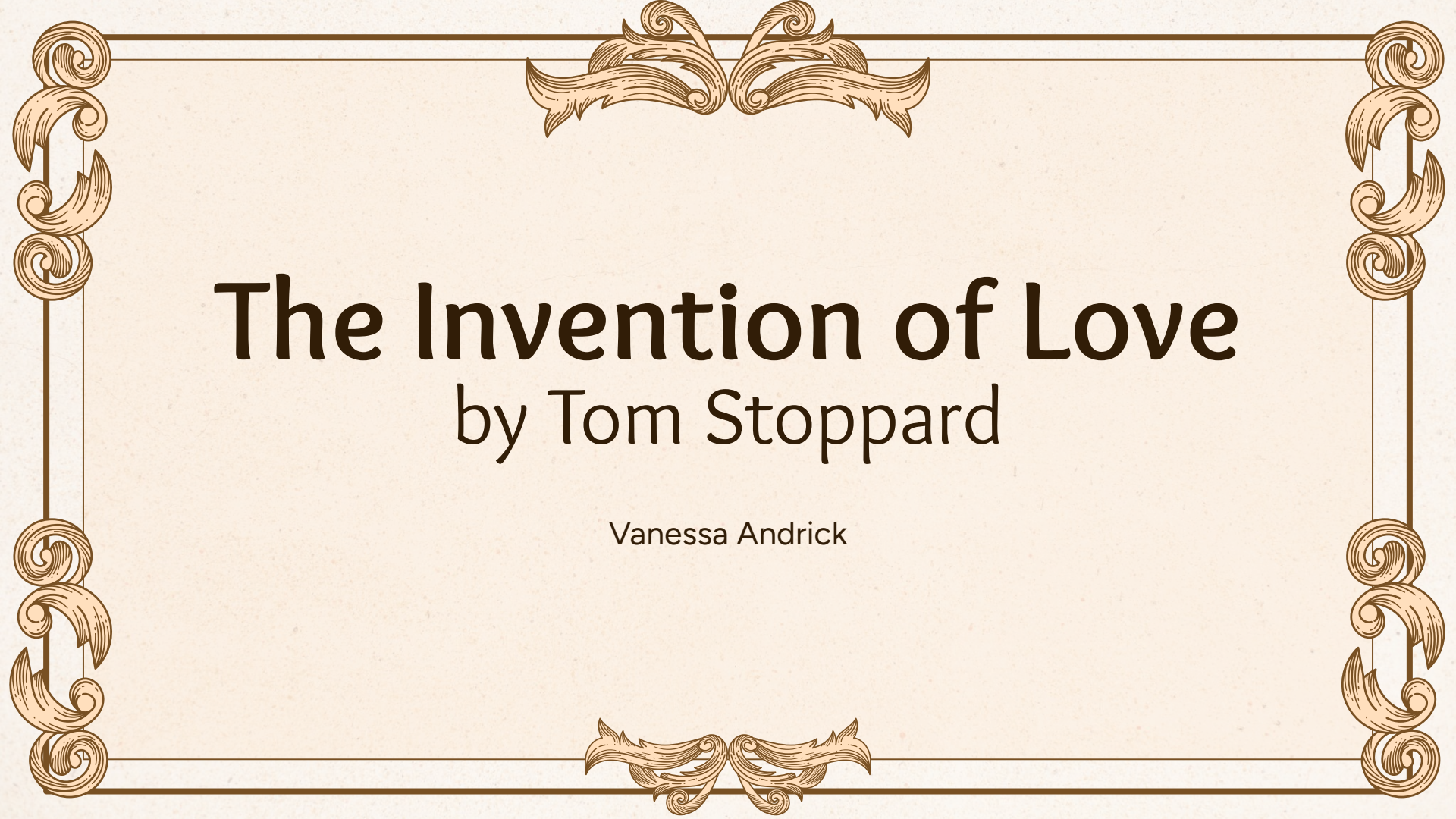




The Invention of Love

by Tom Stoppard

Vanessa Andrick



01

Overview

What is *The Invention of Love*?



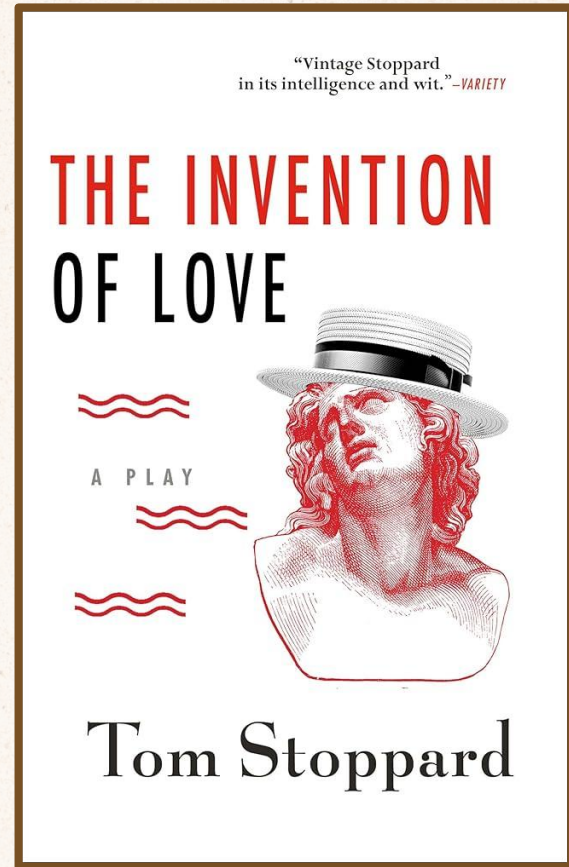
Tom Stoppard

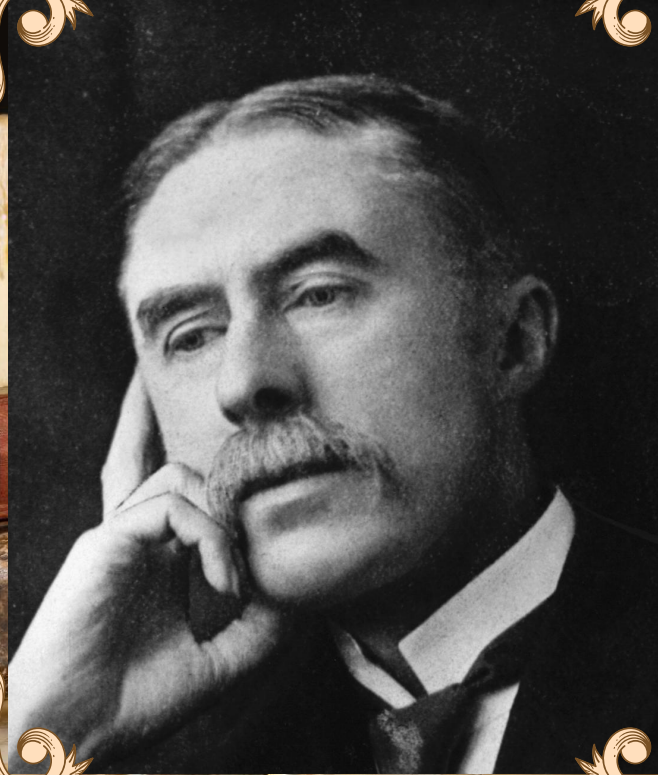
Stoppard is one of the most widely produced living British playwrights. His style includes distinct use of language, wit, intellectualism, and intertextuality

Notable plays: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1966), *The Real Thing* (1982), *Arcadia* (1993)

The Invention of Love

The life and work of scholar and poet A.E. Housman. Art, classics scholarship, changing times, and the immortality of love.





A.E. Housman

A poet and a scholar:
“It sounded like two
different people”

A poet and a scholar:
“It sounded like two
different people”
(Stoppard 2).

Housman was a revered (and
loathed) classics scholar during
his lifetime despite initially
flunking out of college.



And, his poetry...

A Shropshire Lad (1896)

*He would not stay for me,
and who can wonder*

A. E. Housman 1859 – 1936

He would not stay for me, and who can wonder?

He would not stay for me to stand and gaze.

I shook his hand, and tore my heart in sunder,

And went with half my life about my ways.

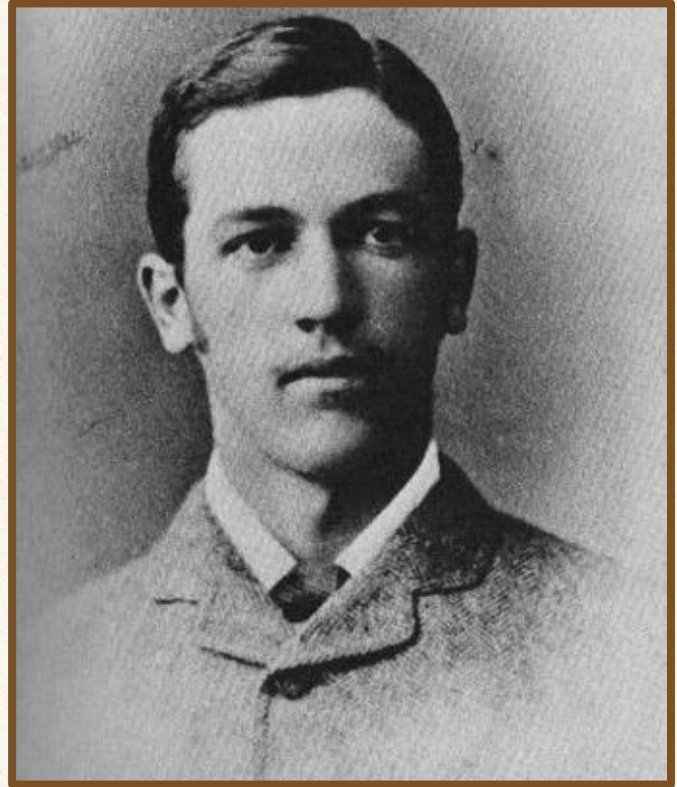
This poem is in the public domain.

- Housman's poetry exhibits some preferred themes
 - Time and death's inevitability
 - War and nature
 - Appreciation for youth and beauty in a hostile, Godless world

Poetry Foundation

So, about that poem...

Housman was gay and unrequitedly in love with his best friend from school, Moses Jackson. The play makes this explicit and it's the driving drama of the play and, many people speculate, his life.





The Aesthetic Movement (1860-1900)

The background of the slide is a painting of a woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a red dress with a white lace collar. She is looking directly at the viewer. To her right, a golden swan is visible. The background is dark with floral and swirling patterns.

“Art for art’s sake” and the
aesthetes. “Knowledge for
knowledge’s sake”?



02

Vision Presentation

Cornerstones, Questions

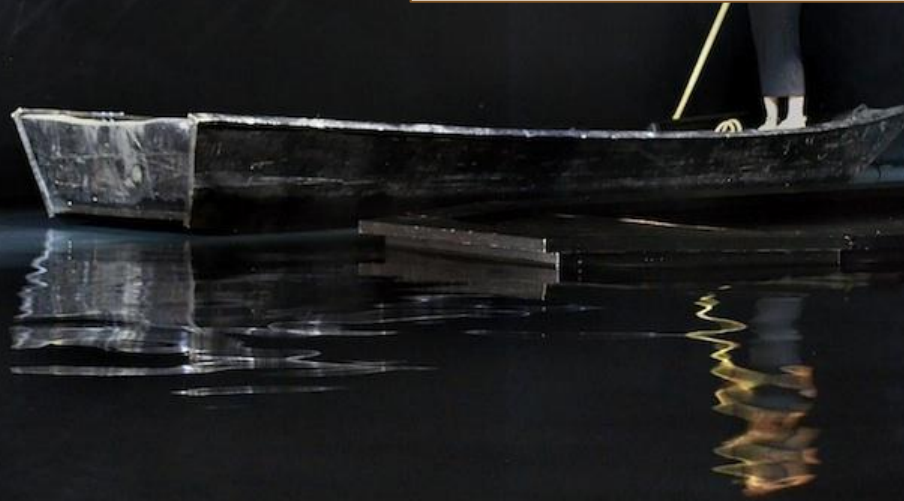
General Beauty

Stoppard employs intertextuality to remark on the **immortality of love and the romantic ideal**, though “morality, art, and social order” may change. What is the **purpose of art?** Classics scholarship: **why study the past?** What do these constructs tell us about our lives? This is a play of questions and half-answers about the march of time, what it means to live a full life, and what lives after us. This is Stoppard’s attempt to make A.E. Housman immortal.

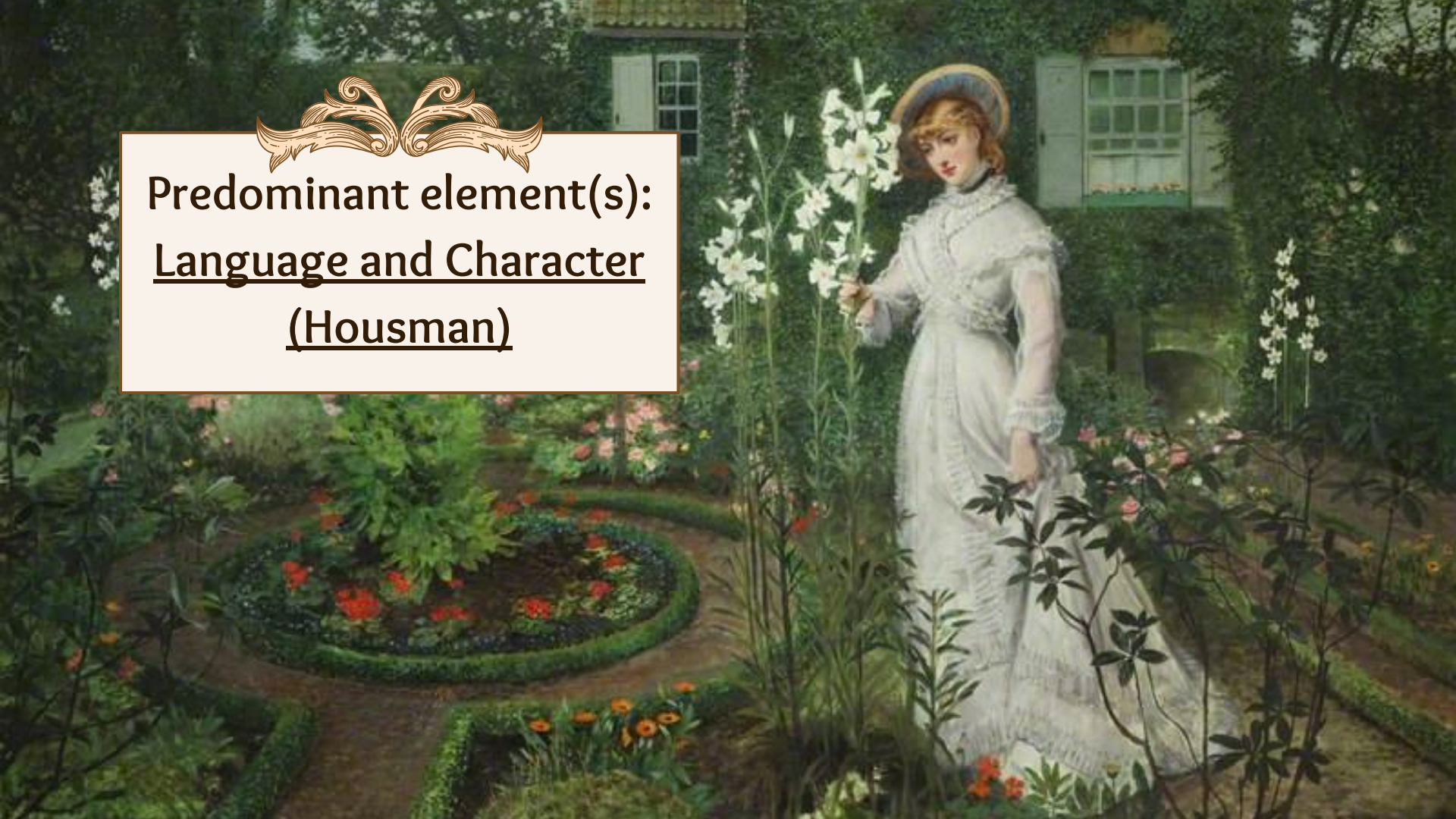


World of the Play

Housman's view of Victorian
England from the River Styx.



Predominant element(s):
Language and Character
(Housman)



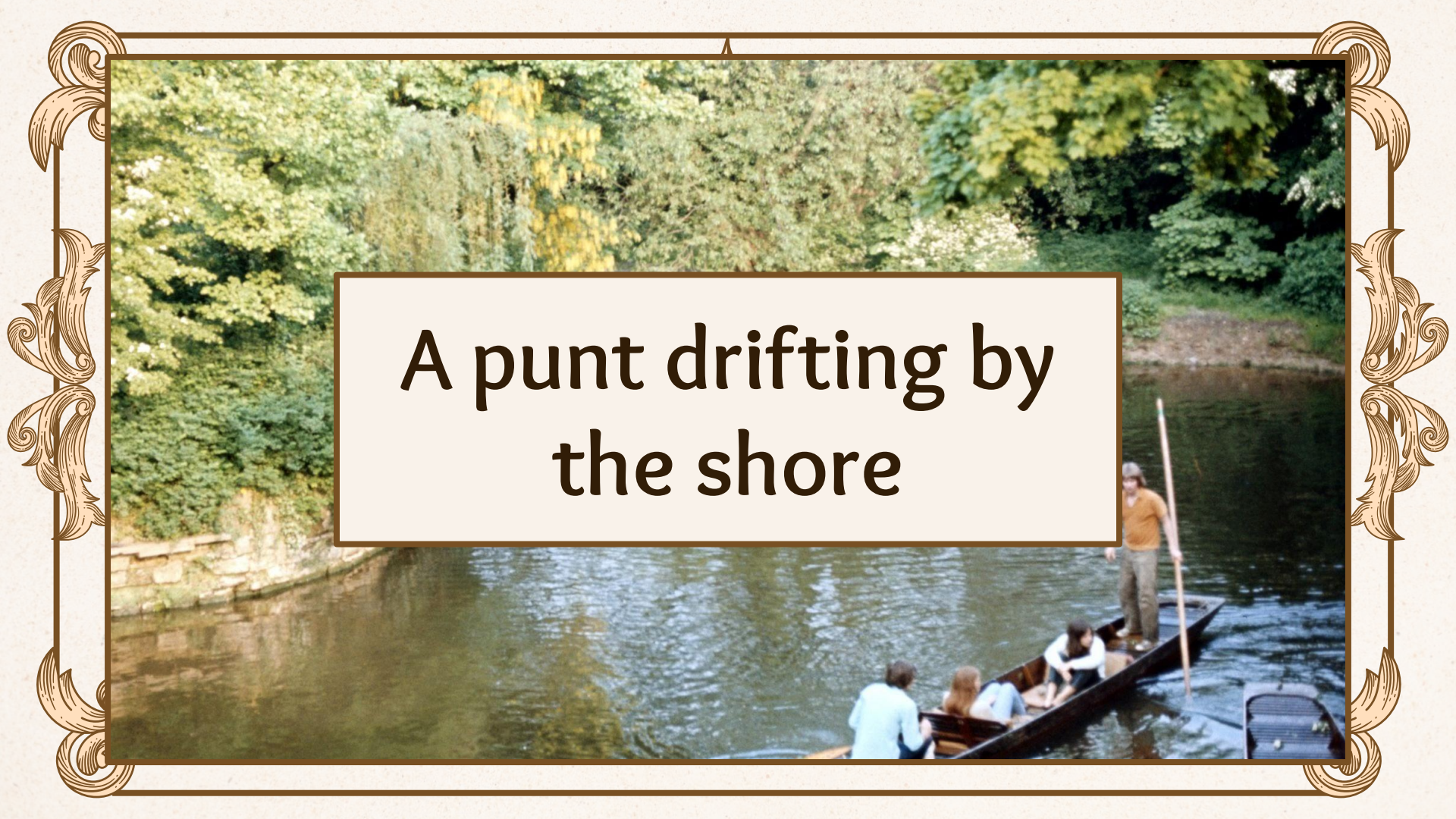


Traditional Form

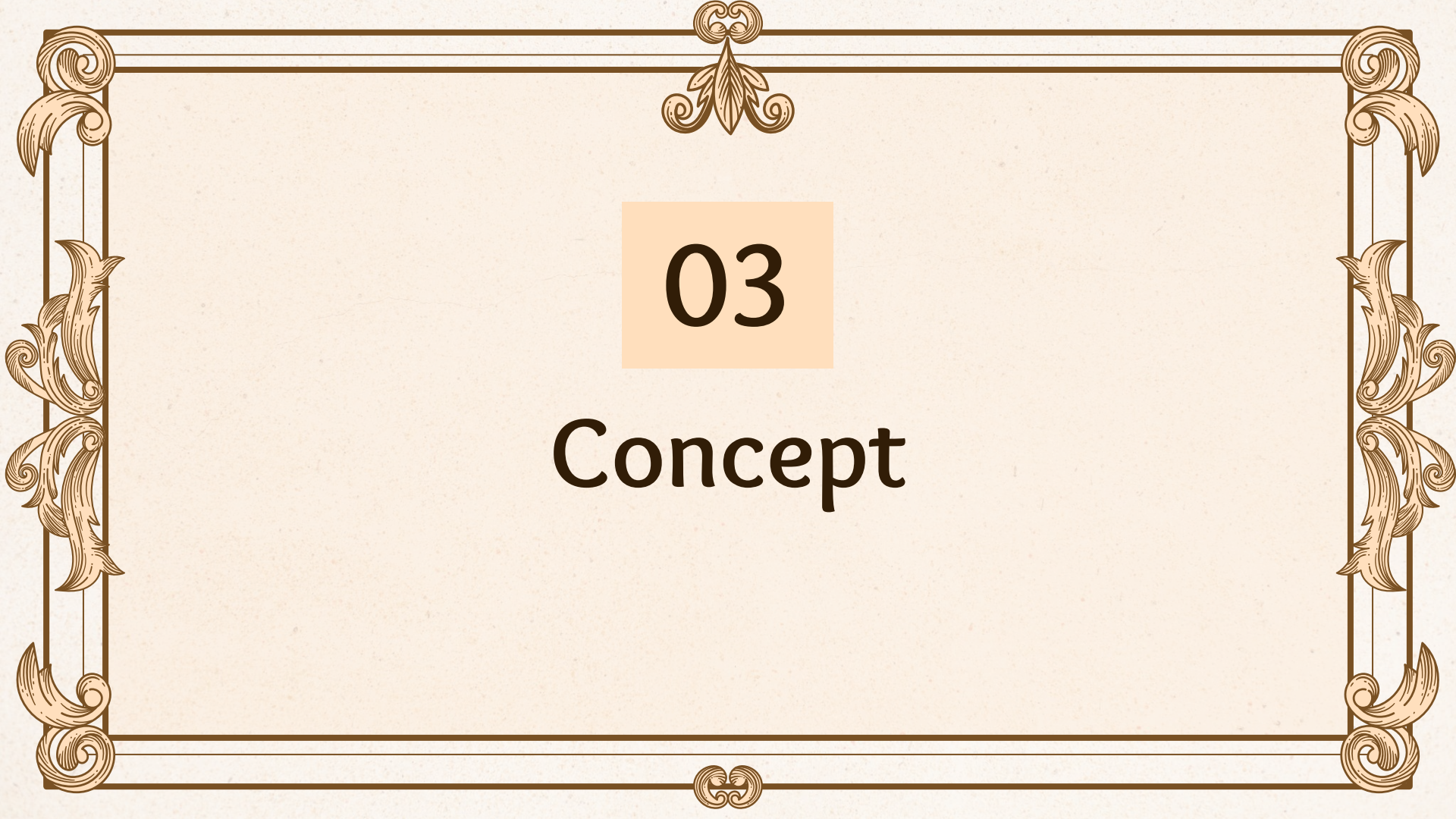
Tragicomic “trip down
memory lane” (or, the
Styx) – **memory play**.

Note: departures from
Housman’s biography



A photograph of a punt drifting on a river, framed by an ornate border. The punt is a long, narrow wooden boat with a person standing at the stern using a long pole to maneuver it. Several people are seated inside the punt. The river is calm, reflecting the surrounding greenery. The background is a dense forest of trees, including a prominent weeping willow on the left bank. The entire image is enclosed in a decorative brown border with ornate scrollwork at the corners.

A punt drifting by the shore



03

Concept

Space

Mobile (boat, bike, etc.)

- Thematically, we are watching life go by
- Practically, it is lecture-heavy with a lot of talking
- So... keep it moving!** Not just between, but *within* scenes
- "References in the stage directions to river, boats, garden, etc. need not be taken at face value"*

Sketched vs. painted

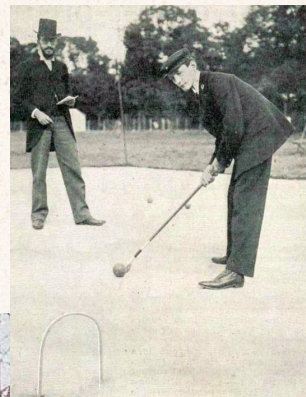
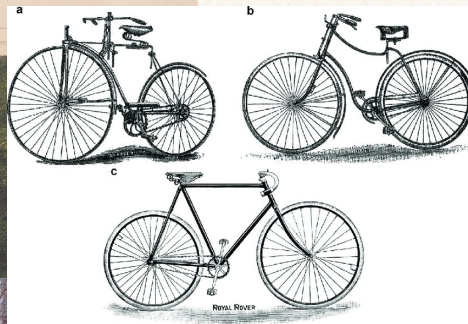
- If movement (abstraction) shows passing memories, unreality, what does a clear, defined space say?
- This play is one of contrasts, of halves making a whole. We are coloring in figures of the past as living lives like ours.
- Paint with our full palette**





Lith. A. Rasm.

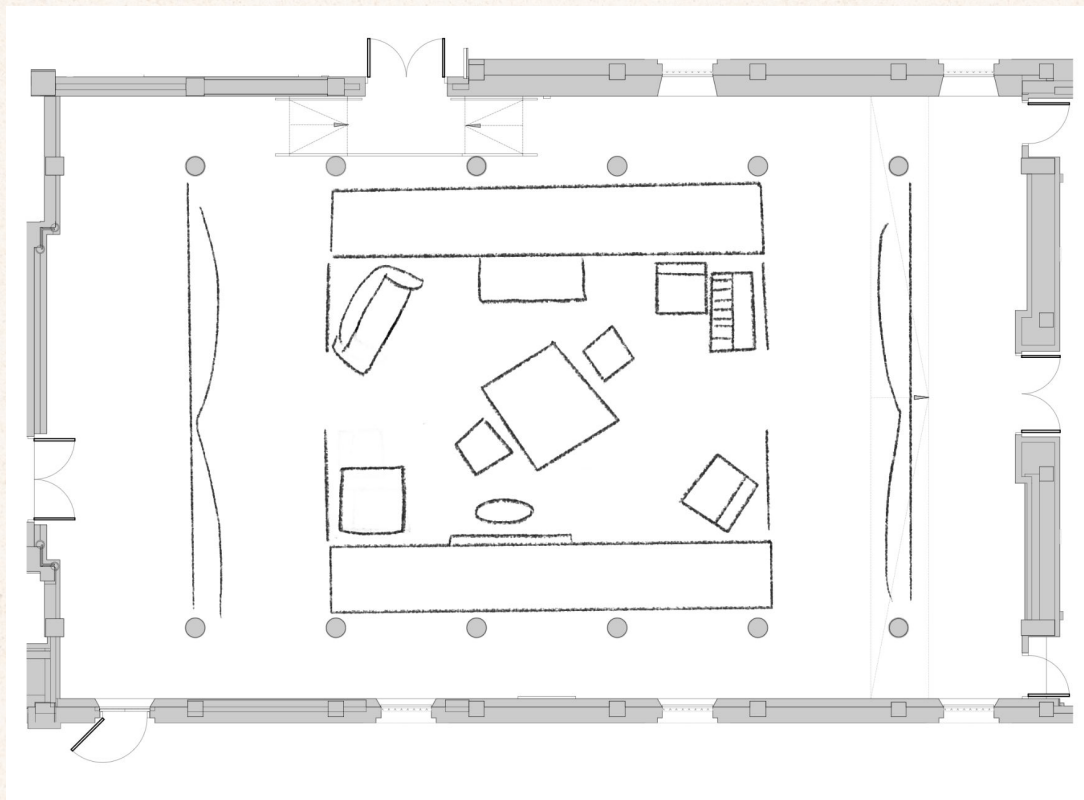
SAINT JOHN'S COLLEGE
OXFORD.

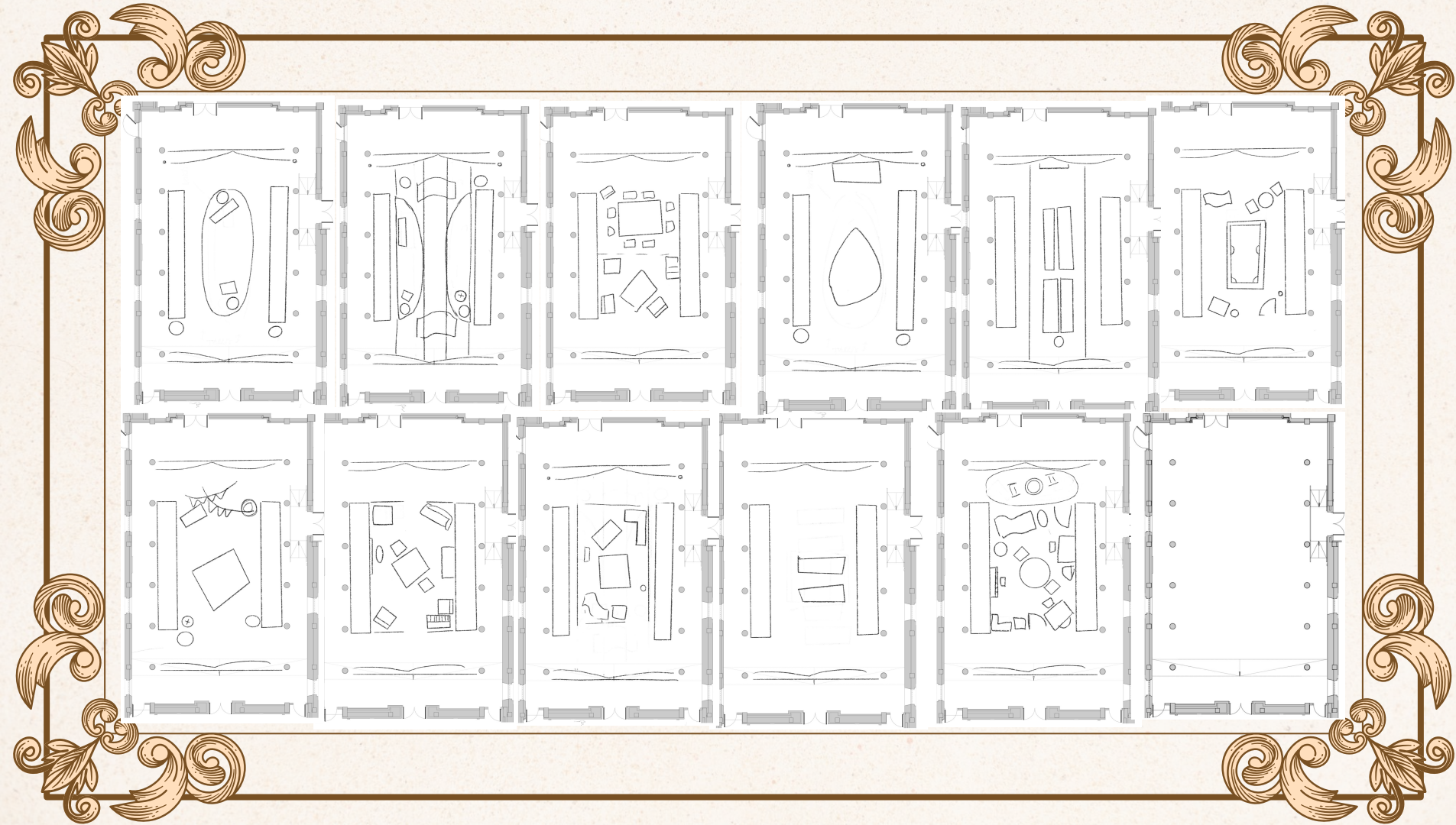


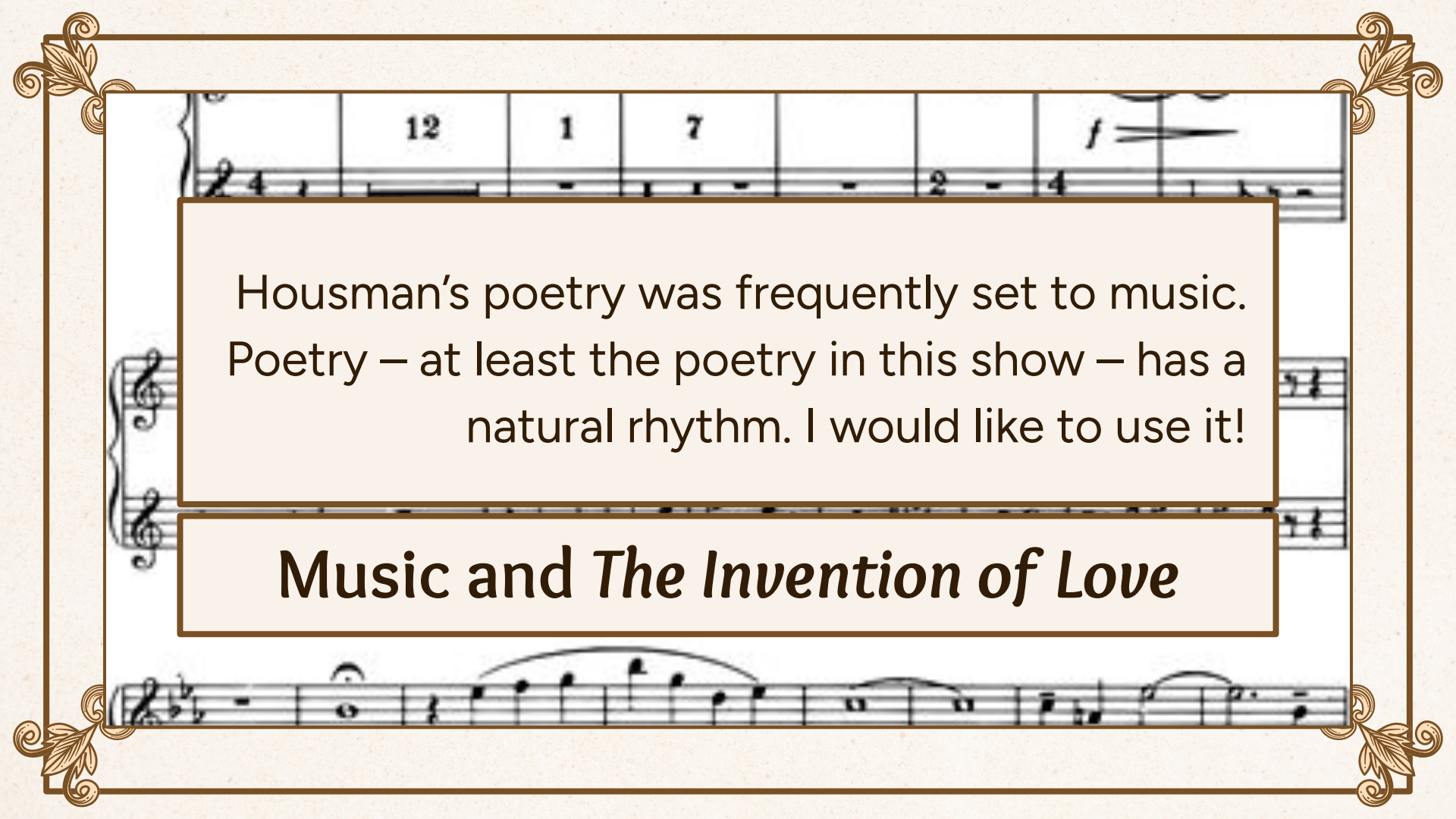










The background of the slide features a musical score. At the top, a piano part is visible with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. It includes measures with numbers 12, 1, and 7 above the staff, and a dynamic marking 'f'. Below this, a vocal line is partially visible. The bottom of the slide shows another musical staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature, containing a melodic line with a slur. The entire slide is framed by a decorative brown border with ornate corner pieces.

Housman's poetry was frequently set to music.
Poetry – at least the poetry in this show – has a
natural rhythm. I would like to use it!

Music and *The Invention of Love*