Shakespeare and World Cinema radically reimagines the field of Shakespeare on film, drawing on a wealth of examples from Africa, the Arctic, Brazil, China, France, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, Tibet, Venezuela, Yemen and elsewhere. Mark Thornton Burnett explores the contemporary significance of Shakespeare cinema outside the Hollywood mainstream for the first time, arguing that these adaptations are an essential part of the story of Shakespearean performance and reception. The book reveals in unique detail the scope, inventiveness and vitality of over seventy films that have undeservedly slipped beneath the radar of critical attention and also discusses regional Shakespeare cinema in Latin America and Asia. Utilizing original interviews with filmmakers throughout, it introduces new auteurs, analyzes multiple adaptations of plays such as Macbeth and Romeo and Juliet, and pioneers fresh methodologies for understanding the role that Shakespeare continues to play in the international marketplace.

Mark Thornton Burnett is Professor of Renaissance Studies at Queen’s University Belfast. He is the author of Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture: Authority and Obedience (1997), Constructing ‘Monsters’ in Shakespearean Drama and Early Modern Culture (2002) and Filming Shakespeare in the Global Marketplace (2007; 2nd edn 2012) and the editor of The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe (1999) and The Complete Poems of Christopher Marlowe (2000). His co-edited publications include Screening Shakespeare in the Twenty-First Century (2006), Filming and Performing Renaissance History (2011) and The Edinburgh Companion to Shakespeare and the Arts (2011). He is Director of the Sir Kenneth Branagh Archive, has held fellowships at the Huntington Library and the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Centre, and has taught at the Folger Institute on the National Endowment for the Humanities programme ‘From the Globe to the Global: Shakespearean Relocations’.
To Henry John Burnett
## Contents

*List of figures*  page viii  
*Acknowledgements*  xi  
*A note on titles*  xv  

Introduction  1  

**PART I AUTEURS**

1  Alexander Abela  23  
2  Vishal Bhardwaj and Jayaraaj Rajasekharan Nair  55  

**PART II REGIONAL CONFIGURATIONS**

3  Shakespeare, cinema, Latin America  89  
4  Shakespeare, cinema, Asia  125  

**PART III PLAYS**

5  *Macbeth*  163  
6  *Romeo and Juliet*  195  

*Epilogue*  232  
*Filmography*  239  
*Bibliography*  245  
*Index*  268  

vii
Figures


6 Paniyan/Iago (Lal) triumphs over a distraught Perumalayan/Othello (Suresh Gopi) in *Kaliyattam* (dir. Jayaraaj Rajasekharan Nair, 1997). Courtesy of Jayaraaj Rajasekharan Nair and Jayalekshmi Films.


8 Santiago/Iago (Manuel Landeta) and Julia/Desdemona (Lisset) join in dance, as depicted in the poster for *Huapango* (dir. Iván Lipkies, 2004). Courtesy of Iván Lipkies and Vlady Realizadores, S. A.

9 Max/Macbeth (Daniel Alvarado) is appalled by his crime in *Sangrador* (dir. Leonardo Henriquez, 2000). Courtesy of Leonardo Henriquez, director, and Cezari Jaworsky, director of photography.
Mrs Lima/Mistress Page (Zeze Polessa) and Mrs Rocha/Mistress Ford (Elisa Lucinda) prove a difficult pair to outwit in As Alegres Comadres (dir. Leila Hipólito, 2003). Courtesy of Leila Hipólito, Conexão Cinema, Ananã Produções and Zohar Cinema.

Poster for Chicken Rice War (dir. Chee Kong Cheah, 2000). Courtesy of MediaCorp Raintree Pictures Pte Ltd.

Wu Luan/Hamlet (Daniel Wu) strikes a soulful pose in The Banquet (dir. Xiaogang Feng, 2006). Courtesy of Huayi Brothers Media Corp.


The film director (Andréa Smith), playing the role of Lady Macbeth, seizes the bloody dagger while Macbeth (Yahya Hamood Mohsin al-Dhafeeri) looks on suspiciously in Someone is Sleeping in My Pain (dir. Michael Roes, 2001). Courtesy of Michael Roes.

Poster for Macbeth (dir. Bo Landin and Alex Scherpf, 2004). Courtesy of Bo Landin, Alex Scherpf and Scandinature Films.

The Capulets and the Montagues are represented as warring township factions in uGugu no Andile/Gugu and Andile (dir. Minky Schlesinger, 2008). Courtesy of Minky Schlesinger and Fireworx Media.

Dance acts as an antidote to social tensions in Mare', Nossa Historia de Amor/Mare', Another Love Story (dir. Lúcia Murat, 2008). Courtesy of Lúcia Murat and Taiga Filmes.


Ibo/Romeo (Denis Moschitto) and Titzi/Juliet (Nora Tschirner) experience the challenges of multiculturalism in Kebab Connection (dir. Anno Saul, 2004). Courtesy of Photofest.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The young lovers, Roméo (Thomas Lalonde) and Juliette (Charlotte Aubin), escape in <em>Roméo et Juliette</em> (dir. Yves Desgagnés, 2006). Courtesy of Photofest.</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Lauri/Romeo (Mikko Leppilampi) and Vilma/Juliet (Laura Birn) savour the applause in <em>8 päivää ensi-iltaani/8 Days to Premiere</em> (dir. Perttu Leppä, 2008). Courtesy of Perttu Leppä and Juonifilmi Oy.</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

I owe primary thanks to four institutions which have funded my research. Queen’s University Belfast granted me a semester of study leave, and the Arts and Humanities Research Council provided an additional semester away from teaching and administration under its one-year research leave scheme. Queen’s University has been equally enabling in the form of grants from the Internationalization Fund, the Research and Travel Fund, and the Santander Mobility Scholarships Scheme, while the British Academy assisted in the form of an Overseas Conference Grant. This book was developed during my tenure of a short-term fellowship at the Folger Shakespeare Library, and I am grateful to Erin Blake, Gail Kern Paster, David Schalkwyk, Sarah Werner and Georgianna Ziegler for making my stay so pleasant and productive. During my tenure of the award, David Carnegie, Anthony R. Guneratne and Andrew Walkling were generous with hospitality, conversation and counsel. I also spent time at the Folger on a separate occasion as guest faculty on the National Endowment for the Humanities institute programme ‘From the Globe to the Global: Shakespearean Relocations’. For that opportunity, I am indebted to Michael Neill and Kathleen Lynch and to all the participants who engaged with the subject of this book in such a vital fashion.

At Queen’s, I have been fortunate in my head of school, Ed Larrissy, who has been tremendously supportive, and in colleagues such as Adrian Streete and Daniel Sanjiv Roberts, who have watched a number of the films studied in this book with me and have been magnanimous in critical insight. Other colleagues have sustained me with their friendship, advice and good humour: they include Ruth Abraham, Fran Brearton, Janice Carruthers, Marilina Cesario, Hastings Donnan, David Dwan, Nigel Harkness, Edel Lamb, Debbie Lisle, Edna Longley, Hugh Magennis, Milena Mendez, Kevin Murray, Ciara O’Hagan, Micheál Ó Mainnín, Des O’Rawe, Andrew Pepper, Caroline Sumpter and Isabel Torres. Further afield, Shakespeareans and non-Shakespeareans far and wide have
Acknowledgements

been encouraging and lent a kindly ear; so thank you to Susan Bassnett, Werner Brönnimann, Richard Burt, Maurizio Calbi, Clara Calvo, Andrew Carpenter, Tom Cartelli, Deborah Cartmell, Mariacristina Cavecchi, Juan Francisco Cerdá, Danielle Clarke, Krystyna Kujawińska Courtyard, Sam Crowl, Susan Crowl, Michael Dobson, Peter Donaldson, Tobias Döring, Jacek Fabiszak, Ewan Fernie, Adam Hansen, Philipp Hinz, Barbara Hodgdon, Ton Hoenselaars, Lisa Hopkins, Russell Jackson, Carolyn Jess-Cooke, Dennis Kennedy, Urszula Kizelbach, Doug Lanier, Courtney Lehmann, Song Hwee Lim, Naomi McAreavey, Luke McKernan, John Milton, Gordon McMullen, Sonia Massai, Ryuta Minami, Vincenza Minutella, Alfredo Michel Modenessi, Andy Murphy, Dan North, Laurie Osborne, Bryan Reynolds, Katherine Rowe, Amy Scott-Douglass, Robert Shaughnessy, Marcel Vieira Barreto Silva, Catherine Silverstone, Jyotsna Singh, Bruce Smith, Lisa S. Starks-Estes, Peter Stoneley, Poonam Trivedi and Li Lan Yong. I would like to mention Pascale Aebischer, N. P. Ashley, Diana Henderson, Peter Holland, Alexander C. Y. Huang, Aimara da Cunha Resende, Daniel Rosenthal, Mariangela Tempera and Greg Colón Semenza for extraordinarily helpful and stimulating conversations and courtesies.

My interests in Shakespeare and world cinema have been nurtured and refined on the conference circuit. I was delighted to chair a seminar on the subject at the Chicago meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America and to learn much from the keen and knowledgeable individuals who participated. Different versions of some of these chapters have been given as papers or plenaries in New Delhi (St Stephen’s College), Dublin (University College Dublin/Abbey Theatre Shakespeare Lecture Series), Galați (‘William Shakespeare: the National Symposium’), Le Havre (‘Hamlet: Shakespeare à l’Écran’ Conference), Iași (‘Shakespeare and Europe: Nation(s) and Boundaries’ Conference), London (London Shakespeare Seminar), Manchester (Annual John Stachniewski Memorial Lecture), New York (Early Modern Seminar, Columbia University), Poitiers (‘Shakespeare et le Spectaculaire’ Conference), Prague (World Shakespeare Congress), Reading (Early Modern University Research Seminar), São Paulo (‘Jornada de Estudos Shakespearianos’, Universidade de São Paulo), Sofia (British Council and National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts), Stratford-upon-Avon (Thirty-Third and Thirty-Fourth International Shakespeare Conferences) and Washington DC (Cosmos Club and Folger Shakespeare Library). I am indebted to the audiences on those occasions for their informed attention, the organizers of the conferences at which I spoke, and the colleagues who invited me to address their staff
Acknowledgements

and students. Notably, I am greatly obliged to N. P. Ashley, Odette Blumenfeld, Gabriela Colipca, Jerome de Groot, Pascale Drouet, Jane Grogan, Sarah Hatchuel, Jean Howard, Kate McCluskie, John Milton, Michelle O’Callaghan, Ligia Pârvu, Gail Kern Paster, Veronica Popescu, Stan Semerdjiev (that trip to the Rila mountains in Bulgaria was truly memorable and inspiring), Alan Stewart, Ann Thompson and Nathalie Vienne-Guerrin.

This book has benefited hugely from the formative input of the world film community. For answering calls and aiding explorations, I am beholden to film directors Sherwood Hu, Pauli Pentti, Slava Ross, Michal Shabtay and Roberta Torre. The following directors and screenwriters were invaluable in that they both facilitated my research and agreed to be interviewed, offering wonderful insight into the filmmaking process: Alexander Abela, Dimitri Athanitis, Shyam Benegal, Rosihan Zain (Dhojee), Boubakar Diallo, Leonardo Henríquez, Leila Hipólito, Chenakthshang Dorje Tsering (Jangbu), Bo Landin, Perttu Leppä, Iván Lipkies, Lúcia Murat, Jayaraaj Rajasekharan Nair, Michael Roes, Alex Scherpf, Minky Schlesinger, Mark Tan and Andibactiar Yusuf. Whether as accountants, administrators, assistants, casting directors, distributors, festival organizers, musicians, performers, photographers, producers, programmers, promoters or writers, related film industry representatives were accommodating and responsive in multiple ways, and they are: Shanti Kumar Aaytee, Paul Callanan, Marc Cases, Uma da Cunha, Una Domazetoski, Marco Gilles, Miki Goral, Ulrich Gregor, Manfred Hagbeck, Meg Hamel, Jarkko Hentula, Lianne Hu, Hui Hui, Ranjit Karthikeyan, Katri Kervinen, Harsha Koda, Rahul Koda, Gábor Kovács, Michiko Kumagai, Tom Magill, Revathy Menon, Milja Mikkola, Ron Mulvihill, Mamoru Nojiri, Sonya Oleynik, Lanpeng Punam Sawhney, Keith Shiri, Frida Spathaki, Basil Tsiokos, Haije Tulokas, Melissa van der Schoor, Sonia Villar, Tiina Virtanen, Sue Wuetcher and Loreley Yeowart. Archivists Lisbeth Richter Larsen and Tommi Partanen provided expertise and materials. Colleagues and friends – Viju Kurian, Rosa María García Periago and Patricia Schiaffini – have been particularly adept and expert in assisting me with translations.

xiv

Acknowledgements

A special thank you must go to Sarah Stanton of Cambridge University Press, who has believed in this project since its infancy and advised on it wisely and distinctively.

Last, but by no means least, I thank Louis Thornton Burnett and Henry John Burnett for agreeing, with not too much protest, to abandon computer games and jigsaws and, instead, come and look at ‘Shakespeare’s bones’, dig up ‘Shakespeare’s garden’ and watch a production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Their love for life has reminded me of what is properly important. For Ramona Wray there are the most heartfelt thanks: she provided illuminating reflections on, and understanding of, how the manuscript might be improved: without her, this book would never have seen the light of day.
A note on titles

How film titles are referred to is a notoriously inconsistent business. For first citations, I have used the non-English title followed by the English translation provided for international distribution. In subsequent references, I use the non-English title alone. There are some world cinema titles that go only by an English-language title; in these instances, there is no necessity for translation. Other films, possibly because they never received international distribution, are referred to by a title in the original language. There is inevitably a certain amount of titular variation in response to local contexts and conventions.