

## Shakespeare Beyond English

Tackling vital issues of politics, identity and experience in performance, this book asks what Shakespeare's plays mean when extended beyond the English language. From April to June 2012 the Globe to Globe Festival offered the unprecedented opportunity to see all of Shakespeare's plays performed in many different world languages. Thirty-eight productions from around the globe were presented in six weeks as part of the World Shakespeare Festival, which formed a cornerstone of the Cultural Olympiad. This book provides the only complete critical record of that event, drawing together an internationally renowned group of scholars of Shakespeare and world theatre with a selection of the UK's most celebrated Shakespearean actors. Featuring a foreword by Artistic Director Dominic Dromgoole and an interview with the Festival Director, Tom Bird, this volume highlights the energy and dedication that were necessary to mount this extraordinary cultural experiment.

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SHAKESPEARE BEYOND  
ENGLISH  
A GLOBAL EXPERIMENT

*Edited by*

SUSAN BENNETT

*and*

CHRISTIE CARSON



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ELIZABETH SCHAFER is Professor of Drama and Theatre Studies at Royal Holloway University of London. Her publications include *Ms-Directing Shakespeare: Women Direct Shakespeare* (2000) and Cambridge University Press's Shakespeare in Production volumes on *The Taming of the Shrew* (2002) and *Twelfth Night* (2009). She is also co-author of *Ben Jonson and Theatre* (1999). Her *Lilian Baylis: A Biography* (2006), was shortlisted for the Theatre Book Prize 2006. She edited *The City Wit* for the Richard Brome online project and is currently completing a performance history of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

BENEDICT SCHOFIELD is Lecturer in German and Senior Tutor of the School of Arts and Humanities at King's College London. He has worked on the development of German theatrical theory, realism and the 'Bestseller', as well as the notion of a German Shakespeare. He has also worked extensively on the wider representation of Germany within the Cultural Olympiad 2012, and the ways in which the 'world stage' provided by the Olympiad provides new avenues for assessing German culture in transnational contexts, and the manner in which this further problematizes the German appropriation of Shakespeare.

CATHERINE SILVERSTONE is Senior Lecturer in Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies at Queen Mary University of London. Her research is concerned

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with the cultural politics of contemporary performance and includes work on Shakespeare in relation to trauma, sexuality, national identity and theatrical reconstruction. She has published articles on the performance of Shakespeare in Aotearoa New Zealand, including in *te reo Māori* (Māori language), and Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. She is the author of *Shakespeare, Trauma and Contemporary Performance* (2011) and is co-editor with Sarah Annes Brown of *Tragedy in Transition* (2007).

P.A. SKANTZE is a director and writer for theatre and performance, and works internationally with her performance company, Four Second Decay. Author of *Stillness in Motion in the Seventeenth-Century Theatre* (2003), Skantze employs practice as research as a methodology suitable not only for contemporary investigations but also for explorations of early modern performance and for Shakespeare. Writing on sound and the sonic arts practised by makers and receivers of seventeenth-century theatre, she explores the practice of spectating across nations, across centuries and across media. Currently she is Reader in Performance Practices at Roehampton University.

KIM SOLGA is Senior Lecturer in Drama at Queen Mary University of London, and Associate Professor of English at Western University, Canada. Her first book, *Violence Against Women in Early Modern Performance: Invisible Acts*, was published in 2009 and appeared in paperback in 2013. She is part of Western University's Africa Institute and travelled for Western to Rwanda in 2010.

JANET SUZMAN was born in Johannesburg, graduated from the University of Witwatersrand, trained at LAMDA and was at the RSC for a decade playing many of the heroines, culminating in a memorable Cleopatra. She has since pursued a rich and varied career. Her production of *Hamlet* opened the RSC's Complete Works Festival in 2006, and her *Antony and Cleopatra* began life at the Liverpool Playhouse in 2010. She was appointed DBE for services to drama in 2011. She edited *Antony and Cleopatra* in 2012.

ANN THOMPSON is Professor of English and Director of the London Shakespeare Centre at King's College London. She is a General Editor of the Arden Shakespeare series and has (with Neil Taylor) edited all three texts of *Hamlet* for Arden (2006); an updated edition of *Hamlet* will appear in 2016. In addition to numerous publications on *Hamlet*, she has also published on a number of other Shakespeare topics, mainly in the areas of editing, source studies, language studies and feminist criticism.

HARRIET WALTER has worked extensively in theatre, television, film and radio since training at LAMDA. Of her many roles with the RSC, where she is an Associate Artist, the most recent have been Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra* alongside Patrick

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Stewart, Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Lady Macbeth* opposite Anthony Sher, all directed by Gregory Doran. Her film credits include *Atonement*, *Babel* and *Sense and Sensibility*. She has also published three books: *Other People's Shoes*, an actors' edition of *Macbeth* and a photography book, *Facing It: Reflections on Images of Older Women* (2011).

SAMUEL WEST is an actor and director. He has played Hamlet and Richard II for the RSC, and Jeffrey Skilling in *Enron* in the West End, and is the voice of Pongo in Disney's *101 Dalmatians II*. He has also played Hal, Benedick and Octavius Caesar on stage, and Henry V, Richard II, Coriolanus, Bertram, Bassanio and Lysander on radio. Sam has toured Palestine twice with the Choir of London and directed *The Magic Flute* for the Palestine Mozart Festival, the first fully staged opera to visit the West Bank.

YONG LI LAN is Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore. She is Director of the Asian Shakespeare Intercultural Archive (A|S|I|A), an online multilingual archive that presents Shakespeare performance videos from East and Southeast Asia alongside scripts and data in English, Chinese, Japanese and Korean (<http://a-s-i-a-web.org>). She has published essays on Shakespeare and intercultural performativity in the theatre, cinema and internet, and is co-editor with Dennis Kennedy of *Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance* (Cambridge, 2010).

KEREN ZAIONTZ is a post-doctoral fellow in the Drama Department at Queen Mary University of London. She researches experimental performance practices such as site-specific theatre and relational aesthetics, and is particularly interested in how artists engage audiences as co-creative participants. Her research into the Belarus Free Theatre links her interest in theatre to her own family history. In the early 1930s her grandfather, Mischa Zaiontz, was convicted of being a counter-revolutionary because he refused to purchase state bonds. He was sentenced to a gulag in north Russia, returning to Kiev on the cusp of World War II.

## FOREWORD

Dominic Dromgoole

It was only four days in to the Globe to Globe Festival. We had already seen the sublime Isango come and go with their sung and danced *Venus and Adonis*, that afternoon we had premièred the Vahktangov's cerebral and monochromatic *Measure for Measure*, and tonight was the second and last performance of the Māori *Troilus and Cressida*. They had erupted onto the stage the day before with their visceral tribal version, their bodies almost naked, their buttocks painted with swirling green Pacific patterning, eyes popping and feet stamping, as if they were trying to pound their way through the earth back to New Zealand. The acting was exhilarating and supple, turbo-charged and witty. The show finished, and the curtain call exploded into a *haka*, that articulate yell which thrills the blood. No sooner had they finished than the audience erupted in turn. But not with conventional applause. About sixty Māori, who had discreetly placed themselves around the back of the yard, shrieked back at the stage, doffed their coats onto the floor and hunkered down, pounding out a combative rhythm straight at the stage. The audience was thrilled and terrified, caught in the no man's land between two groups of mammoth Māori rehearsing an old tribal war rite. When it finished there was more mad applause. I was up in the Upper Gallery in one corner, and watched the thrilled and babbling audience filter out of the vomitoria. They left one group in the middle. It was the Deafinitely Theatre troupe, later in the Festival to play *Love's Labour's Lost*, all of them hearing-impaired, vigorously signing their responses and ideas to each other. 'Hello,' I thought, 'we may be on to something here.'

That night was, of course, a long way down the road from the moment when the idea for the Festival first popped up. A big, simple, stupid idea, which like all stupid ideas took very little translating or explaining: to do all the plays of Shakespeare, each in a different language, each by a premier company from a different country, all in the same space in just six weeks. Our great good luck is that through the vision of Sam Wanamaker, who made the Globe happen, and through the brilliant early

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leadership of Mark Rylance, who enshrined boldness and experiment at its heart, the theatre has become an iconic space within a very short time. Companies from all around the world wanted to come and play with us, and wanted to play raw, human and dirty as the simplicity of the Globe demands. No concepts, no mediation, no filter, just the plays, those remarkable and eternal human documents, told straight from the lit eyes of the actors to the lit eyes of the audience.

Our greater good luck is our audience, a remarkable congregation of collaboration and goodwill, who lift every experience here to a greater height than we could ever imagine. Our own audience turned out in strength, about 200 of them seeing each and every show, with many others seeing 5, 10, and more. And they welcomed the huge influx of new audiences who really made the Festival all that it could be. Whether it was five generations of a Bengali community sitting together in a bay, the deaf audience all waving their hands in the air in celebration, the Palestinians waving their flag, a group of Albanian children holding an impromptu birthday party in the yard, or the South Sudanese invading the stage and refusing to leave – whoever they were, it was essentially their Festival. And to them goes our greatest gratitude for making it work.

I hope these essays give some idea of the range, the variety and the wit of the work. The bar was set high early and was constantly raised. Since the Festival happened, we at the Globe have spoken surprisingly little of it. It is almost as if it defies language. Hopefully, this book will start the process of trying to make some sense of it.

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Without the co-operation and encouragement of people at Shakespeare's Globe this book would not exist. Tom Bird, the Festival Director, and Farah Karim-Cooper, Head of Research and Courses, provided remarkable support from day one, for which we are both tremendously grateful. Our thanks go equally energetically to Sarah Stanton at Cambridge University Press whose initial enthusiasm for a collection of scholarly essays about the Globe to Globe Festival sent us looking for contributors. She has, rather remarkably, continued to show confidence in this book as it grew substantially from initial thoughts of a dozen or so chapters to this collection of more than forty contributions. Her willingness to give us the flexibility to shape the project as the Festival unfolded has been much appreciated, and we hope that this volume rewards her commitment. We would also like to thank Fleur Jones and Jodie Hodgson at the Press who shepherded the book through the publication process.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We would both like to acknowledge the timely support of the Centre for International Theatre and Performance Research at Royal Holloway, financing two working meetings for contributors at crucial junctures in the project’s development. We also have an enormous debt of gratitude to our research assistant, Kimberly Richards, who was level-headed and calm when we were less so. Her ability to keep track of everyone and everything has been indispensable. Finally, we would like to thank all our contributors who came to Shakespeare’s Globe at short notice, travelling by plane, train and automobile with nothing more promised than a ticket to a show. Since that time, they have worked to punishingly tight deadlines and have done so with good cheer and real purpose. It is our great pleasure and good fortune to collect their thoughtful and engaging work on the Globe to Globe Festival here.

Editors’ Note: All references to the plays use the New Cambridge Shakespeare Editions for character names and line numbers. All of the names of performers and scholars visiting from Asia use the Eastern ordering, which places the surname first (Yong Li Lan rather than Li Lan Yong). For performers and scholars living, working and publishing in the West, the surname follows (Adele Lee rather than Lee Adele). Translations are by the chapter authors unless otherwise stated. A website exists to accompany this volume which will contain any developments that occur after the book has gone to press. To keep up with the ongoing impact of the Festival and this collaborative research project, please see: [www.rhul.ac.uk/english/showcase/staffprojectsinitiatives/showcaseitems/shakespearebeyondenglishaglobalexperiment.aspx](http://www.rhul.ac.uk/english/showcase/staffprojectsinitiatives/showcaseitems/shakespearebeyondenglishaglobalexperiment.aspx)