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0521389038 - Players of Shakespeare 2: Further Essays in Shakespearean Performance by
Players with the Royal Shakespeare Company - Edited by Russell Jackson and Robert
Smallwood

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*Further essays in Shakespearean performance
by players with the
Royal Shakespeare Company*

Edited by

Russell Jackson

*The Shakespeare Institute,
Stratford-upon-Avon*

and

Robert Smallwood

*The Shakespeare Centre,
Stratford-upon-Avon*



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Foreword

The essays collected in this volume, like those in its predecessor, offer the actor's perspective on some recent Shakespeare productions by the Royal Shakespeare Company. In each case we invited actors to write about a role they had recently played and to describe something of the ways in which the work was approached. In one instance we invited two performers to discuss two closely related parts, those of Rosalind and Celia in *As You Like It*. The contributors had all talked about their performances in courses at the Shakespeare Institute. Some of the accounts were written during current experience of the production; some were retrospective. Our arrangement of the essays follows the order of plays in the First Folio. The writers differ in their approaches and emphases and in the degree of detailed analysis which they provide. Edward Petherbridge uses his performance of Armado as a starting point for wide-ranging reflections on the relations of actor, director, designer, and text which, in one form or another, lie behind all the essays in the volume. At the other end of the spectrum is the fullness of detail of David Suchet's moment-by-moment analysis of his encounter with Iago. In between these extremes other contributors respond variously and personally to our invitation to offer us the actor's story of the creation of a Shakespearean role.

In his Introduction to the first of these collections Philip Brockbank offered some general reflections on the actor's art and its relation to the plays of Shakespeare. Rather than attempting to cover similar ground here, our Introduction provides some description of the productions within which these performances existed and of their wider context in British Shakespearean theatre in the 1980s. At the beginning of each chapter we provide brief details of the theatrical (and in particular Shakespearean) careers of each of the contributors, and at the end of the volume we list credits for the productions they deal with. For the sake of consistency within this volume and with its predecessor, quotations and references have all been brought into conformity with the Riverside text edited by G.

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Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974). Apart from that, however, we have tried to avoid editorial intrusions as much as possible, for this is a book in which actors speak about an actor's plays.

We are grateful to colleagues in the Shakespeare Institute, the Shakespeare Centre, and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre for their help in planning and preparing this book, and in particular to Sonja Dosanjh and Jill Jowett, respectively Company Manager and Design Assistant at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

R.J. R.S.
The Shakespeare
Institute
Stratford-upon-Avon
April 1987