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SHAKESPEARE PERFORMANCE STUDIES

Taking a “performance studies” perspective on Shakespearean theatre, W. B. Worthen argues that the theatrical event represents less an inquiry into the presumed meanings of the text than an effort to frame performance as a vehicle of cultural critique. Using contemporary performances as test cases, Worthen explores the interfaces between the origins of Shakespeare’s writing as literature and as theatre, the modes of engagement with Shakespeare’s plays for readers and spectators, and the function of changing performance technologies on our knowledge of Shakespeare. This book not only provides the material for performance analysis, but places important contemporary Shakespeare productions in dialogue with three influential areas of critical discourse: texts and authorship, the function of character in cognitive theatre studies, and the representation of theatre and performing in the digital humanities. This book will be vital reading for scholars and advanced students of Shakespeare and of Performance Studies.

W. B. WORTHEN is the author of many books on drama, performance theory, and Shakespeare, including *The Idea of the Actor* (1984), *Modern Drama and the Rhetoric of Theater* (1992), *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (Cambridge, 1997), *Shakespeare and the Force of Modern Performance* (Cambridge, 2003), *Print and the Poetics of Modern Drama* (Cambridge, 2005), and *Drama: Between Poetry and Performance* (2010). He has edited and co-edited several volumes of drama and theatre scholarship, and has served as an editor of *Theatre Journal* and *Modern Drama*, guest editor of *Renaissance Drama*, and is the editor of *The Wadsworth Anthology of Drama*.

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Some of the arguments developed here have been previously explored in articles; while all of these texts have undergone substantial reconsideration, expansion, and revision, I am grateful to the publishers for the opportunity to have presented this work, and for the opportunity to use it in altered form here: “Fond Records: Remembering Theatre in the Digital Age,” *Shakespeare, Memory, and Performance*, ed. Peter Holland (Cambridge University Press, 2007); “Intoxicating Rhythms; Or, Shakespeare, Literary Drama, and Performance (Studies),” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 62 (2010): 309–39; “Shakespeare Performance Studies,” *Shakespearean International Yearbook* 10 (2010):77–92; “‘The written troubles of the brain’: *Sleep No More* and the Space of Character,” *Theatre Journal* 64 (2012): 79–97; “‘What light through yonder window speaks?’ The Nature Theater of Oklahoma *Romeo and Juliet* and the Cult(ure) of Shakespeare,” *Shakespeare and the Urgency of Now*, ed. Cary diPietro and Hugh Grady (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); “Stanislavsky and Cognitive Theatre Studies,” *The Cambridge Companion to Stanislavsky*, ed. Andrew White (Cambridge University Press, 2013).