

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.

SUSAN BENNETT is University Professor in the Department of English at the University of Calgary, Canada. Her interest in contemporary performances of Shakespeare's plays dates back to her 1996 monograph, *Performing Nostalgia: Shifting Shakespeare and the Contemporary Past*. Her latest book, *Theatre and Museums*, was published in 2013. A current research project is concerned with the circulation of performance in global markets where Shakespeare, not surprisingly, is a premium brand. She hopes to see some of the Globe to Globe Festival performances again at different international venues and with other audiences.

CHRISTIE CARSON is Reader in Shakespeare and Performance in the Department of English at Royal Holloway University of London. She is co-editor of *The Cambridge King Lear CD-ROM: Text and Performance Archive* (2000) and the Principal Investigator of the AHRB-funded research project *Designing Shakespeare: An Audio-Visual Archive, 1960–2000*. She has published widely on the subject of contemporary performance and co-edited *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment* (2008) with Farah Karim-Cooper and *Shakespeare in Stages: New Theatre Histories* (2010) with Christine Dymkowski. She hopes to continue to document international gatherings of this kind from a vantage point that takes in both the onstage action and the audience response.

SHAKESPEARE BEYOND
ENGLISH
A GLOBAL EXPERIMENT

Edited by

SUSAN BENNETT

and

CHRISTIE CARSON



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CONTENTS

<i>List of illustrations</i>	page ix
<i>List of colour plates</i>	xi
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	xiii
<i>Foreword by Dominic Dromgoole</i>	xxiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xxv
Introduction: Shakespeare Beyond English SUSAN BENNETT AND CHRISTIE CARSON	1
The Globe to Globe Festival: An introduction TOM BIRD	13
Performance calendar KIMBERLY RICHARDS	19
WEEK ONE	29
1 U <i>Venas no Adonisi</i> : Grassroots theatre or market branding in the Rainbow Nation? MALCOLM COCKS	31
2 Festival showcasing and cultural regeneration: Aotearoa New Zealand, Shakespeare's Globe and Ngākau Toa's A Toroihi rāua ko Kāhira (<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>) in te reo Māori CATHERINE SILVERSTONE	35
3 'What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine': <i>Measure for Measure</i> , Vakhtangov Theatre, Moscow KEVIN A. QUARMBY	48
4 'The girl defies': A Kenyan <i>Merry Wives of Windsor</i> EMMA COX	53

CONTENTS

5	<i>Pericles and the Globe: Celebrating the body and ‘embodied spectatorship’</i> BECKY BECKER	63
6	<i>Technicolour Twelfth Night</i> ELIZABETH SCHAFER	68
	WEEK TWO	73
7	<i>Performing cultural exchange in Richard III: Intercultural display and personal reflections</i> LEE CHEE KENG	75
8	<i>‘A girdle round about the earth’: Yohangza’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream</i> ADELE LEE	83
9	<i>Intercultural rhythm in Yohangza’s Dream</i> YONG LI LAN	87
10	<i>Art of darkness: Staging Giulio Cesare at the Globe Theatre</i> SONIA MASSAI	92
11	<i>Neo-liberal pleasure, global responsibility and the South Sudan Cymbeline</i> KIM SOLGA	101
12	<i>Titus in no man’s land: The Tang Shu-wing Theatre Studio’s production</i> ADELE LEE	110
13	<i>Tang Shu-wing’s Titus and the acting of violence</i> YONG LI LAN	115
14	<i>‘A strange brooch in this all-hating world’: Ashtar Theatre’s Richard II</i> SAMUEL WEST	121
15	<i>‘We want Bolingbroke’: Ashtar’s Palestinian Richard II</i> TAMARA HADDAD	126
16	<i>O-thell-O: Styling syllables, donning wigs, late capitalist, national ‘scariotypes’</i> P.A. SKANTZE	129
	WEEK THREE	139
17	<i>Power play: Dhaka Theatre’s Bangla Tempest</i> CHRISTINE DYMKOWSKI	141
18	<i>Locating Makbet/locating the spectator</i> ROBERT ORMSBY	150
19	<i>‘Who dares receive it other’: Conversation with Harriet Walter (9 May 2012) following a performance of Makbet</i> HARRIET WALTER	154

CONTENTS

20	<i>Two Gentlemen of Verona</i> for/by Zimbabwean diasporic communities SONIA MASSAI	157
21	Inter-theatrical reading: Theatrical and multicultural appropriations of 1–3 <i>Henry VI</i> as a Balkan trilogy ALEKSANDAR SAŠA DUNDJEROVIĆ	161
22	‘This is our modern history’: The Balkans <i>Henry VI</i> RANDALL MARTIN	170
	WEEK FOUR	179
23	<i>Shakespeare 2012/Duchamp 1913</i> : The global motion of <i>Henry IV</i> DAVID RUITER	181
24	Foreign Shakespeare and the uninformed theatre-goer: Part I, an <i>Armenian King John</i> MICHAEL DOBSON	190
25	The right to the theatre: The Belarus Free Theatre’s <i>King Lear</i> KEREN ZAIONTZ	195
26	‘Playing’ Shakespeare: Marjanishvili, Georgia’s <i>As You Like It</i> KATIE NORMINGTON	208
27	<i>Romeu e Julieta</i> (reprise): Grupo Galpão at the Globe, again JACQUELYN BESSELL	212
	WEEK FIVE	221
28	Bread and circuses: Chiten, Japan and <i>Coriolanus</i> DEANA RANKIN	223
29	‘No words!’: <i>Love’s Labour’s Lost</i> in British Sign Language KATE RUMBOLD	227
30	Ending well: Reconciliation and remembrance in Arpana’s <i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i> PETER KIRWAN	237
31	Creative exploitation and talking back: Renegade Theatre’s <i>The Winter’s Tale</i> or <i>Ìtàn Ògìnìntìn</i> (‘Winter’s Tales’) JULIE SANDERS	241
32	<i>A Shrew</i> full of laughter ELIZABETH SCHAFFER	251
33	Foreign Shakespeare and the uninformed theatre-goer: Part II, a Turkish <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> MICHAEL DOBSON	261

CONTENTS

34	‘Didst hear her speak? Is she shrill-tongued or low?’: Conversation with Janet Suzman following a performance of <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> , 26 May 2012	264
	JANET SUZMAN	
	WEEK SIX	267
35	<i>Habima Merchant of Venice</i> : Performances inside and outside the Globe	269
	SUZANNE GOSSETT	
36	Patriotism, presentism and the Spanish <i>Henry VIII</i> : The tragedy of the migrant queen	273
	JUAN F. CERDÀ	
37	Touch and taboo in Roy-e-Sabs’ <i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	282
	STEPHEN PURCELL	
38	Shakespeare and the Euro-crisis: The Bremer Shakespeare Company’s <i>Timon aus Athen</i>	287
	JEANNIE FARR AND BENEDICT SCHOFIELD	
39	Restaging reception: Translating the <i>mélange des genres</i> in <i>Beaucoup de bruit pour rien</i>	292
	DAVID CALDER	
40	Reviving <i>Hamlet</i> ? Nekrošius’ Lithuanian ‘classic’	298
	ANN THOMPSON	
	Afterwords	301
	‘From thence to England’: <i>Henry V</i> at Shakespeare’s Globe	303
	ABIGAIL ROKISON	
	Decentring Shakespeare: A hope for future connections	308
	BRIDGET ESCOLME	
	Index	313

ILLUSTRATIONS

- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 1 | <i>Venus and Adonis</i> , Isango Ensemble. Photograph by Ellie Kurttz, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | page 33 |
| 2 | <i>Measure for Measure</i> , Vakhtangov Theatre. Photograph by Simon Kane, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 50 |
| 3 | <i>Pericles</i> , National Theatre of Greece. Photograph by Simon Kane, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 65 |
| 4 | <i>Richard III</i> , National Theatre of China. Photograph by Marc Brenner, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 78 |
| 5 | <i>Julius Caesar</i> , 369 Gradi/Lungta Film in collaboration with Teatro di Roma. Photograph by Marc Brenner, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 94 |
| 6 | <i>Titus Andronicus</i> , Tang Shu-wing Theatre Studio. Photograph by Simon Kane, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 114 |
| 7 | <i>Richard II</i> , Ashtar Theatre. Photograph by Marc Brenner, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 125 |
| 8 | <i>Othello</i> , Q Brothers/Chicago Shakespeare Theater/Richard Jordan Productions. Photograph by Donald Cooper ©Donald Cooper/photostage.co.uk. | 136 |
| 9 | <i>Two Gentlemen of Verona</i> , Two Gents Productions. Photograph by Ellie Kurttz, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 159 |
| 10 | 1 <i>Henry VI</i> , National Theatre Belgrade. Photograph by Marc Brenner, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 169 |
| 11 | 2 <i>Henry VI</i> , National Theatre of Albania. Photograph by Marc Brenner, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 174 |
| 12 | 3 <i>Henry VI</i> , National Theatre of Bitola. Photograph by Marc Brenner, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 176 |

ILLUSTRATIONS

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 13 | 1 <i>Henry IV</i> , Compañia Nacional de Teatro. Photograph by Donald Cooper ©Donald Cooper/photostage.co.uk. | 183 |
| 14 | <i>King John</i> , Gabriel Sundukyan National Academic Theatre. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 193 |
| 15 | <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , Grupo Galpão from Belo Horizonte. Photograph by Ellie Kurttz, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 217 |
| 16 | <i>Love's Labour's Lost</i> , Deafinitely Theatre. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 232 |
| 17 | <i>All's Well That Ends Well</i> , Arpana. Photographer Ellie Kurttz, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 238 |
| 18 | <i>The Winter's Tale</i> , Renegade Theatre. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 244 |
| 19 | <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> , Theatre Wallay. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 254 |
| 20 | <i>The Comedy of Errors</i> , Roy-e-Sabs. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 283 |
| 21 | <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> , Compagnie Hypermobile. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 295 |
| 22 | <i>Hamlet</i> , Meno Fortas. Photograph by John Haynes, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 299 |
| 23 | <i>Henry V</i> , Shakespeare's Globe. Photograph by John Haynes, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe. | 305 |

COLOUR PLATES

The colour plates are to be found in two inserts, pp. 70–1 and pp. 198–9.

- 1 *Troilus and Cressida*, Ngākau Toa. Photograph by Donald Cooper ©Donald Cooper/photostage.co.uk
- 2 *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Bitter Pill and the Theatre Company, Kenya. Photograph by Marc Brenner, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe.
- 3 *Twelfth Night*, Company Theatre. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe.
- 4 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Yohangza Theatre Company. Photograph by Donald Cooper ©Donald Cooper/photostage.co.uk.
- 5 *Cymbeline*, the South Sudan Theatre Company. Photograph by Ellie Kurttz, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe.
- 6 *Richard II*, Ashtar Theatre. Photograph by Donald Cooper ©Donald Cooper/photostage.co.uk.
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- 10 *King Lear*, The Belarus Free Theatre. Photograph by Simon Kane, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe.
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- 13 *Antony and Cleopatra*, Oyun Atölyesi. Photograph by John Haynes, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe.
- 14 *The Merchant of Venice*, Habima National Theatre. Photograph by Simon Kane, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe.
- 15 *Henry VIII*, Rakatá. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe.
- 16 *Timon of Athens*, Bremer Shakespeare Company. Photograph by Simon Annand, reproduced by permission of Shakespeare's Globe.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

BECKY BECKER heads the BA program in Theatre at Columbus State University in Columbus, GA, and currently she holds the position of International Studies Certificate Coordinator for the university's Center for International Education. Her interest in international studies extends to many parts of the globe, including England, Nigeria and Japan, where she led a study-abroad programme in May 2013. Becky's directing credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Laramie Project*, *Cloud Nine*, *Eurydice* and *Caroline, or Change*. Her published work may be found in *Theatre Journal*, *Feminist Teacher* and *Theatre Symposium*.

SUSAN BENNETT is University Professor in the Department of English at the University of Calgary, Canada. Her interest in contemporary performances of Shakespeare's plays dates back to her 1996 monograph, *Performing Nostalgia: Shifting Shakespeare and the Contemporary Past*. Her latest book, *Theatre and Museums*, was published in 2013. A current research project is concerned with the circulation of performance in global markets where Shakespeare, not surprisingly, is a premium brand. She hopes to see some of the Globe to Globe Festival performances again at different international venues and with other audiences.

JACQUELYN BESSELL is Programme Leader, MA Acting, Guildford School of Acting, and has directed and taught at several conservatoires and regional theatres across the USA, as well as in New York City and London. Her research interests came into focus during her time as Head of Research at Shakespeare's Globe, and include the complex of relationships between performer, audience and space in early modern drama. She convenes the Performance Research Group, a practitioners' collective which explores early modern and postmodern approaches to performance, and her recent publications examine the application of post-Stanislawski actor-training techniques to Shakespeare's plays.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

TOM BIRD was Director of the Globe to Globe Festival and is now Executive Producer at Shakespeare's Globe. In producing the Festival, he travelled around the world from Armenia to Zanzibar in search of performance groups working with Shakespeare. Tom successfully applied for a major Arts Council England grant, as part of The Space project, to ensure that all the performances at the Festival were filmed in high definition.

DAVID CALDER received his BA in French from Trinity College in Hartford, CT, and is currently a doctoral candidate in the Interdisciplinary PhD in Theatre and Drama at Northwestern University. His dissertation examines how contemporary French street theatre companies and former industrial workers jointly negotiate urban redevelopment in converted factory spaces. More broadly, his research addresses the material conditions of production and reception in contemporary European theatre. In Chicago, he has served as a dramaturge on works by Corneille, Ionesco and Sartre.

CHRISTIE CARSON is Reader in Shakespeare and Performance in the Department of English at Royal Holloway University of London. She is the co-editor of *The Cambridge King Lear CD-ROM: Text and Performance Archive* (2000) and the Principal Investigator of the AHRB-funded research project *Designing Shakespeare: An Audio-Visual Archive, 1960–2000*. She has published widely on the subject of contemporary performance and co-edited *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment* (2008) with Farah Karim-Cooper and *Shakespeare in Stages: New Theatre Histories* (2010) with Christine Dymkowski. She hopes to continue to document international gatherings of this kind from a vantage point that takes in both the onstage action and the audience response.

JUAN F. CERDÁ is Lecturer at the University of Murcia and has worked on the Shakespeare in Spain research project since 2006. He has written mostly about Shakespeare's role in Spanish culture, including Shakespeare's presence in the work of actors, directors and the Spanish avant-garde in the first decades of the twentieth century, on Shakespeare's relationship with García Lorca and on the infrequent adaptation of Shakespearean drama for Spanish film. At present, he is collaborating on an annotated bilingual bibliography of Spanish criticism on Shakespeare from 1764 to 2000.

MALCOLM COCKS was born in Zimbabwe, where he lived until 1999. His current research projects focus on aspects of nineteenth-century intellectual history, literature and culture. Malcolm is interested in the idea of Shakespeare as a global commodity, and particularly in the complex political, imperial and moral roles that Shakespeare studies have come to assume in secondary-school curricula around the world. These interests stem from his work as a teacher: he has taught Shakespeare

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

and performance in various educational contexts in southern Africa, Europe and the United Kingdom.

EMMA COX is Lecturer in Drama and Theatre at Royal Holloway University of London. Her research engages with contemporary performances of Shakespeare and Jonson in postcolonial and intercultural contexts. Recent publications include a chapter with Elizabeth Schafer on *The Alchemist* in *Ben Jonson: A Critical Reader* (2013) and *Theatre and Migration* (2013). This essay attempts to locate the different Shakespeares that were thrown up by this Kenyan *Merry Wives*: Shakespeare the global commodity, Shakespeare the tool of imperial pedagogy and Shakespeare the raucous comic ally.

MICHAEL DOBSON is Director of the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon. Between 1999 and 2008 he reviewed every major production of a Shakespeare play in England for the journal *Shakespeare Survey*. His publications include *Shakespeare and Amateur Performance* (2011) and *Performing Shakespeare's Tragedies Today* (2006), as well as programme notes for Shakespeare's Globe, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), Peter Stein, Mokwha, TR Warszawa and others.

DOMINIC DROMGOOLE was appointed Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe in 2006; prior to this he was Artistic Director at the Oxford Stage Company and Bush Theatre in London. Under Dominic's leadership the Globe Theatre has become a champion of new writing, significantly increased its audience size, won several major awards, created regular national and international touring circuits, and filmed many of its productions for distribution in the cinema, on DVD and on TV, and online. Dominic has written two books: *The Full Room* (2001) and *Will and Me* (2006).

ALEKSANDAR SAŠA DUNDJEROVIĆ completed his PhD at Royal Holloway University of London and is currently Senior Lecturer and Head of the Drama Department at University College Cork. He was born in Belgrade, Serbia, where he studied theatre directing at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts. He is also a professional theatre director who has worked in Serbia, Romania, Brazil, Canada and the UK. Aleksandar's expertise is in international theatre and multimedia performance practice, devising and theatre directing. He has published a number of books and articles on the creative opus of Robert Lepage. His most recent book is on performance practices in Brazilian contemporary theatre.

CHRISTINE DYMKOWSKI, at the time of writing her chapter, was Professor of Drama and Theatre History at Royal Holloway University of London; she has since retired. Her work on the performance history of *The Tempest* is extensive: she wrote the volume on *The Tempest* for CUP's *Shakespeare in Production* series (2000; reprinted with minor revisions 2005) and is also Theatre History editor

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

of the forthcoming *New Variorum Tempest* being prepared under Andrew Gurr's editorship. Other work on Shakespeare includes *Shakespeare in Stages*, co-edited with Christie Carson (Cambridge, 2010). With David Wiles she co-edited *The Cambridge Companion to Theatre History* (2012).

BRIDGET ESCOLME is Senior Lecturer in Drama at Queen Mary University of London, where she researches and teaches early modern drama in performance, the performance of mental health, and theatre costume, in theory and through practice. She has worked as a teacher, a performer, a director and a dramaturge. Her published work has explored the ways in which staging convention and the relationship between performer and audience generate meaning in the theatre, so she has been particularly interested in the conventions and traditions that the Globe to Globe Festival have brought to the performance of Shakespeare.

JEANNIE FARR lectures in Performing Arts in London. She achieved her MA in Shakespeare and Theatre at the Shakespeare Institute in December 2011. Her research interests are focused on experimental approaches to classical performance, including cross-gender, single-sex and politically informed interpretations.

SUZANNE GOSSETT is Professor Emeritus at Loyola University Chicago and is the Past President of the Shakespeare Association of America. She is a General Editor of *Arden Early Modern Drama* and a General Textual Editor of the Norton Shakespeare Third Edition. Her most recent editions are of *Pericles* (2004), *Philaster* (2008) and *Eastward Ho!* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

TAMARA HADDAD is a doctoral student at the University of Kent, where her research focuses on site-specific performance and audience reception of late medieval and early modern drama. She is also interested in the adaptation of early English drama into a Middle Eastern context, especially in relation to regional Arabic dialects.

PETER KIRWAN is Lecturer in Shakespeare and Early Modern Drama at the University of Nottingham. His primary research and teaching interests are in authorship and collaboration in the Renaissance, early modern book history, digital media and contemporary Shakespearean performance. He reviews theatre for several academic journals and on his blog, *The Bardathon* (<http://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/bardathon>). His work on previous Shakespeare festivals has dealt with questions of intercultural performance, the subjectivity of the reviewer and the UK reception of foreign-language productions. He is a trustee of the British Shakespeare Association.

ADELE LEE is Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Greenwich, London. She is the author of numerous articles on Shakespearean appropriation and

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Renaissance travel writing, and has published works in such journals as *Shakespeare Bulletin*, *Early Modern Literary Studies* and *Quidditas*, among others. She is currently completing a book for Fairleigh Dickinson University Press entitled *The English Renaissance and the Far East: Cross-Cultural Encounters* and contributed to a new critical introduction to Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

LEE CHEE KENG is Assistant Professor in the Visual and Performing Arts Academic Group, National Institute of Education (Singapore), Nanyang Technological University. He is the Chinese translation co-editor of the Asian Shakespeare Intercultural Archive (A|S|I|A), and has written, translated and directed plays in Chinese and English. His research interests include visual metaphor in performance, Shakespeare performance in Asia and cultural policy.

RANDALL MARTIN is the editor of the Oxford World's Classics edition of *Henry VI Part Three* (2001) and has written extensively about the Henry VI trilogy. He has also co-edited a stage-oriented edition of *The Merchant of Venice* (2001) with Peter Lichtenfels and a collection of essays, *Shakespeare/Adaptation/Modern Drama: Essays in Honour of Jill L. Levenson* (2011), with Katherine Scheil.

SONIA MASSAI is Reader in Shakespeare Studies at King's College London. She has published widely on the global and intercultural dimensions of contemporary Shakespearean performance. Her publications on this topic include *World-Wide Shakespeares: Local Appropriations in Film and Performance* (2005), scholarly essays in journals and collections, and feature-length articles and reviews in newspapers, blogs and literary magazines, including the *Guardian* and *Salon Magazine*. In 2009 she organized a large international conference on 'Local/Global Shakespeares' with Globe Education, and she is currently completing her new book, *Shakespeare and Global Modernity*.

KATIE NORMINGTON is Vice Principal and Professor of Drama at Royal Holloway University of London. She researches medieval drama, including contemporary productions of medieval texts. She has also published on contemporary theatre and practice, and has previously studied Russian theatre director Meyerhold's techniques and investigated the application of these to theatre rehearsal processes.

ROBERT ORMSBY is Assistant Professor at Memorial University of Newfoundland and his primary area of research is the performance of early modern drama. He is currently completing a monograph on *Coriolanus*. He is also working on a project about Shakespeare, Canada and globalization that is concerned with how Shakespeare is used to produce both local and international identities. His work has appeared in *Cahiers Élisabéthains*, *Canadian Theatre Review*, *Modern Drama*, *Shakespeare Bulletin* and *Shakespeare Survey*.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

STEPHEN PURCELL is Assistant Professor of English at the University of Warwick. His research focuses on Shakespeare in contemporary performance and popular culture. He is the author of *Popular Shakespeare* (2009), as well as numerous articles on Shakespeare on stage, television and film. His writing on the World Shakespeare Festival also appears in *A Year of Shakespeare: Re-Living the World Shakespeare Festival* (2013) and *Shakespeare Survey* 66 (2013). He directs for the theatre company The Pantaloons.

KEVIN A. QUARMBY is Assistant Professor of English at Oxford College Emory University. His previous career was as a professional UK actor, appearing in Shakespeare productions throughout the country. A theatre reviewer in the UK and US, he offers detailed theatrical records, both informed and critical. He is co-director of the World Shakespeare Project, a model for interactive pedagogy in a new media world. His book, *The Disguised Ruler in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (2012), considers *Measure for Measure* as one of several interrelated plays. Focusing on Shakespeare, performance and editorial decision-making, his research questions the intersection between contemporary performance practice and canonical mediation of the text.

DEANA RANKIN is Senior Lecturer in English and Programme Director for English and Drama at Royal Holloway University of London. After graduating, she lived in Japan, where she saw as much contemporary and traditional Japanese theatre as she could; she was then Belfast co-ordinator for the Japan–UK Festival 1991. She is the author of *Between Spenser and Swift: English Writing in Seventeenth-Century Ireland* (Cambridge University Press, 2005) and is currently writing a book about assassination on the early modern English stage. She maintains a strong interest in Japanese performance and Japanese film versions of Shakespeare.

KIMBERLY RICHARDS is a doctoral student in the Department of Theater, Dance and Performance Studies, University of California, Berkeley. She received the Award for International Research at the Canadian Association of Theatre Research conference in May 2012. Her research focuses on performances from places of war, trauma studies and globalization.

ABIGAIL ROKISON began her career as a professional actor. She completed her PhD at Cambridge University in 2006, after which she was a Lecturer in Drama and English there. In January 2013 she became a Lecturer at the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham. Abigail has written a number of journal articles and chapters on Shakespeare and children's literature. Her monograph, *Shakespearean Verse Speaking* (Cambridge, 2010), won the inaugural Shakespeare's Globe first book award (2012). She has recently completed her second book, *Shakespeare for Young People: Productions, Versions and Adaptations*.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

DAVID RUITER has taught at the University of Texas at El Paso for the past fourteen years, where 80 per cent of the student population is of Mexican descent. David and his students live and work in a dynamic, bilingual and binational environment, and in his time teaching there he believes his views of Shakespeare have altered and expanded – indeed, have been translated – by this experience. David and his colleague Ruben Espinosa have recently completed an edited collection entitled *Shakespeare and Immigration*.

KATE RUMBOLD is Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Birmingham. Her research focuses on the reception and quotation of Shakespeare from his own lifetime to the present day (and in particular in the eighteenth century), and she has recently completed a co-authored book with Kate McLuskie on the cultural value of Shakespeare in the twenty-first century.

JULIE SANDERS is Professor of English Literature and Drama at the University of Nottingham and currently Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning at Nottingham's Ningbo, China campus. As well as researching early modern drama in its historical and geographical contexts, she has particular interests in adaptation theory, not least in relation to intercultural performance and global contexts for performing and interpreting Shakespeare. She is the author of *Novel Shakespeares* (2002), *Adaptation and Appropriation* (2006) and *Shakespeare and Music* (2007).

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

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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

FOREWORD

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