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Edited by Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper

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Shakespeare's Globe

From 1997 Shakespeare's Globe flourished once more on London's South Bank after an absence of four hundred years. The playhouse is now a major attraction for theatregoers, scholars, tourists, teachers and students of all ages, who come to experience Shakespeare's plays and those of his contemporaries performed in their original conditions.

The team of artists and education specialists who made this happen come together here to reflect on their ten-year experiment. Principal actors, designers, musicians and Globe Education staff engage with international scholars in a lively debate about the impact of this extraordinary building. Featuring an in-depth interview with former Artistic Director Mark Rylance and a contribution from Patrick Spottiswoode, Founder and Director of Globe Education, the book highlights the complex relationship between designer, composer, actor and audience that gives energy to this thriving Shakespearean centre.

CHRISTIE CARSON is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English at Royal Holloway, University of London.

FARAH KARIM-COOPER is Lecturer in Globe Education, oversees all research activities at Shakespeare's Globe and chairs the Globe Architecture Research Group.

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and

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in 2005. His seventeen roles included Henry V, Richard II, Hamlet, Cleopatra, the Golden Ass, Olivia, the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, Proteus and Bassanio. He only directed one production himself during his tenure, *Julius Caesar*, in 1999. In 2007, he was the co-recipient with Claire van Kampen and Jenny Tiramani of the Sam Wanamaker Award for pioneering work that has contributed to the understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare. More recently, in 2007, he wrote and acted in the successful play, *The BIG Secret Live 'I am Shakespeare' Webcam Daytime Chatroom Show*, at the Chichester Festival Theatre.

PATRICK SPOTTISWOODE joined Shakespeare's Globe in 1984 and became founding Director, Globe Education in 1989. Globe Education's twenty-three full-time staff provide lectures, workshops, courses and productions for over 100,000 people at the Globe every year and for many more through outreach and distance learning. Projects other than those referred to in this book include an International Hamlet Project involving 10,000 school students from Denmark, Germany, the UK and Poland, the commissioning of thirty-seven poets to revisit Wordsworth's 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge' for the poem's two-hundredth anniversary; translations of Spanish and Italian plays, Globe Quartos, Occasional Research Papers and Globe Folios. Patrick has been a visiting professor at Washington University, St Louis; Course Director for undergraduate courses at the Globe for several US universities; and co-convenor of conferences including Shakespeare and Martyrdom, at the Globe, and Shakespeare in Venice, in Venice.

JENNY TIRAMANI is an independent theatre designer and dress historian. She was Director of Theatre Design at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre from its opening in 1997 until 2005. In 2003 she received the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Costume Design for the all-male Globe production of *Twelfth Night*, and she was the co-recipient with Mark Rylance and Claire van Kampen of the 2007 Sam Wanamaker Award for her contribution to Shakespeare. Many of her theatre designs have been produced in the UK and abroad. She has given papers on the history of dress, theatre architecture and design practices in the time of Shakespeare at conferences and institutions such as the National Portrait Gallery, Royal Holloway University of London and the Society of British Theatre Designers. Her published works include articles in *Costume*, the Costume Society's journal, and she completed Janet Arnold's book, *Patterns of Fashion; The Cut and Construction of Linen Shirts, Smocks, Neckwear, Headwear and Accessories for Men and Women c.1540–1660* (2008).

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JAMES WALLACE is an actor, and trained at the Central School for Speech and Drama 1990–3. He has also taught on the classical acting course at Central School and at the Globe. James has co-ordinated over thirty staged readings for the *Read not Dead* programme and has directed scenes for undergraduate performances in Globe Education's higher education courses.

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FOREWORD

Andrew Gurr

When we were working on the evidence for the design of the original Globe in order to identify the shape and materials needed to realise Sam Wanamaker's vision, we did sometimes discuss whether the end-product of our labours would work as a modern theatre. None of us seriously believed that it might attract big crowds. The most clear-sighted objective any of us had was to get the replica of Shakespeare's Globe as right as we could, so that we could then see what might be done with it. At a different time and in different books I had suggested that Elizabethan playgoers probably behaved more like a football crowd than modern theatre audiences, but none of us had any idea that the novelty of groundlings round the stage would transform the experience of modern playgoing in the way it has done since the first performances at the new Globe in 1996.

The greatest single benefit of the Wanamaker project was that it drew together a huge assembly of expertise, from theatre-history scholars to architects to historians of English vernacular building. It was a truly international enterprise, too. Besides Sam from the USA, the architect Theo Crosby was from South Africa, John Orrell was an Englishman resident in Canada, and I was from New Zealand. We all shared the same fascination with London that first drew Shakespeare to the city. We worked to complete most of the first step in the enterprise over a decade ago. In the ten years since it opened the Globe has used the skilled actors, directors and students of theatre to see how the old type of theatre might still work. The result has been to show that it works in a wholly fresh and invigorating way, a way that has told us a lot that is exciting about Shakespeare and his contemporaries. This book is a record of these first ten years, and what they have accomplished.

Underpinning all the work, and Sam's own vision, was and still is the assumption that Shakespeare as player and co-owner of his company's two theatres always knew exactly what he was doing. Therefore, the theory goes, a fresh approach to the original staging of his plays through the surviving play-texts should be able to show

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ANDREW GURR

us a lot more of his practical genius than we have discovered through the last century or so. To establish that required digging into the state of theatre in Shakespeare's own time. It means not only creating a version of his own physical workplace but uncovering the stories behind his two theatres, finding out why his company from the outset wanted different summer and winter venues, and how they used them. Shakespeare invested 10 per cent of his own savings in the Globe, a theatre already old-fashioned when he helped build it in 1599, and nine years later when Richard Burbage finally secured the Blackfriars indoor playhouse to use for his company he took a similar share in it. From then on, as they had planned from the outset in 1594, the Shakespeare company was the outstanding theatre company of its own day and indeed of any time. For nearly fifty years it played with wonderful extravagance and indeed arrogance, leaving one of its playhouses empty each season while using the other, at a time when London suffered from an extreme shortage of playhouses.

Reproducing the full set of conditions under which Shakespeare produced his plays is impossible now, as we are often told. This book acknowledges that problem in several places. Now we have a version of what the Globe might have been like in 1599, in the same materials and therefore offering similar acoustics (though before the final painting and carvings were applied to the interior, as Martin White says in chapter 13, 'Research and the Globe'). Since then we have experienced the staging of several plays in what is now called OP (versions of what might have been the 'original practices'). And playgoers have flocked to this new/old theatre to experience the shock of the old.

The effect on actors and audience of open-air playing, where large crowds make themselves into visible and active participants in the event, has been the biggest revelation of the whole project so far. This book registers some of the ways in which so many people have navigated through what Claire van Kampen calls in chapter 6 the 'turbulent seas of mistrust' (see p. 79) to find out what they can from it all. They have evoked, quite rightly, many reservations about the discoveries that have been made and about what might be found in the future. It is vital to keep these reservations in mind as you read these accounts.

Perhaps the most weighty doubt of all is the obvious distance between playgoers then and modern audiences. Here is just one instance of that gulf. It shows itself in the difference between the performance conditions in Shakespeare's years and those of today in the minds of the audiences for whom George Chapman wrote his first comedy, *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria*, in 1595. He, and the Admiral's Men led by the greatest actor of his day, Edward Alleyn, knew exactly what they were doing. When they staged the play, the Admiral's had been set up a year before along with the Shakespeare company, the Chamberlain's Men. The two companies shared the exclusive right to perform at the Theatre and the Rose in the London suburbs, where they were free from the Lord Mayor's hostility. This meant that Londoners

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had only the two playhouses and the two companies to go to if they wanted to see a play. By late 1595 both companies were fully aware that their audiences were seeing the same faces on stage each day playing a different role, creating a problem of overfamiliarity. They had seen Alleyn as Hieronimo in Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, and as Tamburlaine, Faustus and Barabbas in Marlowe's great plays. So what Chapman did was create a farce using multiple disguises so that the audience could watch Alleyn posing as parodies of his own characters from other plays. He starts the play disguised as the Blind Beggar who is really Cleanthes, Egypt's banished general returned in secret to Alexandria. He also disguises himself as Leon, a usurer with a bottle-nose like Barabbas in *The Jew of Malta*, and as Count Hermes, a braggart who rants lines from *Tamburlaine*. In these four roles Alleyn spoke more than a third of all the lines in the play. The Barabbas and Tamburlaine-like figures allowed him to burlesque his own famous roles as a 'fustian king', the term he self-mockingly called himself in a letter to his wife in 1593. As the blind prophet he prophesies to three court ladies how they will meet their future husbands. Then in turn as Cleanthes, Leon and Hermes he meets and marries all three.

The play is a hilarious farce for which modern readers simply lack the experience to identify the parodied characters, let alone Alleyn's own self-mockery. The late Millar MacLure, for instance, said regretfully of the play that modern readers 'will have cause to reflect grimly (as every reader of minor Elizabethan drama must) on the curious tastes of our ancestors'. Unless you could recognise the false nose that Alleyn wore for *The Jew of Malta* and already knew his resonant lines spoken as Tamburlaine, and unless your playgoing was confined to the plays of the only two companies then permitted to perform in the vicinity of London, there is no way you could make sense of, let alone enjoy, Chapman's rollicking farce. We cannot now share the information the first playgoers had at the staging of these plays. Language is our most obvious loss – we proudly entitle the standees (an oddly American term for such a positive posture) in the yard with the name 'groundlings', ignoring the scorn that Hamlet packed into the word when he invented it to describe the gapers at his feet. In his time a groundling was a small fish, a loach with a huge sucker for a mouth that enabled it to feed off the algae from the stones at a river's bottom. As a pretend prince he might be expected to scorn the gapers staring up at him from the yard. Richard Burbage, playing that prince for the first time, is told how the boy companies have dislodged the adult players from the city. He grieves for the players, as we hear, but the original audiences would have known very well that the landlord of the boy company then playing at the Blackfriars and profiting from their success was Burbage himself. Lacking that information now, we are alienated from the thrill and comedy of the immediate moment on the original stage.

That is one enormous task the Globe's actors still have to confront. But in the first ten years' working with the Globe great progress has been made towards

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a more thoroughgoing reconstruction of Shakespearean playing conditions, and more is to come. Just as the Shakespeare company started at their one old-fashioned outdoor theatre and later added to it seasonal playing with their indoor theatre, so the addition of a version of the Blackfriars should allow Shakespeare's Globe to copy the original company with performances all the year round. The versatility and mobility of the original company, happy to transport its plays from one venue to another at the drop of a purse, is a challenge to creative theatre work now; that was one of the standard expectations then. Taking plays like *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* indoors after a summer at the Globe, or starting them indoors and then taking them into the daylight, offers rich new possibilities that should teach us more about the principles and the practices of Shakespearean staging.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* says that the word 'maverick', used by Patrick Spottiswoode about the Globe project, was originally the name of a Texas rancher who neglected to brand his calves. The word was subsequently picked up to define a thief, anyone who stole and then branded such calves. While resisting any suggestion that the Globe is an illegal activity, the idea that it might be thought of as a not-yet branded calf ready to grow into a mighty bull does have its appeal.

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