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0521811155 - Speech and Performance in Shakespeare's Sonnets and Plays

David Schalkwyk

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SPEECH AND PERFORMANCE IN SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS AND PLAYS

David Schalkwyk offers a sustained reading of Shakespeare's sonnets in relation to his plays. He argues that the language of the sonnets is primarily performative rather than descriptive, and bases this distinction on the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein and J. L. Austin. In a wide-ranging analysis of both the 1609 quarto of Shakespeare's sonnets and the Petrarchan discourses in a selection of plays, Schalkwyk addresses such issues as embodiment and silencing, interiority and theatricality, inequalities of power, status, gender and desire, both in the published poems and on the stage and in the context of the early modern period. In a provocative discussion of the question of proper names and naming events in the sonnets and plays, the book seeks to reopen the question of the autobiographical nature of Shakespeare's sonnets.

DAVID SCHALKWYK is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Cape Town. He has published on Shakespeare, literary theory, philosophy and South African literature in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *English Literary Renaissance*, the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, *Pretexts*, *Linguistic Sciences*, *Textus* and the *Journal of Literary Studies*.

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To Christina, Andrew and James

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Note

The text of Shakespeare's sonnets used in this book is the facsimile of the 1609 Quarto reproduced in *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Stephen Booth (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1978). Quotations from the plays are from *The Oxford Shakespeare*, ed. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).