

## ADVENTURE &amp; TRAVEL

## Ghostly Inspirations

served letters and velvet seats will transport us back to us feel what they felt.

In the accidental “moments,” it can be uplifting. As to the past can appear here, solidly constructed, early nothing at all. I was disappointed, for instance, read my guide book and the closed museum dedicated a great 19th-century comm- Satie in Montmartre, spring day, all I discov-

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r dead heroes.

blue Parisian plaque on itie lived and composed at meant he stood here, : very doorstep, in front of cked door. He smelled g leaves. And, amazingly, I it took. I walked away ne of his Gynnopédies, in- eate something in his s every bit as contented, I

suspect, as if I'd been allowed inside, seen a little piano or a yellowed draft of his compositions.

I longed for similar heart palpitations on a recent trip to Stratford-upon-Avon. Stratford's favorite son William Shakespeare, with whom I share a birthday Saturday, is one of my favorite writers. I was hungry to feel his presence, or posthumous approval, in my tourism.

I paced outside his grammar school, but wasn't permitted in, as contemporary Stratford youth were using it for their education. I saw the country house of his wife's family. I glanced at a chair purported to be the one Shakespeare wooed her from. It was all very real, but it didn't provoke what I'd hoped for. I couldn't place myself alongside him in that glove workshop (where he apprenticed his father), or in the fields where he may have

dreamt up the faeries from “A Midsummer Night's Dream.” I could not cross the chasm of those centuries. Shakespeare may very well have lived in this house, but it wasn't the same now, amidst the car traffic and pedestrians in athletic gear. What he saw and heard in this house was unrecoverable for me, no more or less imaginable here than when I was in a room in Brooklyn, a book in my hand. I left



**REMEMBER ME** Lady Macbeth stands behind Shakespeare in his hometown.

these sites entertained, educated, intrigued, but not visited.

However, I did feel Shakespeare's ghost—walking, working, living—in, of all places, a circa-1996 replica of the Globe Theatre (located a few blocks from where the original had

stood), the labor of love of American actor Sam Wanamaker.

There, I was fortunate enough to be toured through the empty theater by David Crystal, the great Shakespearean linguist. I was allowed up on stage, backstage and down into “Hell,” below stage. I walked its yard, touched the boards from down where the groundlings would've drank (and relieved themselves) and listened. I gazed at the painted heavens under the canopy while Crystal, in Elizabethan dialect, marched across the platform and recited the prologue to Act I of “Henry V.”

How easily it worked for me, that speech pleading for imagination, how quickly I flew to that other, nearby stage of the 1600s, jarred and jostled, sensing my hero close by.

What do I hope for on my own memorial? (A middle-age writer can dream.) “On This Site, Arthur Phillips (1969-2099) Struggled With His Mortgage, Held Out Hopes for the Minnesota Twins (1961-) and Drew Inspiration From His Heroes.”

*Mr. Phillips's latest novel “The Tragedy of Arthur” was published this week; it includes what purports to be a previously unknown King Arthur play by William Shakespeare.*



**THE TRACKER**  
A 30,000-Foot View

Interactive iPhone app “WindowSeat” takes flight maps up a big notch. Enter your travel details and it will not only track the path of your plane, but will offer up details about landmarks on the ground. “WindowSeat” works off-line, so you can avoid being tackled by a flight attendant. And while the makers don't promise 100% accuracy, you can tweak your location as you fly (that's, like, totally not the Grand Canyon). In early summer, it will be available for the iPad, too. \$2.99, [windowseatapp.com](http://windowseatapp.com)



**THE TOUR**

**Curry, No Hurry**

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Travel will run a 16-day culinary tour accompanied by Prasad Chirromula, owner of five Thai restaurants in Connecticut. There will be excursions to the famous spice market in Kochi and a wholesale produce market in Mumbai, cooking classes, palace visits, yoga sessions and more. Guests will sleep off their meals at luxury hotels such as the Leela Kempinski Goa and the Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai. From \$12,910 per person, [geringerglobaltravel.com](http://geringerglobaltravel.com)