

SHAKESPEARE, SPECTATORSHIP AND THE TECHNOLOGIES OF PERFORMANCE

Shakespeare, Spectatorship and the Technologies of Performance examines how rapid changes in performance technologies affect modes of spectatorship for early modern drama. It argues that seemingly disparate developments – such as the revival of early modern architectural and lighting technologies, digital performance technologies, and the hybrid medium of theatre broadcast – are fundamentally related. How spectators experience performances is not only affected in medium-specific ways by particular technologies but is also connected to the plays' roots in early modern performance environments. Aebischer's examples range from the use of candlelight and re-imagined early modern architecture to set design, performance capture technologies, digital video, social media, hologram projection, biotechnologies and theatre broadcasts. This book argues that digital and analogue performance technologies alike activate modes of ethical spectatorship, requiring audiences to adopt an ethical standpoint as they decide how to look, where to look, what medium to look through, and how to take responsibility for looking.

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University of Exeter



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How to Read This Book

This book might have been three books: one on candlelit performance at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, one on intermedial and social media performance at the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company, and a final one on theatre broadcasting. It has been trimmed down and dovetailed to form a single overarching argument that aims to demonstrate how modes of technologically mediated spectatorship across all three types of performance are interrelated and form part of a bigger picture, with an introduction that anchors all three sections in a theoretical framework.

Therefore, if your focus is on just one of the book's three parts, I advise you read it in conjunction with the Introduction, as all parts of the book assume the reader's familiarity with the framework laid out there. A further shortcut consists in diving straight into the introductory section headed 'A Spatial Theory of Technologically Mediated Spectatorship for Early Modern Drama: *Locus*, *Platea* and Offstage Obscenity' (p. 12). For readers of Parts Two and/or Three, 'The *Platea* and the Offstage in the Digital age' (p. 20) is also essential.

All citations from Shakespeare's plays refer to Stephen Greenblatt et al.'s *The Norton Shakespeare* (2008), and citations from early modern plays refer to David Bevington et al.'s *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology* (2002). Unless otherwise noted, websites were checked and information was available and accurate in May 2019.