Shakespeare for Freedom

Shakespeare for Freedom presents a powerful, plausible and political argument for Shakespeare’s meaning and value. It ranges across the breadth of the Shakespeare phenomenon, offering a new interpretation not just of the characters and plays, but also of the part they have played in theatre, criticism, civic culture and politics. Its story includes a glimpse of ‘Freetown’ in Romeo and Juliet, which comes to life in the 1769 Stratford Jubilee; the Shakespearean careers of the Leicester Chartist, Cooper, and the Hungarian hero, Kossuth; Hegel’s recognition of Shakespearean freedom as the modern breakthrough; its fatal effects in America; the disgust it inspired in Tolstoy; its rehabilitation by Ted Hughes, and its obscure centrality in the 2012 Olympics. Ultimately, it issues a positive Shakespearean prognosis for freedom as a vital (in both senses), unending struggle.

Shakespeare for Freedom shows why Shakespeare has mattered for four hundred years, and why he still matters today.

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Shakespeare for Freedom
Why the Plays Matter

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For Theo and Kirsty
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