perspective on the six Queens separate from their status as wives

II. We will give female historical figures a voice to tell their own experiences
- experiences that have, in the past, predominantly been told by men

III. We aim to show that even 500 years later, there are still parallels to be found in the female experience

IV. We will show that women can tell stories together that are interesting, engaging, clever, and funny - stories told by women do not have to be about or include men in order to be entertaining

V. We plan to use the pop concert genre to enable this fun, silly, comic, and powerful story to be told exclusively by women - but not just "for" women - and in order to facilitate our third aim

VI. All of the above needs to be done whilst above all acknowledging the silliness and campiness of its own genre and being self-aware of its own message; it should never be earnest or too sincere



Photo: Joan Marcus

REFLECTIONS ON THE SHOW

Now that you have seen the show, have your students consider the questions below.

Which SIX Queen:

- Did you connect most with and why?
- Has the life story that would make the best movie?
- Would you actually like to know?

After they individually reflect, open up the discussion to the larger class.

“WE ARE GONNA HELP YOU FIGURE OUT ONCE AND FOR ALL WHICH OF US IS THE QUEEN OF THE CASTLE...”

Next, split the class into six small groups and assign each group a Queen. Each group will compare and contrast between society’s expectations of a happy life today compared to what would be considered a happy life for a woman in the early sixteenth century.

**“THE ONE YOU’VE BEEN WAITING FOR
THE MYSTERY
THE ONE WHO CHANGED HISTORY...”**

HISTO-REMIX

Toby and Lucy wanted to write a show about the six wives of Henry VIII. In this activity using a similar process to how SIX was written, students will create their own version of a musical inspired by a historical figure(s).

STEP 1 As a class read (or watch on Instagram) Toby and Lucy’s writing tips:

1. Write the kind of thing that you would want to see and not what you think what someone else would like. Chances are if you like what you are writing, someone else will as well.

2. Just write something. It’s so much easier to edit something terrible into something amazing than it is to write something fantastic right off the bat.

3. If you’re having trouble writing or are experiencing writer’s block - call a friend who’s a writer and bounce some ideas off them. There is nothing more inspiring than finding a collaborator that you really gel with.

So pick up a pen and WRITE! (To watch the video - check out the @sixbroadway Instagram feed)

STEP 2 Individually, in pairs or small groups, decide on a person from history that you would like to learn more about. This could be someone that you learned about in school, have read, or heard about in conversations.

STEP 3 RESEARCH! Do as much research as you can on this person. Be a detective - you are gathering information to help inspire you!

STEP 4 Decide on form. Toby and Lucy were inspired by pop music and wrote a pop concert musical. What kind of music do you like to listen to? What kind of TV shows do you watch? What form inspires you? Hip Hop? TikTok? Horror? Podcast?

STEP 5 Once you have decided on a form, think about the elements and successful people within that form. What qualities do they have? What qualities can you replicate in your piece?

STEP 6 Start writing! If you feel stuck, refer back to Toby and Lucy’s writing tips. Don’t feel like you have to stay historically accurate. Remember...

“SWITCHING UP THE FLOW AS WE ADD THE PREFIX”



WRITING YOUR OWN NARRATIVE

What different types of power are shown by the SIX Queens? What power did they have in their lifetimes over people's actual opinions, or their lives? What power can they be given as historical figures?

STEP 1

Explain to your class the concept of taking control of your own narrative.

STEP 2

Share the below prompts with your class and invite them to answer the questions.

What makes you special and different?

What is your superpower?

What kind of music makes you dance?

What qualities do you want to be known for?

What mark have you left on the world, so far?

What do you want to be known for?

STEP 3

Once students have answered the questions, share them out as a class.



INSPIRED TO LEARN MORE?

Resources excerpted from the A.R.T. SIX Toolkit

TO READ

- *The Wives of Henry VIII* by Antonia Fraser - A narrative that deconstructs the stereotypes the six have been known as for centuries.
- *Divorced Beheaded Survived: A Feminist Reinterpretation of the Wives of Henry VIII* by Karen Lindsey - The stories of the six wives through a feminist lens. Another great insight to how the wives might've felt.
- *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* by Gladys Malvern - A historical narrative view of the lives of the six wives. It brings to light what their inner thoughts may have been.
- *Women and Tudor Tragedy: Feminizing Counsel and Representing Gender* by Allyna E. Ward - An academic look at gender in the Tudor era. It gives greater context of the society of the wives as a whole.

TO LISTEN

- A recorded lecture/discussion about the six wives and the filming of the mini-series *Six Wives* with Lucy Worsley.
- A short podcast for children and their parents retelling the story of Henry VIII and his six wives in a narrative fashion.

TO WATCH

- *Secrets of the Six Wives / Six Wives with Lucy Worsley* - A biographical mini-series with historical re-enactments from PBS.
- *The Ascent of Woman* - A four-part documentary series that highlights the importance of women in society over the course of 10,000 years.



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ONTARIO CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- Language/English
- Social Studies/History
- Drama
- Music
- Dance
- Canadian and World Studies
- Gender Studies
- Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice
- Equity and Social Justice: From Theory to Practice
- World Cultures
- Understanding Fashion
- Dynamics of Human Relationships
- Challenge and Change in Society

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AND GLOBAL COMPETENCIES

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship
- Learning to Learn/Self-Aware & Self-Directed
- Communication
- Global Citizenship and Sustainability
- Digital Literacy

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