



The Shakespearean International Yearbook

THE SHAKESPEAREAN INTERNATIONAL YEARBOOK

**DISABILITY PERFORMANCE AND GLOBAL
SHAKESPEARE**

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10 Access and Global Shakespeares

The State of the Field

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The coronavirus pandemic has had a profound impact on the field of Shakespeare studies. Performance venues were shuttered and teaching moved online, leaving practitioners and scholars alike to find new ways to engage with the polysemic cultural phenomenon that is Shakespeare. Some of the changes were accelerations: as long as global Shakespeares has existed as a recognizable area of study, researchers have worked to challenge inherited concepts of “center” and “margins,” but the staggering inequities thrown into relief by the pandemic, both within countries and between them, appear to have stimulated a new sense of urgency in interrogating the multiple ways Shakespeare’s works can be mobilized in different contexts and cultures.

For the purposes of this chapter, I use a single framing concept to provide unity, and that concept is access. Who has the opportunity to stage, to read, to watch, or to write about Shakespeare? Whose engagements with Shakespeare, whether creative, critical, or something between the two, are then picked up, transmitted, shared—and shared with whom? Many of the works considered in this chapter engage in highly self-conscious reflection on their methodologies, alert to their own limitations.

I will imitate my subjects by opening with a brief reflection on how the works came to be chosen for this collection: a process shaped by my privileged access to a large, well-funded research library. The first section of the review will consist of a survey of works whose primary purpose is to describe and analyze creative engagements with Shakespeare. The second section will focus on works that foreground questions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and ability, while the third section will focus on works investigating technology, mediation, and pedagogy.

The Question of Access

The University of Toronto’s Robarts Library is an amazing resource. As I searched the library catalog, restricting myself as much as possible to the

relevant years, I saw, far more frequently than I ever had in the past, the promising link “Available Online.” In the end, I read only three of the volumes covered in this chapter as physical books. Scholarly publishing had been moving more and more to online dissemination even before the pandemic, but the sudden need to give students access to books while keeping them apart from each other turned a stream into a torrent. This expanded access is in many ways an enormous step forward for academia: electronic books neither need physical storage space, nor are they prone to damage or loss. The classroom truly has gone global in the cloud. I am conscious of how privileged I am in having access to this collection. My editors, when suggesting titles, also offered to facilitate access—an offer I seldom had to take them up on. I know that I may be discussing books that are not easily available to many readers of this chapter.

There are drawbacks. Without walking down the physical aisles of books, I lose the ability to encounter books I did not know I needed. Further, university libraries now need to subscribe to the best possible deals for their students, favoring large academic publishers who can make the greatest number of volumes available at the lowest cost. It is no coincidence that two of the physical books I read were put out by smaller university presses. There are also disparities in access, or accessibility. I have the luxury of living in a city with excellent internet connectivity, and of reading on more than one monitor at once.

I must also offer one caveat. This chapter covers works about which I felt competent to write. It features no work published in languages other than English, even though many of the works within it remind us that much work on Shakespeare is done in other languages.

Performance and Appropriation

The untimely death of Christy Desmet in 2018 was greeted with great sadness by those who had known her, and by those who had benefited from both her pioneering work in developing the field of Shakespeare and appropriation studies, and her lifelong generosity towards emerging scholars. As a Festschrift, *Performing Shakespearean Appropriations*, edited by Darlena Ciraulo, Matthew Kozusko, and Robert Sawyer, is at once a welcome, heartfelt tribute, and a collection that sits slightly oddly in conjunction with Desmet’s work.

The introduction, by two of the volume’s editors, both former students of Desmet’s, provides a succinct but thorough overview of the overlap and tensions between such related terms as appropriation, adaptation, collaboration, and so forth. The collected essays, divided into sections on “Past,” “Present,” and “Future,” are, appropriately, diverse, ranging from explorations of early modern children’s games, through Shakespeare as a

referent in popular culture (in television programs as different as the 1960s *Batman* and HBO's *Westworld*), to Shakespeare as performed by students on YouTube.

Of particular interest for me were the essays by Lisa S. Starks and Alexa Alice Joubin. The first is a nuanced reading of Jessica's role in a number of productions of *The Merchant of Venice* (mostly stage productions now available on video but also Michael Radford's 2004 film). By comparing the present and absent rings, as well as the different directors' use, or appropriation, of Jewish prayer, Starks provides both illuminating readings of the films and a user-friendly introduction to Levinas. Instructors looking for a lucid outline of the distinct but intertwined operations of ontological and ethical memory will find this chapter extremely useful.

Joubin's chapter on transgender theory is more methodologically diverse, but its first section sent me down an internet rabbit-hole to learn more about the inflection of Japanese pronouns with regards to gender and formality, and indeed the elision of first-person pronouns, allowing for a speaker to evade referring to themselves as belonging to any particular gender. This section of Joubin's chapter was a fascinating case study of how Shakespeare in translation can express possibilities not available to an author writing in early modern English, and a salutary reminder that understanding an appropriation in translation requires a strong understanding of the new language.

For all the richness of the essays in this book, though, choosing which should stand as exemplars drove home the awkwardness of a *Festschrift* for the purpose of honoring Christy Desmet's particular legacy. By generic convention, such a book includes essays by luminaries in honor of a lost colleague. But Desmet herself was a passionate promoter of young scholars who have not yet had their big break. Bearing this in mind, I did feel as though Sujata Iyengar's afterword was the best possible tribute to Desmet. Reader, it is not easy reading. Iyengar compiles the depressingly familiar data about the prevalence of contingent labor in the academy, and combines it with a call to action to prioritize the allocation of resources to "make academic thriving possible again for ... those are ... overworked, but precariously under-employed and underpaid" (228). Perhaps a second volume might make another tribute, amplifying the kind of voices Desmet spent her career advancing.

Several other books honor the importance of appropriation studies. *Shakespeare in Cuba: Caliban's Books* by Donna Woodford-Gormley (part of Palgrave's Global Shakespeares book series) traces how Shakespeare's works have been translated, adapted, and re-mixed in Cuba. In order to do so, she uses as a critical frame the Brazilian modernist concept of cultural anthropophagy, which urged Brazilian artists to move from "imitation of European culture into the idea of devouring European culture and

incorporating and mixing it with indigenous Brazilian elements” (9). This formulation disrupts any sense that the later work is somehow indebted to a superior colonial culture.

As the book’s title would suggest, *The Tempest* features prominently in Woodford-Gormley’s analysis, beginning with Roberto Fernández Retamar’s complex and evolving relationship with the figure of Caliban. Retamar’s first invocation of the character in his 1971 essay, “Caliban,” reflects his awareness of being a champion of Latin America’s *mestizo* culture, while speaking the language of the European colonizers. By the nineties, Woodford-Gormley relates, the essay had been published so widely that Retamar felt compelled to write that he wanted to move on from his association with Caliban; by the end of the decade he had resigned himself to having captured a cultural moment.

Dramatic productions are the focus of the book, though, and Woodford-Gormley documents and analyzes engagements with four main texts: *The Tempest*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet*. This includes a feminist retelling of *Hamlet* from Ophelia’s perspective, a mash-up of *The Tempest* with other plays, whose characters are stranded on the island, or a take on *Romeo and Juliet* in which the virtues of life under the guidance of the *Comité de Defensa de la Revolución* lead to a peaceful ending to the play; for readers like myself, less familiar with theatrical productions in communist countries, the account of *Romeo y Julieta en Luyanó* provides a useful corrective for those more familiar with the reductive stereotype of “girl meets tractor” stories. Throughout these considerations, Woodford-Gormley provides a wealth of background, both historical and cultural, for a reader unfamiliar with Cuba. Even more crucially, she provides detailed histories of the companies and artists that produced the plays, frequently citing the directors’, writers’, and dramaturgs’ own descriptions of their intentions.

In contrast to Woodford-Gormley’s critical study is a collection of translations of plays. Rare in the field of global Shakespeare studies are primary materials for teaching and research. Alexa Alice Joubin’s *Sinophone Adaptations of Shakespeare: An Anthology, 1987–2007*, fills this lacuna. It is an ambitious collection, with at least three interwoven critical projects. As with much of the work undertaken by scholars and practitioners engaging with global Shakespeares, Joubin seeks to “blur the lines between central and peripheral locations of cultural production” (6), “using Asian cultural texts themselves as a methodological hub” (7). Her choice to curate a specifically regional approach to the topic is intended to break down the silos created by “narrowly defined national Shakespeares” (6) and also to dislodge the conception of “China as a homeland in a settler colonial mentality,” using the term “Sinophone [as] a more inclusive notion that points to a network of cultures” (9). The introduction is both carefully theorized

and generous in its detailing of the political and cultural conditions under which each of the chosen texts was originally created.

The works collected include fairly close translations, radically streamlined musical adaptations, a solo performance of *King Lear* that riffs on the scenes of the play, rather than presenting the full story, and a 1986 production in which Hamlet, Macbeth, Lear, and Othello share each other's lines, while their stories are probed by a Modern Man. As a collection, the plays and libretti make a fascinating, varied archive, representing productions in varied styles and with varied political agendas. Yilin Chen, for example, offers a translation of Lü Po-shen's *huaju*-style musical, *The Witches' Sonata*, which Chen presents as an explicitly feminist take on *Macbeth*. The Shanghai Jingju Theater Company's *King Qi's Dream*, in contrast, puts a Confucian spin on *King Lear*.

The volume's general introduction by Joubin and the introductions to each play (some by Joubin, and others by her contributors) provide a reader possessing only a glancing knowledge of Sinophone theatrical and musical traditions with the essential cultural background to grasp how the original writers bring their own literary traditions into play with Shakespeare's texts. The translations themselves, in some cases, could give the reader a little more guidance through paratextual cues. In some of the productions that mix spoken dialogue with song, it can sometimes be difficult to tell when the singing stops and normal speech resumes.

Joubin's choice to present pairs of adaptations generates many points of productive contrast. For example, the two engagements with *Macbeth*, *The Witches' Sonata* by Lü Poshen and the *kunqu* opera *Story of Bloody Hands*, offer very different representations of Lady Macbeth. Lady Iron, as she is called in *The Story of Bloody Hands*, does not merely sleepwalk; rather, like Richard III on the eve of Bosworth, she is tormented by the ghosts of her and her husband's victims, including her sister Lady Mei (Lady Macduff). Lü's Lady Macbeth is made of sterner stuff, disarming her husband in the banquet scene. In *The Witches' Sonata* it is she who appears as a ghost, a memory haunting her husband in the brief interval between her death and his. The works collected and translated here are therefore a useful archive, and Joubin's collection is to be commended for giving these productions broader exposure.

In their *The Arden Research Handbook of Shakespeare and Contemporary Performance*, Peter Kirwan and Kathryn Prince have elicited from their contributors a collection of essays that examine self-consciously the question of how scholars and practitioners engage, or sometimes fail to engage, with each other's work. In the words of C. K. Ash, an independent researcher, director, and dramaturg, one goal of "this collection of interviews was to open up a two-way dialogue between academics and theatre practitioners" (245). An excellent example of this overlap is the chapter

contributed by Andrew James Hartley, Kaja Dunn, and Christopher Berry, whose jointly authored chapter examines the difficulties—and rewards—of thoughtful diverse casting first through a theoretical lens, and then through a production of *Twelfth Night* at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. The authors provide an overview of the role of American university programs in training theater practitioners, and a history of the theater program at UNC Charlotte’s “mixed” record on racial casting. Although the authors state in their introduction that the “purpose of this analysis is not to offer hard solutions” (171), they sell themselves short. In choosing to pursue “culturally conscious” rather than “color-blind” casting (182), in ensuring that they were highlighting Black-authored scholarship (183), in ensuring that performers spoke with their own voices, rather than striving to sound “classical”—these interventions suggest, without dictating, best practices for directors to de-colonize their productions of Shakespeare.

The baton is picked up in the next chapter, as Erin Julian and Kim Solga take the 2018 Stratford, ON production of *The Comedy of Errors* as a case study in how the economics of festival Shakespeare can frustrate even sincere, well-considered attempts at “practicing (and not just representing) diversity” (192). The authors’ examination of the economics of the repertory system, and their granular engagement with the details of the rehearsal process as provided by director Keira Loughran, give an eye-opening account of the sheer labor involved in achieving diversity in practice and representation, and in creating a truly inclusive creative space. The editors and authors of this volume, as well as the practitioners interviewed, see the promise in promoting dialogue between the academy and the rehearsal room, and in a flexible approach to that dialogue.

The Asian Shakespeare Association’s 2016 conference in Delhi was clearly a fascinating and richly diverse scholarly gathering, judging by the book of essays Poonam Trivedi, Paromita Chakravarti, and Ted Motohashi have assembled from papers given there. As the editors explain, *Asian Interventions in Global Shakespeare: ‘All the World’s His Stage’* is intended to interrogate “the politics of language and translation, the dividing lines between the universal/global/transnational and cosmopolitan, and how we identify and theorize the liminal spaces and mobilities in between” (4). In particular, the collection aims to consider Asia as “not a mere geographic space but a putative regional collation of tendencies of economic and cultural growth and flows” (4). The book has three sections: the first theorizes the “Asian ‘global’ and its discontents,” while the second focuses on digital media, and the third considers Shakespeare as a global poet, particularly through the work of Rabindranath Tagore.

Two essays illustrate the range of work done by the contributors. Mariko Anzai’s contribution is a discussion of Akio Miyazawa’s play *Motorcycle Don Quixote*, part of the Stephen Greenblatt and Charles Mee’s 2006

Cardenio Project, in which distinctly “national” adaptations of the Cardenio story were played around the world from 2006 to 2014. Anzai takes issue with Greenblatt’s comment that he found the final reconciliation between Tadao and Machiko “strange and incomprehensible” (71) for its matter-of-factness. Despite Greenblatt’s concession that “cultural projection is not a one-way street” (71), the statement that he had experienced “the phenomenon of cultural mobility as misunderstanding” (87) privileges the Western scholar’s understanding of the material over the Japanese adaptor’s. Anzai’s riposte to Greenblatt combines a contextualization of the piece within recent Japanese “Quiet Theater” and a nuanced understanding of Japanese vernacular unavailable to an Anglophone scholar working in translation to challenge this anglocentric reading.

Andronicus Aden’s chapter on *Hamlet* in Nepal focuses primarily on the 1906 play *Shri Atal Bahadur*, a work that adapts both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, repurposing them for political purposes, but his discussion ranges across time to pull in other *Hamlets* from the Himalayan region. Aden’s work thus not only calls attention to the under-researched topic of Shakespeare in Nepal but also demonstrates the prominence of Shakespeare as a cultural signifier in the country, expanding from a national perspective to a regional one.

As the title and concept suggest, Alexa Joubin and Victoria Bladen’s anthology, *Onscreen Allusions to Shakespeare: International Films, Television, and Theatre* is a heterogeneous collection. An allusion may be isolated and fleeting, or part of a sustained engagement with a hypotext; “international” might refer to post-colonial India, settler-colonial Australia, European countries, or their former colonies; the screens involved may range from the early silent films of the twentieth century to computer screens during the pandemic. The editors have chosen essays that adroitly represent both this geographic diversity and temporal range within specific countries.

Victoria Bladen’s chapter may be taken as paradigmatic. It traces the different roles played by Shakespearean allusions in three different Australian films that engage with their hypotext in three distinct ways. In the 1919 silent film *The Sentimental Bloke*, Raymond Longford and Lottie Lyell use intertextual allusions to *Romeo and Juliet* to highlight the depth of emotion experienced by their working-class hero, the Bloke, but also depict his uncouth reactions to live staging of the play. Bladen reads this as an early example of “Australian cultural interest in parodying its own perceived lack of cultural sophistication, its ‘cultural cringe’” (39).

The other two works considered by Bladen engage with Shakespeare to wildly divergent degrees. Peter Weir’s brief allusion to sonnet 18 in *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, she argues, establishes “confrontation ... between European culture ... and the sublime power and horror of a landscape that has purportedly been colonized, yet not understood or controlled” (41–42).

The protagonist in Jerzy Domaraszki's *Lilian's Story* expresses herself through extensive quotations from Shakespeare. Lilian's use of quotation enables her confrontation and engagement with a literal and a literary father, one "destructive and controlling" and one, Shakespeare, "nurturing" (49). Bladen demonstrates the multi-valent role Shakespeare plays in twentieth-century Australian film: a source of cultural capital, an anxiety-inducing suggestion of colonial inferiority, a reminder to settlers that they are foreign to the colonized land, and resource for modern-day self-fashioning.

As most chapters cover a number of works, and since "allusion" can operate in so many registers, readers may find the book most useful as a jumping-off point, a collection of insightful engagements that demand closer attention.

Nicoleta Cinpoes, Florence March, and Paul Prescott's *Shakespeare on European Festival Stages* features on its second page a map of Europe, marking the various performance sites covered in the collection. The image is at once a clear justification—if one were needed—of the need for such a "travel companion" (2), and an evocation of the environment in which much of the book was completed, as tourists, theater-goers, and scholars traveled more through online maps and videos than to actual festivals. A number of themes recur from chapter to chapter and festival to festival.

The first is the shared assumption or assertion of most festivals—and the book's editors—that Shakespeare can be endlessly co-opted by any artistic vision or national narrative that wishes to do so. As just one example, Filip Krajník and Eva Kyselová reflect on how Shakespeare has been a "symbol of cultural emancipation of Czechs" since the nineteenth century, and how that position as a "proxy for ... their political positions" (57) has evolved and adapted through the twentieth century to the fall of communism.

In considering the festival venues, the various authors are sensitive to the politics and economics of space. Krajník and Kyselová recognize the importance of Václav Havel's decision to open Prague Castle "to ordinary people once again, and to invest it with a new, democratic ethos" (56). The idea resurfaces in Lisanna Calvi and Maddalena Pennacchia's discussion of how repurposing the *Teatro Romano* in post-war Verona served in part as an act of reclaiming "a place that fascism had tried to overwrite in order to construct and celebrate its myths" (122). In terms of economics, Anne Sophie Refskou, citing Alexa Alice Joubin, carefully considers Kronborg castle in Helsingør's status as an "authentically fake site" (196). In the words of the editors, "the contemporary, restored version" of a castle or other historic setting "retains an early modern patina and affect" (11).

With close attention to the history, economics, and politics of each festival, along with thumbnail sketches of key productions, this collection is more than just the "Grand Tour of the exquisitely ephemeral" (1) described by its editors.

Pamela Bickley and Jenny Stevens' *Studying Shakespeare Adaptation: From Restoration Theatre to YouTube* lives up to its title, offering an introduction to both close adaptations and full-scale re-imaginings, and highlighting work from 1678 through to the present day. It is geographically and culturally diverse, though with a stronger emphasis on British and American output than on works from outside the Anglosphere. The introduction briskly considers the vocabulary that might be used to describe such engagements with Shakespeare, such as production, adaptation, or appropriation, wisely adopting a fair broad critical definition of the term appropriation. The authors then race through representative creative interventions with twelve works of Shakespeare.

The chosen format is at once enchanting and frustrating—but I intend that as a compliment. Each chapter focuses on one Shakespearean text, usually through three adaptations. Most readers will finish the book inspired to dig further into the less-known productions, but wishing that each section could have been longer. Bickley and Stevens provide sharp, nuanced readings of shorter works, as in their careful attention to how characters' accents and facility (or lack thereof) with code-switching reflects characters' relative abilities to navigate urban Indian society (27) in Bornila Chatterjee's *The Hungry*, adapted from *Titus Andronicus*.

A section of the same length later considers Dominic Cooke's TV series *The Hollow Crown: The War of the Roses*. The authors are able to work in deft critiques of the conservatism of the series, in particular its opening, which "appears to adopt a wholly Tillyardian approach: the opening shot of the ... *Henry VI* plays pans across the iconic cliffs" (43) of Dover, while Judi Dench speaks Ulysses' lines from *Troilus and Cressida* about hierarchy. Within five pages, the section covers casting, production style, social media promotion, and more. Overall, the book provides a chef's tasting menu of creative interventions that invite further study.

Race, Gender, Sexuality

In contrast to the whirlwind tour offered by Bickley and Stevens, L. Monique Pittman's *Shakespeare's Contested Nations: Race, Gender, and Multicultural Britain in Performances of the History Plays* focuses solely on British productions in the twenty-first century, particularly asking the question: "Why do the representational modes of history on stage and screen remain limited in their re-vision of the past, present, and future of Britain?" (9).

The book stands out for Pittman's close engagement with the policy, politics, and economics that underpin the institutions producing the works. Michael Boyd's *Henry VI* for the Royal Shakespeare Company and Nicholas Hytner's *Henry* plays from the second tetralogy at the National Theatre featured Black actors in lead roles: Daniel Oyelowo as Henry VI and

Adrian Lester as Henry V. Pittman adeptly picks apart the “inattentive” to the point of self-deception “colorblind casting” (49) of both directors, reading the works in the historical and political context of the 2000 report from the “Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (FMEB) chaired by Bhikhu Parekh, *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*” (51).

She achieves even greater depth in her examination of the politics of the Cultural Olympiad of 2012 and its relation to the production of the first series of *The Hollow Crown*, produced by Neal Street Productions for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). This chapter includes a deconstruction of the internal contradictions of Danny Boyle’s patriotic opening pageant for the Olympic games (a “breezy affirmation of a healthy multicultural nation” [99]), a “follow the money” look at the production history of *The Hollow Crown*, including internal BBC policy documents, the Equality Act of 2010, changes in internal leadership at the BBC, and the re-negotiation of its license fee. All of these factors form a richly detailed backdrop to Pittman’s reading of the racial and sexual politics of the films themselves.

The next chapter continues with an examination of Neal Street Productions’ adaptation of the first tetralogy into three films, reading it in the context of the frequently openly racist Brexit debate. Like Bickley and Stevens, Pittman analyzes the insular implications of the opening shot combined with Dench’s monologue (133), while arguing that excision of Cade’s rebellion muted any sense of internal class-based conflict within a mono-ethnic Britain. Further, whereas the first series had included a number of European actors in prominent roles, the second series featured only British and Irish performers (129). Sophie Okonedo was cast as Queen Margaret (a French character), and while the French forces had a few supernumeraries played by actors of color, the English army was played by White actors. Pittman argues that “these choices reinforce dangerously, if inadvertently, myths of British white racial purity” (131) and serve to shore up a mythical “geography that holds intruders at bay and parses no distinction between refugee and invader” (134).

In *Race and Affect in Early Modern English Literature*, Carol Mejia Laperle has brought together 11 thought-provoking and wide-ranging essays. Her brief introduction manages to pack in an elegant overview of the development of Pre-modern Critical Race Studies as a field, as well as a forceful argument for why affect studies offer critical inquiry into race such a valuable point of access. Affects, she writes “do not just transmit through bodies, they also influence, attribute, and categorize in ways that reflect and reinforce unequal power structures” (xix).

Despite the shared critical lens, the essays take a wide range of approaches. Ambereen Dadabhoy combines an analysis of how Marston’s *The Renegado* racializes Islam, in order to make it visible, with an

unapologetically personal discussion of her position as a “person-scholar who is raced, whose religion has been demonized through the US-led War on Terror” (3). The chapter is thus both an interrogation of how race operates in the play, and strong appeal for pedagogical self-reflection: if we use *The Renegado* to teach about race in early modern literature, what effect will that have on the readers to whom it is assigned?

Matthieu Chapman and Averyl Dietering both deploy an Afro-pessimistic lens to very different ends. Dietering, explicitly drawing on Chapman’s earlier work, offers a fascinating examination of different early modern techniques: black line and white line woodcuts, and engraving, to show how print illustrations rendered dark-skinned bodies and faces almost featureless, fostering the “growth of a white English identity that defined itself in opposition to blackness” (139).

Chapman’s deeply personal chapter—preceded by content warnings whose meaning becomes apparent bit by bit—juxtaposes rehearsals for a student production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with the murder of George Floyd in 2020. Where, he asks, does the sudden racialized disgust of Lysander’s rejection of Hermia come from? “Away, you Ethiop!” Lysander shouts. The violence of the language, and the relative lack of attention it elicited at the time, contrast sharply with the care and attention the production paid to its representation of gender. The play had content warnings regarding sexuality, but this racist outburst attracted little comment. That very lack of attention, the numbness to that verbal violence confirm for Chapman “a simple but undeniable doctrine—black lives do not matter. They cannot matter. Black death does” (185).

David Ruiter’s *The Arden Research Handbook of Shakespeare and Social Justice* is laid out in four sections: interviews conducted by Ruiter with five leading scholars and practitioners, followed by essays on the practice, performance, and economies of Shakespeare and social justice.

Readers of the *Shakespeare International Yearbook* may well gravitate towards the third section, with its chapters on world-wide performances of Shakespeare and adaptations of his work, covering a student production of *King Lear* in India that served as a call to arms against gender violence; the effects of a prison Shakespeare program in South Africa; and two chapters on Chinese productions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Richard III*, read in contemporary political context.

The two chapters that most resonated for this reader, read in the context of the other works in this review, were Malcolm Cocks’ work on Shakespeare in southern Africa, and Alfredo Modenessi and Paulina Morales’ analysis of *Enrique IV, primera parte*, the National Theater Company of Mexico’s contribution to the 2012 Globe to Globe festival.

Cocks’ approach to his subject is reminiscent of Alexa Alice Joubin’s use of the regional as a critical lens for understanding global Shakespeare

(Joubin, *Sinophone Adaptations of Shakespeare*, 6). His chapter considers how the “complex imbrication of the ‘global’ and the ‘universal’ in Shakespeare reception in Africa has nonetheless created unique opportunities for local African practitioners” (176). He considers both South African productions (in English) and two from Mozambique, in Portuguese, emphasizing regional connections that bridge the linguistic divide. Alert to Shakespeare’s role as a cultural commodity, he explores, for example, the multiple ironies of how Johannesburg Awakening Minds (JAM)—a theater troupe formed in 2012 of mostly homeless men—have leveraged “Shakespeare’s high cultural status” to earn “a visibility and kudos among their paying audiences that they might otherwise not command” (179).

Modenessi and Morales’ chapter similarly reveals new insights into the Globe to Globe productions. The rendering of *I Henry IV* in what can broadly be called “Mexican Spanish” is part of an ongoing project to displace Castilian Spanish’s position of assumed prestige. Writing in a self-consciously Mexican vernacular also allowed the translators to use diction that would resonate with contemporary social justice debates. That the production was mounted in Mexico’s Constitution Square, colloquially “El Zócalo,” would have made its audience hyper-alert to political implications: it “has been the main stage for Mexican history and politics since colonial times” (149).

Digital Performance, Technology, Pedagogy

Amrita Sen’s *Digital Shakespeares from the Global South* exemplifies most of the dominant themes of this review essay. Sen and her contributors consider the possibilities and pitfalls of digital Shakespeares, productions and scholarship, in de-centering the Anglo-American experience of Shakespeare. While online bibliographies and archives can disrupt binaries of center and margin, Sen notes that social and economic “disparities *within* the Global South also affect the levels of digital participation of citizens” (5, emphasis in original) can seriously compromise the enhanced participation and access digital Shakespeares can offer.

Sen and Chris Thurman’s chapters focus on the dissemination of creative engagements with Shakespeare through digital media, with Thurman focusing on South African interventions during the coronavirus pandemic and Sen examining longer-term projects, the Fundación Shakespeare Argentina’s website, and the MIT Global Shakespeares Video & Performance Archive’s extensive materials relating to Shakespeare in Brazil, “two largely educational websites offer important and viable alternatives to non-curated sites such as YouTube” (70).

As in Woolford-Gormley’s *Shakespeare in Cuba*, Sen draws heavily on the theoretical model of cultural anthropophagy to understand how both sites

allow for an approach to Shakespeare that “neither apes nor rejects European culture, but ‘devours’ it, adapting its strengths and incorporating them into the native self” (Barry 36, cited in Sen 61). Sen especially lauds the FSA’s bilingualism and its engagement with social media, ensuring that “while disseminating local Argentinian Shakespeares, [it] has succeeded in reaching a broader global audience” (63). Any reader who has not yet encountered the work of FSA but now joins that global audience (I include myself in that number) owes Sen a debt of gratitude for showcasing their efforts. The MIT project, in turn, draws praise for being curated by scholars from the region, by which means the “decolonial archive attempts to restore the plurality of memories, experiences and histories” and also “makes visible their critical labor while also building an inclusive global community centered around Shakespeare appropriation and scholarship” (66).

If Sen’s essay is largely celebratory, both Heidi Craig and Laura Estill’s and Souvik Mukherjee’s contributions offer more cautionary insights.

Mukherjee’s chapter offers a look at the promise and the perils of learning and teaching about Shakespeare online in the context of India under pandemic lockdowns. In contrast with past, deeply colonial pedagogies, digital resources mean that Shakespeare has “been moved from the ivory towers of legendary academics to a global cloud” (88), but Mukherjee marshals sobering statistics to demonstrate the limitations of this move, given relatively low penetration of the internet in India, such that “over 55% of the population of India cannot reach any information, let alone Shakespeare’s works, online” (81). The digital divide is in fact a set of divides: urban centers are better connected than rural, richer households more than poor, and while most platforms are designed for access by computer, most Indian users access the internet on their smartphones. Gender, too, plays a role as only a quarter of women in India have a smartphone compared to 41% of men (82). The fact that the “global cloud” remains out of reach of so many not only reflects, but also exacerbates these digital divides.

Craig and Estill offer a survey, historical and geographical, of online bibliographies and other tools for locating, reading, and citing scholarship. Their chapter acknowledges “the lack of visibility of Shakespeare scholars from the Global South, particularly due to a dearth of citation, and [seeks] to contribute to its remedy through a citation practice that moves beyond the typical centres of Shakespeare studies” (20). They call for a greater attention to, and citation of, scholarship from the Global South.

One of the key digital resources on the Global South is the Spanish-English bilingual website of the Fundación Shakespeare Argentina. The foundation, now in its twelfth year, promotes Argentinian productions and translations of, as well as scholarship about, Shakespeare. Their video library includes previews of their own production of *Mucho Ruido y Pocas Nueces* (2019), along with an interview with the cast; videos of the

Foundation's visit to the Mercedes' Prison, where the Renacer group had staged Shakespeare for the first time (2016); as well as talks by the likes of Stanley Wells, interviews with international practitioners from the UK, Germany, Poland, and the United States. Although watching *Mucho Ruido* requires membership of the theater platform Teatrix, a one-month, low-cost trial is available, and most of the other videos are available on YouTube or Vimeo. The Foundation has also published a series of short e-books on Shakespeare in Argentinian culture, including one on Borges.

The real rabbit hole, however, may be the Foundation's collected materials on the work of Argentinian poet and critic Rafael Squirru. Squirru, at the time of his death in 2016, had translated three of Shakespeare's plays, though only *Hamlet* and *La Tempestad* have been published. The FSA interviewed Squirru three years before his death, and features a too-brief ebook about Juan Carlos Liberti's paintings and drawings inspired by Shakespeare, including a number used to illustrate Squirru's translations.

The Routledge Handbook of Shakespeare and Interface, edited by Clifford Wierier and Paul Budra, is an imposing collection, at almost four hundred pages, but one that rewards reading outside one's comfort zone. The essays gathered range widely in their consideration of interface, "that elusive liminality between media and cognition" (1) as the editors phrase it, and each author is at pains to theorize the concept. One of the main benefits anticipated by the editors is that readers "of this collection should gain a deep understanding of interface theory just by reading the discussions which begin every chapter" (1). A reader can easily dip into this collection based on immediate research interests, but the essays benefit from being read in dialogue with one another.

In some cases, early modern experiences of Shakespeare, from the perspective of audience and reader, are considered through interface theory. Laurie Johnson finds interface "a useful analogy" for early modern playhouses, as it can help take "into account the full array of sensory stimuli that audience members experience" "while acknowledging "that these perceptions constitute the world rather than merely receive input from the world" and thus "help us to focus on the agency of the audience" (295). Erika Mary Boeckeler turns her attention to the 1603 quarto of *Hamlet* to demonstrate how orthography and typography combine to create homographic visual puns—for example echoes of "power" in the verb "pour" in *Hamlet*: both spelt as "power" in different parts of the text (154).

At the other end of the temporal scale, Sarah Connell gave this digital novice a far clearer understanding of how the choice of code for producing online texts changes the kinds of searches readers can perform, and therefore what kinds of questions they can ask. Heidi Craig and Laura Estill, too, ask readers to consider how the tagging of subject search terms shapes researchers' experience of using the World Shakespeare Bibliography.

Bruce R. Smith's and Mary Hartman's chapters move away from the technology of interface to ask readers to consider the body—voice for Smith and various forms of embodiment for Hartman—in terms of interface theory. Hartman's essay in particular speaks powerfully to Mathieu Chapman's essay, discussed elsewhere in this review, as she reminds us that the ownership generated by the embodied performance of Shakespeare's "words, as we express them for others to hear, challenges us to challenge them" (350.)

For all the slenderness of Stephen Wittek and David McInnis' much briefer volume for the Cambridge Elements, *Shakespeare and Virtual Reality*, the editors and contributors engage in rigorous and inventive ways with the emerging medium—or media, as more than one writer emphasizes the spectrum of immersive technologies that we group under the term "virtual reality." The essays presented are acutely attuned to being written in media res; as Wittek notes, the project "shows what the object of discussion looked like before it grew into maturity" (72).

McInnis' and Wittek's own contributions reflect their common experience with relatively sophisticated uses of virtual reality as a pedagogical tool. Wittek's study examined the effect of adding a virtual reality component to students' exposure to Shakespeare. While a control group read *Hamlet* and engaged with filmed versions of the play, a second group had an added virtual reality intervention. McInnis' essay covers two applications of VR to post-secondary education, examining both an in-class demonstration of three interpretations of the final scene of *The Taming of the Shrew* in 360° filming, and a hackathon in which prospective students were invited to use social media to respond to a VR staging of the assassination scene in *Julius Caesar*.

These essays question what virtual reality can do for Shakespeare, but the opening chapter, by Jennifer Roberts-Smith, astutely flips the question on its head, emphasizing what Shakespeare can do for virtual reality. In Roberts-Smith's formulation, "VR is no more likely to have a medium-specific power to manifest or teach 'Shakespeare' more faithfully or more effectively—to clarify or expand 'Shakespeare' as a conceptual field—than any other new medium before it" (4).

Working with slightly more traditional media and interfaces, Alexa Alice Joubin and Peter S. Donaldson have developed an online course with a full performance video, introductory materials, and a range of assignments based on Wu Hsing-Kuo's 2001 adaptation *Lear Is Here*, also anthologized in Joubin's *Sinophone* collection (see above). With remarkable efficiency, the module provides enough essential context about Wu and the theatrical traditions on which he draws to forestall the "temptation for a person who is not familiar with Chinese theater to think of the production as typical or representative of Chinese theater in general or of Chinese adaptations of Shakespeare in particular" ("Introduction").

The site also provides its visitors with two to three other stagings of *Lear* for comparison. Ong Keng Sen's 1997 Singapore production and David Tse's 2006 bilingual UK/China production are available to all viewers, while Michael Elliott's film starring Laurence Olivier is only available to those who have access to MIT Libraries' subscription to *Drama Online*. As the Olivier film is widely available and the most likely to be familiar to an audience actively seeking out engagements with Shakespeare from outside the Anglosphere, this lack of access is hardly a great problem.

The exercises themselves are thoughtful prompts for short answer questions and a longer essay, but will certainly benefit from careful framing by a classroom instructor, especially for students who are less familiar with analyzing performance decisions rather than play scripts. Instructors at any level seeking additional resources to prepare students for analyzing video rather than text may find it useful to pair *Lear Is Here*, or future MIT modules, with Joubin's *Screening Shakespeare*, an online open-access textbook published by the Digital Humanities Institute at George Washington University. Although the textbook is concerned with topics from film and video production (e.g. camera angle and movement) that go beyond the context of filmed theater performances such as *Lear Is Here*, students can also learn about lighting, blocking, costume, and other elements common to both stage and screen.

Choosing which essays to discuss in detail from Diane Henderson and Kyle Sebastian Vitale's *Shakespeare and Digital Pedagogy: Case Studies and Strategies* has proven difficult. Each chapter in the collection provides "an overview of its project, a description of its creation and component parts, an exploration of intended and resulting student learning, and useable objects and takeaways for application" (2), making this book a tremendous practical resource for teachers at many levels.

The Digital Scribes project, created by Cyrus Mulready, engages with pedagogical research about the crucial importance of note-taking in lectures and seminars as an academic skill. Mulready's goal in the project was to mitigate the challenges of introducing majors and non-majors alike, in a large lecture setting, to the "significant challenges" of Shakespeare's language. In this project, groups of students were assigned as the note-takers for a given day's lesson, and then used simple online collaboration tools such as Google Docs to "collaborate in a wiki or shared document" and "post their notes to a central place where they can be shared" (14). Having taught in academic skills centers, I was excited to see this kind of attention paid to the nuts-and-bolts of in-class learning. Mulready's chapter provides concrete, actionable steps for instructors trying to demystify Shakespeare for classes of mixed levels.

Kathryn Vomero Santos' contribution outlines how instructors can leverage "digital technologies to move beyond such unproductive notions

about Shakespeare's inimitable brilliance" (39). In this project, students used online Optical Character Recognition software to generate a transcription of the EEBO copy of Bartholomew Yong's 1598 English translation of Jorge de Montemayor's *Siete libros de la Diana*, an intertext for Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. They then marked up the text using the coding developed by the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) to generate a shared list of words and terms in need of glossing (42). A crucial point flagged by this collaboration was Proteus' rejection of Julia as "but a swarthy Ethiopie." Class conversation then concluded that it is Shakespeare who introduces a "metaphor of racial difference and white supremacist standards of beauty" (43) entirely absent from the intertext. As with other chapters in this volume, Vomero Santos' chapter shows how one class activity can introduce students to key technological skills, while also facilitating critical conversation of literary texts.

Conclusion

The past couple of years, inevitably shaped by the coronavirus pandemic, have accelerated a number of trends in Shakespeare studies in general, and in global Shakespeares in particular. The rapid deployment and development of new options for online collaboration, performance, and instruction have, as a positive, brought us into theaters and classrooms around the world. This rapprochement between practitioners and audiences, teachers and students, has pushed forward a key goal of global Shakespeares, blurring and undermining the obsolete binary of center and periphery. At the same time, the perpetual financial precarity of the arts sector has become even more acute, and the consolidation of scholarly publishing in fewer presses risks enshrining Shakespeare as the province of well-funded theater companies and a handful of publishing houses, who amplify the voices of established scholars.

How the current critical environment will develop depends on the joint efforts of those in gate-keeping positions, and those whose voices have been historically pushed to the edges. Can the online platforms used to ensure that "the show must go on" for large companies be leveraged to give smaller companies greater reach, while still compensating their creative artists fairly? Can critics from the Anglosphere approach newly accessible productions with appropriate awareness of their own limitations in understanding the cultural contexts of international Shakespearean writing and performance? Perhaps so, if we can bear in mind a variation on Craig and Estill's advice: "Effective research," and we can add effective creative collaboration between practitioners, scholars, and those who work on both sides of the divide, "is a matter of learning where to look and how to listen" (21).

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The Shakespearean International Yearbook

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Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>vii</i>
ALEXA ALICE JOUBIN AND NATALIA KHOMENKO	
<i>General Editor</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>x</i>
PART I	
Disability Performance and Global Shakespeare	1
1 Introduction: Disability Performance and Global Shakespeare	3
KATHERINE SCHAAP WILLIAMS	
2 Concealing, Simulating, or Re-Defining Disability? <i>Richard III</i> and Performing (with) Disability in Arabian Gulf Theater	19
KATHERINE HENNESSEY	
3 “A Body Like This Can’t Play Richard”: Embodied Representation and Welshness in <i>richard iii redux [or] Sara Beer is/not Richard III</i>	36
S. R. MAY	
4 “Baroque Staring”: Caliban in Polish Theater	55
ANNA KOWALCZE-PAWLIK	
5 Making Meaning of the (Ab)normal Body: Reading Caesar’s Body as a Palimpsest in <i>Julius Caesar</i> and Sri Lankan Performance	79
ISURU AYESHMANTHA RATHNAYAKE	

6	“What’s with Him?”: Reading <i>Hamlet</i> and <i>Haider</i> through the Lens of Disability-Craft	97
	DEYASINI DASGUPTA	
7	Intellectual Disability, Madness, and Gender in Karim-Masihi’s <i>Tardid/Doubt</i> : A Rewriting of Shakespeare’s <i>Hamlet</i>	118
	SHEKUFEH OWLIA	
8	“Cast[e]ing Shakespeare”: Intersections of Disability and Race in Vishal Bhardwaj’s <i>Maqbool</i>	139
	ZAINAB CHEEMA	
9	Against White Cripistemology: Seeing Race and Global Disability in <i>King Lear</i>	160
	PENELOPE GENG	
PART II		
	The Year in Review	183
10	Access and Global Shakespeares: The State of the Field	185
	RODERICK HUGH MCKEOWN	
	<i>Index</i>	203

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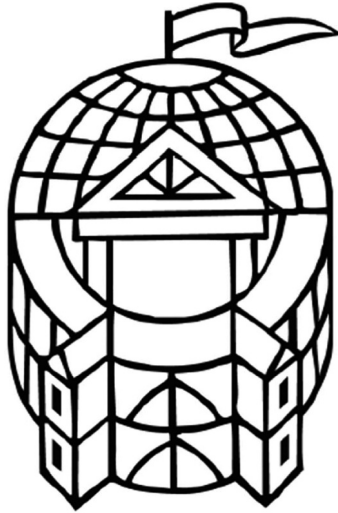
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Disability Performance and Global
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**Edited by Alexa Alice Joubin and
Natalia Khomenko**

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