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978-0-521-20660-0 - The Winter's Tale: In Performance in England and America 1611-1976

Dennis Bartholomeusz

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*The Winter's Tale*

in performance in England and America

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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an inner voice – was it memory or intuition? – told you that beyond the pure passion of understanding, a less rational, less pure, more heterogeneous instrument is still needed to work the true magic. So you stepped out of the silent study of the scholar into the forest of life, and as the magician reaches for the mandrake you reached for someone alive; you reached for me and set me down in this circle . . . In your memory, which harbours an almost boundless tradition, there stirs an old saying occasionally obscured but never quite forgotten: the true readers of Shakespeare and also those in whom Shakespeare is truly alive are those who carry within them a stage.

From Hugo von Hofmannsthal's  
*Shakespeare's Kings and Noblemen*  
(1905). (Translation from the  
German by Mary Hotlinger and  
Tania and James Stern in *Selected  
Prose* (1953), pp. 247–67.)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contents

List of plates	<i>page</i> ix
Preface	xiii
Introduction	I
1 <i>The Winter's Tale</i> on the open stage – 1611–1634	12
2 The eighteenth century	28
3 John Philip Kemble – <i>The Winter's Tale</i> in a picture frame	42
4 From Macready to Phelps	64
5 Charles Kean's interpretation of <i>The Winter's Tale</i>	81
6 <i>The Winter's Tale</i> in New York	101
7 From Barrett to Beerbohm Tree	111
8 The New Theatre (New York), the Savoy (London): Winthrop Ames and Granville-Barker on the open stage	132
9 Boston, New York, London, Connecticut, Ontario, Oregon – 1912–1975	165
10 <i>The Winter's Tale</i> at Stratford-upon-Avon	197
Afterword: actors and critics	227
Appendix	239
Notes	243
Select bibliography	263
Index	271

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-20660-0 - The Winter's Tale: In Performance in England and America 1611-1976

Dennis Bartholomeusz

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Plates

- |    |  |         |
|----|--|---------|
| 1  | Two Satyrs from Ben Jonson's <i>Oberon</i> , staged in the First Banqueting House in 1611, Inigo Jones [ <i>Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth</i> ]  | page 17 |
| 2  | Mrs Pritchard as Hermione in <i>Florizel and Perdita</i> (v.iii) first staged at Drury Lane in 1756, engraved by Ravenet after the lost original by R. E. Pine c. 1760 [ <i>Courtauld Institute of Art</i> ] | 36      |
| 3  | Miss Farren as Hermione (v.iii), Johann Zoffany, c. 1780 [ <i>Everard Studley Miller Bequest 1966/7, National Gallery of Victoria</i> ]  | 39      |
| 4  | Florizel and Perdita in the pastoral scene (iv.iv), [Hanmer edition of Shakespeare, 1744, <i>British Museum</i> ]  | 40      |
| 5  | The trial scene, <i>The Winter's Tale</i> , at Drury Lane, 1802, and at Covent Garden, 1811 – Kemble Promptbook [ <i>Folger Shakespeare Library</i> ]  | 44      |
| 6  | The palace of Leontes (1.ii). Frederick Fenton's design for Samuel Phelps's production at Sadler's Wells, 1845 [ <i>Richard Southern Collection, Bristol University Drama Library</i> ]                      | 45      |
| 7  | The pastoral scene (iv.iv), Sadler's Wells, 1845, Frederick Fenton's design [ <i>Richard Southern Collection, Bristol University Drama Library</i> ]   | 46      |
| 8  | Piranesi etching of a prison; from the Carceri Series c. 1745. [ <i>National Gallery of Victoria</i> ]   | 50      |
| 9  | Mrs Siddons as Hermione (v.iii) at Drury Lane, 1802 – from the engraving by J. Alais after a painting by Adam Buck [ <i>British Museum</i> ]   | 60      |
| 10 | <i>The Winter's Tale</i> (v.iii) at Covent Garden, 1837, produced by Macready [ <i>Forrest Collection, Birmingham Public Library</i> ]   | 69      |
| 11 | Palace of Polixenes (iv.ii) designed for Charles Kean's production of <i>The Winter's Tale</i> , at the Princess's Theatre, 1856, by Thomas Grieve [ <i>Victoria and Albert Museum</i> ]                     | 83      |
| 12 | Pyrrhic Dance (1.ii), Princess's Theatre, 1856 [ <i>Victoria and Albert Museum</i> ]   | 85      |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-20660-0 - The Winter's Tale: In Performance in England and America 1611-1976

Dennis Bartholomeusz

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

## Plates

- |    |   |     |
|----|---|-----|
| 13 | Mrs Kean as Hermione [ <i>Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon</i> ]   | 89  |
| 14 | H. Cuthbert's design for Hermione's apartments (II.i), Princess's Theatre, 1856 [ <i>Victoria and Albert Museum</i> ]   | 90  |
| 15 | Grieve's design for the trial scene (III.ii), Princess's Theatre, 1856 [ <i>Victoria and Albert Museum</i> ]  | 93  |
| 16 | Grieve's design for Allegory of Time (IV.i), Princess's Theatre, 1856 [ <i>Victoria and Albert Museum</i> ]   | 94  |
| 17 | Grieve's design for Apollo in his car (IV.i), Princess's Theatre, 1856 [ <i>Victoria and Albert Museum</i> ]  | 96  |
| 18 | I. Dayes's design for the statue scene (V.iii), Princess's Theatre, 1856 [ <i>Illustrated London News Picture Library</i> ]   | 98  |
| 19 | William Burton as Autolycus (IV.iv), Burton's Theatre, New York, 1856 [ <i>Folger Shakespeare Library</i> ]   | 105 |
| 20 | Johnston Forbes-Robertson as Leontes (V.i), Lyceum, 1887 [ <i>Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon</i> ]   | 121 |
| 21 | Mary Anderson as Perdita (IV.iv), Lyceum, 1887 [ <i>Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon</i> ]   | 123 |
| 22 | Mary Anderson as Hermione (V.iii), Lyceum, 1887 [ <i>Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon</i> ]  | 124 |
| 23 | Viola Allen as Perdita (IV.iv), Knickerbocker Theatre, New York, 1904 [ <i>Folger Shakespeare Library</i> ]   | 126 |
| 24 | The pastoral scene (IV.iv) designed by T. E. Ryan for <i>The Winter's Tale</i> , produced by Beerbohm Tree at His Majesty's Theatre, 1906 [ <i>Bristol University Drama Library</i> ] | 128 |
| 25 | <i>The Winter's Tale</i> (II.iii), Rose Coghlan as Paulina, Henry Kolker as Leontes, New Theatre, New York, 1910 [ <i>Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]                                | 137 |
| 26 | Hermione and Polixenes with Leontes and Mamillius (I.ii) New Theatre, New York, 1910 [ <i>Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]  | 139 |
| 27 | Edith Wynne Matthison as Hermione (V.iii), New Theatre, New York, 1910; [ <i>Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]   | 141 |
| 28 | Costumes designed by Albert Rothenstein for Granville-Barker's production of <i>The Winter's Tale</i> at the Savoy Theatre, 1912 [ <i>Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]                | 142 |
| 29 | Henry Ainley as Leontes, Savoy Theatre, 1912; [ <i>'Sphere', 26 October, Illustrated London News Picture Library</i> ]  | 144 |
| 30 | Lillah McCarthy as Hermione, Savoy Theatre, 1912 [ <i>'Sketch', 2 October, Illustrated London News Picture Library</i> ]  | 147 |
| 31 | H. O. Nicholson as the old Shepherd and Leon Quartermaine as the Clown (III.iii), Savoy Theatre, 1912 [ <i>'Sketch', 2 October, Illustrated London News Picture Library</i> ]         | 148 |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-20660-0 - The Winter's Tale: In Performance in England and America 1611-1976

Dennis Bartholomeusz

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

	<i>Plates</i>	xi
32	The pastoral scene (iv.iv), Savoy Theatre, 1912 [ <i>Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	150
33	A Satyr, Savoy Theatre, 1912 [ <i>'Sketch', 2 October, Illustrated London News Picture Library</i> ]	152
34	The court of Leontes, designed by Norman Wilkinson, Savoy Theatre, 1912 [ <i>'Sketch', 2 October, Illustrated London News Picture Library</i> ]	154
35	Herbert Hewtson as Time, Savoy Theatre, 1912 [ <i>'Sketch' 2 October, Illustrated London News Picture Library</i> ]	163
36	John Gielgud as Leontes in Peter Brook's production of <i>The Winter's Tale</i> , Phoenix Theatre, 1951 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	171
37	John Gielgud as Leontes and Diana Wynyard as Hermione (v.iii), Phoenix Theatre, 1951 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	174
38	The trial scene (III.ii), Phoenix Theatre, 1951 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	177
39	The statue scene (v.iii), Phoenix Theatre, 1951 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	179
40	Flora Robson as Paulina, Lewis Casson as Antigonus (II.iii), Phoenix Theatre, 1951 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	181
41	The palace of Leontes designed by Sophie Fedorovitch, Phoenix Theatre, 1951 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	182
42	The pastoral scene, designed by Sophie Fedorovitch, Phoenix Theatre, 1951 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	185
43	Virginia McKenna as Perdita, Richard Gale as Florizel, Phoenix Theatre (iv.iv) 1951 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	186
44	Richard Hay's set for <i>The Winter's Tale</i> , Shakespeare Festival Theatre, Ashland, Oregon, 1975 [ <i>Shakespeare Festival Theatre Library, Ashland, Oregon</i> ]	193
45	The statue scene (v.iii), Shakespeare Festival Theatre, Ashland, Oregon, 1975 [ <i>Shakespeare Festival Theatre Library, Ashland, Oregon</i> ]	195
46	The court of Leontes (I.ii). Anthony Quayle's production of <i>The Winter's Tale</i> , Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1948 [ <i>Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection</i> ]	204
47	John Kidd as the old Shepherd and Paul Scofield as the Clown	



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-20660-0 - The Winter's Tale: In Performance in England and America 1611-1976

Dennis Bartholomeusz

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

*Plates*

- (III.iii), Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1948 [*Photographed by Angus McBean, Harvard Theatre Collection*] 206
- 48 Peggy Ashcroft as Paulina and Eric Porter as Leontes, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1960 [*Holte Photographics, Stratford-upon-Avon*] 211
- 49 Jaques Noel's design for the trial scene in Peter Wood's production of *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1960 [*Holte Photographics, Stratford-upon-Avon*] 212
- 50 The pastoral scene (iv.iv), Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1960 [*Holte Photographics, Stratford-upon-Avon*] 215
- 51 The court of Leontes (I.ii), in Trevor Nunn's production of *The Winter's Tale*, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1969 [*Holte Photographics, Stratford-upon-Avon*] 216
- 52 The pastoral scene (iv.iv), Royal Shakespeare Theatre, 1969 [*Holte Photographics, Stratford-upon-Avon*] 219
- 53 Judi Dench as Perdita and David Bailie as Florizel (iv.iv), Royal Shakespeare Theatre, 1969 [*Holte Photographics, Stratford-upon-Avon*] 220
- 54 The court of Leontes (II.i) in the production of *The Winter's Tale* by John Barton and Trevor Nunn, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, 1976 [*Holte Photographics, Stratford-upon-Avon*] 223
- 55 The statue scene (v.iii), Royal Shakespeare Theatre, 1976 [*Holte Photographics, Stratford-upon-Avon*] 225

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-20660-0 - The Winter's Tale: In Performance in England and America 1611-1976

Dennis Bartholomeusz

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Preface

I came to Shakespearian theatre by an indirect route, through Jean Anouilh's *L'Alouette*. *The Lark* by Anouilh did not need elaborate realistic settings, and simple objects could become many-sided symbols, a gate in a field which Jeanne d'Arc clambered over could become a prison grate or railings in a courtroom if the right light was thrown upon it. I discovered that Anouilh in *The Lark* trusted the imagination, as Shakespeare did, to give the object a local habitation and a name. The best in this kind were but shadows which the imagination could amend.

For making these discoveries possible at the Lionel Wendt Theatre in Colombo, I wish to thank Neville Weeraratne who created Anouilh's objects with infinite artistic tact and Arul Vedamuttu who lit them, and for whom lighting was a form of music. My thanks go also, as 'over a vast', to Professor E. F. C. Ludowyk who first showed me what a serious and beautiful thing a stage could be and to all those distinguished amateurs in Colombo who felt that his attitudes to the theatre should be kept up. To those now more near at hand, with their sense of life delighting in life, who made the miracle of Shakespeare's stagecraft a matter of direct experience when I directed them in *King Lear*, *Coriolanus*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Winter's Tale* at Monash, I owe much. To the small group of staff and students who helped to produce *The Winter's Tale*, most of all to Richard Pannell who played Leontes, Margaret Cody who was Hermione, Helene Shaw who played Paulina, Colin Smith who doubled as Antigonus and the old Shepherd, Gary Kinnane who played the Clown, Alan Dilnot who played Autolycus, Alastair Rosemale-Cocq who was Camillo, and Susan Tweg, who designed the most expressive of costumes with small resources, I owe a particular debt of gratitude.

To know *The Winter's Tale* experientially on the stage was essential to this enterprise, but the writing of a critical stage-history involves much scholarly labour. The Australian Research Grants Council provided financial assistance at the right time, Monash University sabbatical leave, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign a Visiting Professorship, and the Folger Shakespeare Library a Fellowship, all of which made it

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-20660-0 - *The Winter's Tale: In Performance in England and America 1611-1976*  
Dennis Bartholomeusz

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

*Preface*

possible to examine primary source material at first hand in England and America. Between 1971 and 1981, the Monash University Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Library of Congress, the library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the New York State Library, the Huntington Library, the Harvard Theatre Collection, the Toronto Public Library, the archives of the Shakespeare Festival Theatre at Stratford, Ontario, and the Shakespeare Festival Theatre in Ashland, Oregon, the library of the British Museum, the theatre collections in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Shakespeare Library in Birmingham, the Shakespeare Centre Library in Stratford-upon-Avon, the Bodleian Library in Oxford, the Bristol University Drama Library, the library of the British Theatre Association, the library of the Garrick Club, the Courtauld Institute of Art, the Duke of Devonshire, the Administrative Council of Chatsworth and the Conservator of the Chatsworth Collection, all offered me assistance without which this book could not have been completed. To all those scholars and curators whose silent labours helped me complete what I had begun I offer my warmest thanks, but most especially to Dr Levi Fox of Stratford-upon-Avon, to Mr Gerald Nash formerly of the Gabrielle Enthoven Collection, to Dr Jeanne Newlin of the Harvard Theatre Collection, and to the late Dorothy Mason of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

It is commonplace that in the field of scholarship we can only see further by standing on the shoulders of scholars of genuine eminence who have gone before us. I am particularly grateful for the broad shoulders of Professor W. A. Armstrong, Professor Charles Shattuck and Professor Arthur Sprague. For their quick and generous assistance with rare tact, for insights of many kinds freely given, no acknowledgements will ever be quite adequate.

Several players and directors of Shakespeare responded cheerfully to my enquiries. I thank them all but wish to record a particular debt to Dame Flora Robson, Trevor Nunn, James Edmondson, and Blanche le Clanche du Rand. The encounter with the players of the English and American theatre was an instructive and lasting pleasure. When distance prevented me from seeing contemporary productions of *The Winter's Tale* I tried to consult those who had been present in the audience. For such consultations I owe especial thanks to the late Robert Speaight, Dame Muriel Bradbrook, and Dr Peter Naish, who had the capacity for detailed recall.

Bill Armstrong, Charles Shattuck and Philip Martin read parts of the manuscript at various times with the eyes of trained hawks, and Walter Veidt, giving generously of his time, helped me to track down the German reviews of Granville-Barker's production of *The Winter's Tale*. I thank them again, and Sarah Stanton and Annie Cave of the Cambridge University Press for much useful critical comment. The Department of

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-20660-0 - *The Winter's Tale: In Performance in England and America 1611-1976*

Dennis Bartholomeusz

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Preface*

xv

English at Monash University made the services of two wonderfully skilled typists available to me, Gail Ward who took responsibility for the body of the book and Sheila Wilson for the 'Conclusion' and 'Introduction'. Over the years the Department has provided the services of excellent research assistants, Sujatha Pannell, Maureen Mann, Lorraine Bullock, Mimi Colligan and Anna Gelperowicz, who gave me invaluable help when it was needed. I thank all those colleagues at Monash who offered me good advice and showed great tolerance when pages of my typescript were thrust at them without warning. The person at the centre of my hearth, Angela Mariadason, assisted me in the gathering of material, helped to order the bibliography by keeping it within manageable bounds and read the manuscript at every stage of its development with infinite patience. Her assistance over the years has been kind and unvarying.

*Department of English  
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Victoria, Australia*

*Note*

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All references, unless otherwise stated, are to Ernest Schanzer's New Penguin edition of *The Winter's Tale*. References to the other plays of Shakespeare are to *The Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans.

Unless otherwise stated the place of publication of works referred to in this book is London.