

SHAKESPEARE SURVEY  
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SHAKESPEARE STUDIES AND PRODUCTION

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47

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STANLEY WELLS

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# SHAKESPEARE PLAYED SMALL: THREE SPECULATIONS ABOUT THE BODY

DENNIS KENNEDY

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Any space we occupy deeply affects how we perceive events inside it. We are bodies which occupy space and, metaphorically speaking, are occupied by it; especially when we are present in a space marked off from the mundane, like a holy temple or a chamber for the exercise of power, we are likely to alter not only our behaviour but our frame of mental reference. Theatres, which are spaces separate from ordinary life by definition, affect us not only by their architecture and decor but also by the spatial relationship established between actor and spectator. From the hillside amphitheatres of Athens in the fifth century BC to the concrete cinema bunkers of late twentieth-century suburban shopping malls, a theatre space is inscribed with ideas about the position of drama within the culture that built it.

For Shakespeare the issue of space has assumed particular importance, and in the modern era has been highly contested, partly because the status of Shakespeare's plays has focused attention on where they can be seen to best advantage. While most of us imagine Burbage's the Theatre or the Globe when we think of the original productions, the plays were performed in their own time in a variety of public, private and royal spaces, a fact that should make us question the common notion that they were 'written for' the public theatre or were somehow contained by it. Yet the Elizabethanist movement of the end of the nineteenth century, associated with William Poel in London and Jozsa Savits in Munich,

made that proposition the basis for much subsequent worry over the right space for Shakespeare. Taking the radical inference that the performance space was inscribed in the text itself, Poel and Savits, and their more successful heirs like Granville Barker and Tyrone Guthrie, have vastly affected how Shakespeare relates to the spectator in the physical environment of the stage.<sup>1</sup>

Though Poel and Savits sought spatial authenticity, the spaces they established were conscious compromises with practicality and unconscious compromises with their ingrained theatrical biases. The right space for Shakespeare, regardless of any claims its architect might make about fidelity to a lost epitome, is always going to be the right space for a specific culture. The reified proscenium productions of Charles Kean at the Princess's Theatre were as right for mid-nineteenth-century London as Guthrie's open-stage productions at the Ontario

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<sup>1</sup> In preparing this essay I was fortunate to have the research assistance of Melissa Gibson, who made a number of important contributions to the work. For a discussion of royal and other non-public performances by Shakespeare's company, see Peter Thomson, *Shakespeare's Professional Career* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 150-65. I treat the issue of the right space for Shakespeare in more detail in *Looking at Shakespeare: A Visual History of Twentieth-Century Performance* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 34-42 and 152-64. On the cultural implications of theatre buildings, see Marvin Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (Ithaca, 1989).

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Festival Theatre were for mid-twentieth-century North America. Yet the intensity of the search for space in the twentieth century, causing enormous expense in building and in remodelling, has been motivated by two ambitions specific to modernity: to get Shakespeare out of the boxed-in stages of proscenium theatres, and (thereby) to create a rejuvenated or urgent sense of intimacy between the actor and spectator. Especially since the Second World War, producers of Shakespeare have repeatedly appealed to the need for connection, hoping for a revitalized mode of performance that would affect audiences directly and (re-)capture the intensity presumed to be present in the texts.

For my purposes the crucial aspect of this story is that most theatres playing Shakespeare in the modern era, whether pre-existing or purpose-built, have been large. Of course, 'large' is a relative term: the Theatre of Dionysos sat at least 13,000 bodies, the first Globe upwards of 3,000, and the second Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford about 1,500; all of them seem large by our contemporary standards, with substantial distance between the ludic space and farthest spectator. (In some cases even to the closest spectator: at the SMT, for example, rebuilt in 1932 after a fire, the scenic system in operation for many years discouraged the use of the forestage, so that the action was often at least 30 feet (over 9 metres) away from the front row.)<sup>2</sup> Guthrie's Festival Stage in Ontario, designed for Shakespearian 'intimacy', seats an extraordinary 2,258 people, 858 of them in a balcony; though no spectator is more than 65 feet (20 metres) from the stage, that is nonetheless an enormous audience.

All proscenium theatres coercively discipline the gaze, but large auditoria amplify the separation between audience and performer by sheer force of distance. As Guthrie himself put it, spectator and actor in a proscenium arrangement are separated by two barriers, 'a barrier of fire, which is the footlights, then a barrier of space called the orchestra'.<sup>3</sup> The bodies of actors

on stage are therefore made to look smaller than the body of the viewer, more like puppets or imagined creatures in an autonomous and visually consistent world, and the farther away from the stage a spectator sits the more dream-like the actors will appear. This phenomenon is well-suited to the affection of power the audience can assume over the players by virtue of the ocular relationship between silent watcher and speaking doer. (On the issue of power, it's useful to recall that the proscenium stage was developed to display the expensive and scenographically complex court musical entertainments that eventually led to seventeenth-century opera, a form historically associated with royal authority.) In a standard proscenium theatre the best seats for viewing, which are not necessarily the closest seats, are by custom the most expensive, and a clear downward grading is established for those with progressively inferior sightlines. Thus inscribed in the seating plan of large theatres – even those with open stages – is a scopic hierarchy that unconsciously replicates an antiquated social hierarchy. Especially in a turn-of-the-century theatre, with stalls, boxes, circle, pits, and galleries built to distinguish the classes by space and to rank their regard of the stage, audiences today still form an ordered opticon of reception.

At about the time that Poel and Savits were reacting against Shakespeare in the wrong spaces, a similar reaction occurred in Europe against the general habits of performance in large spaces. The historical avant-garde, working against the grain of the established or commercial theatre, began to experiment with small and unconventional venues as part of its oppositional project. Unable to secure a regular theatre for the first production of the *Théâtre Libre* in 1887, André Antoine was forced to use a hastily arranged performance space that sat

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<sup>2</sup> Richard and Helen Leacroft, *Theatre and Playhouse* (London, 1984), p. 159.

<sup>3</sup> Tyrone Guthrie, 'Theatre at Minneapolis', in *Actor and Architect*, ed. Stephen Joseph (Toronto, 1964), p. 37.



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only 349.<sup>4</sup> What was a necessity for Antoine soon became a mark of avant-garde distinction, and small spaces and small audiences were taken to signal a seriousness of artistic purpose and disdain for bourgeois values. The Studio Theatre of the Moscow Art Theatre, which Stanislavsky created for Meyerhold's experiments with Symbolism in 1905, became the model (even though it never performed for the public): the MAT opened a series of Studios later, the Intimate Theatre in Stockholm was formed for Strindberg's chamber plays, Max Reinhardt started both Schall und Rauch and the Kammerspiele in Berlin, Georg Fuchs made the Künstlertheater in Munich a centre of analysis and reform. A studio, of course, is a place for study, a laboratory; the names of the other small theatres implied a similar emphasis on marginality or artist-audience process.

Most of these institutions did not survive the Great War. Though their aesthetic customs were sometimes kept alive by amateur players, it was the self-conscious revival of avant-garde attitudes in the 1960s and early 1970s that found renewed profit from the tradition. In the Off-Off-Broadway movement in New York, in the fringe movement in London, in left-bank theatres in Paris, in basement theatres in Rome, and in university and alternative theatres from Moscow to Tokyo, theatrical marginality was exemplified and cherished. Indeed it was in this environment, usually associated with leftist political inclinations, that some of the most exciting theatre work of our time was hatched in small or unconventional spaces: the Théâtre du Soleil, the Schaubühne, the Living Theatre and the Open Theatre, the Taganka, and directors like Konrad Swinarski, Jerzy Grotowski, Richard Foreman, Robert Wilson, JoAnne Akalaitis, Tadashi Suzuki, and Yukio Ninagawa, to name but a few, investigated the relationship between actor and spectator, trying to break down or lessen the separation between them, literally and metaphorically.

Prior to the 1970s Shakespeare was infrequently connected to the studio movement.

The size of the casts, the length of the plays, the expense of production, and the continued appropriation of Shakespeare as genteel high art, all colluded to discourage the radical experimentation and small purses associated with the fringe. (There were exceptions, most notably the collage Shakespeare of Charles Marowitz at the Open Space Theatre in London.) In 1974, however, the British branch of the socially committed, marginalized theatre suddenly appeared in the centre of Shakespeareland, when under the leadership of Buzz Goodbody a corrugated metal storage shed up the street from the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford was converted to a playing space. Seating about 140 people in a rough environment with a temporary feel, it was consciously constructed as an alternative to the mainstream traditions of the large theatre. Even its name, *The Other Place*, suggested its eccentricity.<sup>5</sup> Since then small-scale or chamber performance has become an important part of the RSC's work, and some of its most gripping and innovative productions have been staged for the intimate surroundings of *The Other Place* or its London variants, the Donmar Warehouse (opened in 1977) and its replacement, a small flexible theatre in the Barbican called the Pit (1982). Meanwhile the chamber movement for Shakespeare had spread around the world.

Chamber performances place a burden on the finances of theatrical organizations because it is normally impossible for audiences of 150 or less to cover enough of the costs to make

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<sup>4</sup> See Jean Chothia, *André Antoine* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 7. I discuss the issue of the audience for the avant-garde in a paper called 'The New Drama and the New Audience', in *Edwardian Theatre*, ed. Michael Booth and Joel Kaplan (Cambridge, forthcoming 1995).

<sup>5</sup> See Colin Chambers, *Other Spaces: New Theatre and the RSC* (London, 1980). On the visual implications of chamber performance see *Looking at Shakespeare*, pp. 250-7. It is interesting that the building had originally been put up in 1962 as a studio for the RSC acting work conducted by Michel Saint-Denis. Only later was it used for storage.

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professional production feasible, even when expenses have been drastically reduced; some form of subsidy is necessary, whether external or internal, which means the producers must be firmly committed to the project to maintain it. Yet it's clear that many performers as well as many spectators are attracted to Shakespeare in reduced environments, preferring the intimacy achieved to the grander gestures and more detailed images in larger spaces. As Peter Holland wrote in 1982 about Stratford, 'the myth has grown up – however hard the company may try to rebut it – that the productions at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre itself are for tourists and school parties, while the productions at The Other Place are the justification for a long and miserable drive or an impossible confrontation with British Rail'.<sup>6</sup> Myth or no, the importance of chamber Shakespeare is undeniable. Though postmodern performance often seeks the coolness and spectacle of proscenium staging, at the same time there has been a general movement in western culture away from representation displayed on a large scale and toward psychological intimacies familiar from film and television. I now propose to investigate the reasons for the success of small Shakespeare through three speculations based on performance theory, using as examples the work of Trevor Nunn.

*Speculation 1. The impact of performance in small spaces results from the parity between the performer's body and the spectator's body.*

As Erika Fischer-Lichte succinctly points out, the theatre event occurs when an actor (A) represents a character (X) while a spectator (S) looks on. The triadic relationship A–X–S is irreducible. But because the actor is a three-dimensional body and always needs room, 'the stage space also represents an irreducible element of the theatrical code'; it is '(1) the space in which A acts, and (2) the space in which X is found'.<sup>7</sup> I add to the formula the requirement of space for spectation, since S is also a three-dimensional body, and usually a

number of three-dimensional bodies, taking up room. So there are two necessary spaces: the ludic space for A, and the watching space for S. The boundary of where X can be found is at the line where the two spaces meet. In these terms the distance between X and S in large theatres reduces the apparent size of A, making it difficult and often impossible for much of the audience to read facial and gestural details and encouraging, as I noted above, a sense of S's superiority over A. This tendency is so much a part of the experience of the theatre in history that little attention has been paid to its psychological and physiological effects, though a number of theatrical moments have been forced to deal with it. There seems little doubt, for example, that the outsized masks of Greek actors were designed at least in part to make symbolic facial postures visible to spectators far up the hillside; opera glasses, introduced as early as the 1730s but gaining significantly in popularity as playhouses expanded in size in the nineteenth century, were optical compensations with a similar purpose, adding an element of spying to the theatrical experience. Of course the spatial distance between A and S has traditionally been offset by make-up, large gestures, and loud voices; for Shakespeare that has meant a routine of acting variously called 'big' or 'inflated' or 'classical'. To compensate for a reduced physical impression, the actor in a large space performs in a larger-than-life manner.

Thus when a performance occurs in a small theatre, especially one where the ludic space is not architecturally divided from the watching space, the proximity of A's body is the dominant physical impression made upon S. While distant views of a proscenium performance normally affect only the eyes and ears, keeping the danger of A's body at bay, the corporeal

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<sup>6</sup> Peter Holland, 'The RSC and Studio Shakespeare', *Essays in Criticism* 32 (1982), 205–18; p. 206.

<sup>7</sup> Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Semiotics of Theatre*, trans. Jeremy Grimes and Doris L. Jones (Bloomington, 1992), p. 101.

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contiguity of small space performance can affect the range of senses. The results are not necessarily pleasant – especially when touch and smell are involved – but they provoke the audience to recognize that the actor is not merely a representation. As an undeniable presence, as a space-occupying creature distinctly like the watcher in size, vitality, and desire, the actor in a studio becomes both more human and more threatening. For Shakespeare the proximity of A to S, and the less rigorous distinctions between ludic and watching spaces, can be more powerful than in other types of presentation. The transgressive opportunities of performance, particularly those violating common notions of where Shakespeare belongs and how he should be represented, can dominate normal fictive issues like story and character and theme. The space in which *Hamlet* is played, in other words, can be more important than *Hamlet* itself.

At the same time the spoken text becomes more emphatic. Most of the renovations in Shakespeare stage space since Poel have attempted to recentre the word, recognizing that the actor on a bare stage, especially when partly surrounded by spectators and untrammelled by decorations, is chiefly perceived as a body speaking text. In a small theatre the spoken word becomes as intimate as the environment, insidious, urgent and intrusive. Because the vocal qualities are close to those of everyday life, the stage events seem domestic in scale, a condition that cuts both ways: the performance can show violent or hilarious upheavals of that domesticity, or show mere banalities. By the simple fact of their proximity A and S become familiar. Sighs, whispers, ironic inflections, the electricity of sudden outbursts, these appear direct and genuine to the late twentieth-century spectator, whereas large-scale Shakespearian acting may appear stagey or artificial. Why contemporary spectators seem to prefer one over the other is a complicated question, and I'll defer my attempt at an answer until later. First I hope to establish through an

example some of the ways that audiences are affected by chamber Shakespeare.

There have been many notable successes on small stages, and some failures as well, but the performance that gets discussed the most in English is Trevor Nunn's *Macbeth* at The Other Place in 1976. The production is doubly interesting to us because Nunn had staged the play in the main house in 1974, then restaged it for the Aldwych Theatre in London the following year; dissatisfied both times by a lack of intensity, he mounted a chamber version using two of the company's stars, Ian McKellen and Judi Dench, to experiment with a 'big' play in a small space. Nunn, who was at the time the Artistic Director of the RSC, had been a strong supporter of Buzz Goodbody's work at The Other Place. He had supervised the final dress rehearsals of her 'village hall' production of *Hamlet* in 1975 after her suicide in April, and the experience convinced him of the distinctive opportunities of studio performance. His *Macbeth* has particular weight as an historical example because it was one of the earliest of the RSC chamber productions; the comments of reviewers may be accorded more consequence than usual because they were not habituated to the rewards and dangers of such a Shakespearian enterprise.

Nunn and the designer John Napier notably set out to limit size and spectacle. The ludic space was a circle of about 20 feet in diameter, outlined by a black line painted on bare floorboards. The watching space consisted of a few rows of seats on the floor on three sides of the circle and a few more rows on raised scaffolding, all with a quality of impermanence. The spatial relationship created the sense that spectators were staring at an intimate ritual of evil, helpless to act, even though it was close enough to touch. A circle of wooden beer crates was set at the boundary of the ludic space, just outside the magic circle; seated on them, actors not involved in a scene could watch the action, mediating between the positions of A–X and S. The crates were also used as props inside the

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circle, along with an extremely limited number of other items: a richly decorated coronation robe, a bell, a thunder sheet.

In such a minimized visual field, the smallest movements and the smallest voices were severely focused. Almost all commentators recorded some reaction to how the cramped space heightened their discomfort over witnessing a dark intimacy, and many spoke of their sense of voyeurism at perverse acts. 'Everything is cribbed, cabined and confined', said the *Birmingham Post*, 'lit by sulphurous gleams.' Maurice Daniels, a long-time staff director and lighting designer at Stratford (though not connected with this production), reported that he felt 'like a voyeur watching with horror and fascination as Lady Macbeth and Macbeth became aroused, really unable to keep their hands off each other, as they planned Duncan's murder'. The theatre is voyeuristic by nature, of course, and the proscenium theatre lends itself especially well to the spirit of peering through a keyhole. The voyeurism of this *Macbeth*, however, struck many viewers as distinctly disturbing. Gareth Lloyd Evans related his 'sense of almost unbearable proximity to, and identification with, the world of the play: terror, apprehension, pity counterpointing with revulsion'. And Robert Cushman said that 'we are brought so close to Macbeth, and to evil itself (we are practically locked up with them), that we cannot disown them'.<sup>8</sup>

I suggest that the source of spectators' disturbance lay in the condition of studio playing adopted at The Other Place: the actors publicly performed actions that should be hidden, as they do whenever *Macbeth* is staged, but in this case they did so almost unframed, tangibly close, and as if the spectators were not present. They performed inside the conventions of psychological realism, overtly ignoring the presence of the audience, maintaining fourth-wall illusion though the fourth wall of a proscenium did not divide ludic space from watching space and was most plainly not implied. The performance created a disjunction between two attitudes to

corporeality: spectators acknowledged the actors' bodies, indeed could not resist their carnal closeness, while actors (at least officially) denied the spectators' bodies and concentrated on their own.

The spectators' inescapable awareness of the actors' bodies in a closed space can be demonstrated by the frequency with which commentators reported physical details and movements, often noting unusually small matters. I could make a very long list, but some samples will serve:

Jaggedness of movement and gesture . . . characterised the whole production. [On first seeing the witches, Macbeth and Banquo] twirled rapidly around, with daggers drawn, to face them. This 'twirl' became a feature of the playing and was sometimes continued until the actor's body had passed through 360 degrees in a complete pirouette.<sup>9</sup>

The meeting between them was orgasmic in movement, and we later remembered the pushing movement of her hips and thighs when she gently but insidiously pulled Duncan into her castle.<sup>10</sup>

[In the scene with the murderers] Macbeth was at his most briskly administrative, busy with papers . . . [until he sent them away with a] dismissive jerk of the head.<sup>11</sup>

At Macbeth's return to court there is an instant outburst of cheers and embraces, abruptly cut off as soon as the point has been made. For the coronation, Macbeth performs a stately walk round the perimeter of the acting area clad in Duncan's robe . . . If [the Macbeths] are sure of one thing it is that nothing can drive them apart, a process that begins with the murder and is ruthlessly articulated up to the

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<sup>8</sup> *Birmingham Post*, 13 September 1976. Daniels cited in Michael Mullin, 'Stage and Screen: The Trevor Nunn *Macbeth*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 38 (1987), 350-9; p. 355. Lloyd Evans in a review in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 28 (1977), 190-5; pp. 193-4. Cushman's report of the London run, *New York Times*, 5 February 1978.

<sup>9</sup> Richard David, *Shakespeare in the Theatre* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 87.

<sup>10</sup> Gareth Lloyd Evans, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, p. 194.

<sup>11</sup> Roger Warren, *Shakespeare Survey* 30 (1977), p. 178.

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moment of Ian McKellen lugging Judi Dench off like a carcass.<sup>12</sup>

This kind of characterized movement and gesture, which reveals inner state as well as conveys emotional attitudes about the story, is familiar to us from the cinema, where a raised eyebrow or an impassive face in close-up can be used to enunciate enterprises of great pith and moment. 'There's no art / To find the mind's construction in the face', Duncan holds, but in filmed performances audiences find it automatically. All audiences, including theatre audiences, are now habituated to the psychological–realist acting associated with films and television, what one television critic has called 'micro-acting'.<sup>13</sup> I suspect that familiarity made the production more accessible. Certainly the acting used techniques of gesture and voice to create emotional closeness, as Holland noted:

All the incisive detail of McKellen's performance was aimed to make Macbeth recognisable, to encourage us to empathise in the most complex way possible. His presentation of the part had nothing to do with sympathy – indeed this was the least sympathetic Macbeth I have ever seen – but the evil was explicable rather than terrifying, closer to malice than an abstracted principle of negativity.<sup>14</sup>

Reading the face became the central interpretative task and, when a spectator's line of sight was obscured, the production was in danger of losing its hold. Roger Warren felt he missed a number of important moments because of his seat location: 'I should dearly have liked to see Judi Dench's face, for instance, as she greeted Duncan', he wrote.<sup>15</sup>

Other features of the production also replicated filmic patterns. Though it's already the shortest of the tragedies, Nunn cut *Macbeth* down to two and a quarter hours and played it without interval, like a film; and some of its visuals were clearly cinematic, like the line of red blood on Lady Macduff's neck when a murderer cut her throat as the lights faded. Yet the moment remained highly theatrical, since Macduff himself, impassive and helpless, was

watching the murder of his wife and children from a crate outside the circle. And the general feel of the production was theatrical as well, its best instances deriving from simple images of actors' bodies in space, like the magnificent moment after Lady Macbeth's death when McKellen stood frozen under a bare lightbulb which hung from a cord. He set it swinging in a long arc, his face alternately in shadow and light, precisely indicating the rhythm of elation and despair he had traced in the play:

I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,  
And wish th'estate o'th'world were now  
undone. (5.5.47–8)

But overt theatricality only worked to a point. It was not able to include Ian McDiarmid's Porter, for example, which was almost universally condemned; McDiarmid played the role as a music-hall turn, addressing the audience directly and forcing the obscenities and jokes. Not only did his performance seem too big for the small space, it violated the basic assumption of the production by admitting the spectators' presence. Even more telling, prior to its run at the Warehouse Nunn briefly mounted the production in the main theatre at Stratford in 1977, where its cinematic details and theatrical intimacy were hopelessly lost in the large space.

*Speculation 2. The absence of the performer's body in film and video is offset by magnified body-gesture.*

Actors in film and video, emerging only as simulacra of light and shadow or as pixels of cathode rays, obviously cannot acknowledge a

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<sup>12</sup> Irving Wardle, *The Times*, 14 September 1977.

<sup>13</sup> An unsigned review of Derek Jacobi's performance in the BBC production of *Hamlet*, *New York Times*, 16 November 1980, as quoted in *Shakespeare on Television: An Anthology of Essays and Reviews*, ed. J. C. Bulman and H. R. Coursen (Hanover, NH, 1988), p. 264.

<sup>14</sup> Holland, 'The RSC and Studio Shakespeare', p. 214.

<sup>15</sup> Roger Warren, *Shakespeare Survey* 30 (1977), p. 179.

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spectator's presence or be acknowledged in turn. If our starting point is that Shakespeare's work was intended to be seen in the theatre, then the absence of the performer's body is the most significant phenomenological difference in Shakespeare on film and television, a circumstance frequently acknowledged by commentators. 'Film occurs in a kind of virtual space', William Flesch notes. 'Lacking a dimension it lacks a basic *presence* in the world we live in. Nothing in film can touch or be touched.'<sup>16</sup> It's not the actual touching of or by actors in live performance that is notable, but the possibility that it can occur, especially in a studio space; with the possibility gone, film and video speculation belongs to a different category of experience. The 'loss of the actor', as W. B. Worthen calls it, which characterizes all mechanically reproduced performance, is usually assumed to be a severe detriment. 'Although the camera simulates intimacy with the characters, it also keeps us safe from them', Worthen says, so that we are permitted 'to watch without risk'; denied the public dimension of Shakespeare's work, we are prevented 'from playing our part'.<sup>17</sup>

Yet the simulation of intimacy in film and television is very powerful. What causes it, and why do spectators feel it? I'm not at all sure that I have the answer, but it's important to stress first that watching films and videos has significantly altered the perception of any kind of drama. Prior to the invention of motion pictures, when the term 'live performance' was a tautology, dramatic representation was an uncommon experience, whereas film, radio, and especially television have made drama in the late twentieth century all-pervasive and practically universal. In much of the world it is difficult to get through an ordinary day without some exposure to electronic enactments, and many people spend an inordinate amount of time engaged by the various dramatic, pseudo-dramatic, and speciously dramatic representations on television. Despite their recent arrival, film and video are now deeply

part of us, and our cultural habituation to them has deeply affected the way we perceive the world.

Further, film and television have thoroughly altered the social construction of audiences. Though the body of the actor is absent in mechanical drama, quite obviously the spectator of film and video remains corporeal and has (or can have) an affiliation to other spectators. But film-going, despite its similarity to theatre-going, does not encourage the same sense of community among spectators because of the impersonality of enacted event. Occasionally an audience in a cinema will clap at the end of a film, for example, but since the actors are not present to receive approbation, any more than they have been present to receive the gaze, the applause seems forced and awkward: it is applause for the machine. (Though in some cases applause in a cinema may signify the sense of community that has developed among the spectators.) And television, where the gathered audience may be a few persons or a single person only, suggests a private, one-to-one relationship of each spectator to the talking head on the screen. As Sheldon Zitner writes, 'from stage to film to television, the audience changes from active collective to passive collective to passive individual'.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> William Flesch, 'Proximity and Power: Shakespearean and Cinematic Space', *Theatre Journal*, 39 (October 1987), 277-93; p. 277. The issue of the fixity of film's performance text is raised in Patricia Ferrara, 'Towards a Theory of Shakespearean Film', *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 16 (1988), 167-73; p. 172. Catherine Belsey addresses the question of cinematic and Shakespearean illusion in 'Shakespeare and Film: A Question of Perspective', *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 11 (1983), 152-8.

<sup>17</sup> W. B. Worthen, 'The Player's Eye: Shakespeare on Television', *Comparative Drama*, 18 (Fall 1984), 193-202; pp. 197, 200, 201.

<sup>18</sup> Sheldon, P. Zitner, 'Wooden O's in Plastic Boxes: Shakespeare and Television', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 51 (Fall 1981), 1-12; p. 2. See also Neil Taylor, 'Two Types of Television Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Survey* 39 (1987), pp. 103-11; p. 104. Two essays by Graham Holderness are important for the institutional