

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JACOBETHANISM IN TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY
COSTUME DESIGN FOR SHAKESPEARE

by

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Abstract

The meanings originally communicated by Elizabethan/Jacobean dress have long been confined to history. Why, then, have doublets, hose, ruffs, and farthingales featured in many UK Shakespeare productions staged since the turn of the twenty-first century? This thesis scrutinises the practice of costuming Shakespeare's plays in Elizabethan/Jacobean ('Jacobethan') dress. It considers why this approach to design appeals to contemporary directors, designers, and audiences, and how it has shaped the meaning of the playwright's works in specific performance contexts. Chapter One examines the 'original practices' processes developed by Shakespeare's Globe's costume team between 1997 and 2005. Chapter Two establishes how Jacobethan-dress costuming has become a Shakespearean performance 'tradition', focusing on the practices of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the National Theatre. Chapter Three ascertains how myths relating to the ruff and Queen Elizabeth I have been manipulated by theatre practitioners, and Chapter Four explores instances where Jacobethan costumes were used to represent fantastical elements in Shakespeare's plays. Chapter Five assesses how such garments function in productions defined by a temporally eclectic approach to setting. This study reframes Jacobethanism as a dynamic collection of practices capable of refashioning textual meanings, reflecting present-day political and societal shifts, and confronting contemporary injustices.

*In memory of my dad, Keith Stephen Hawkins, whose support for my pursuits was
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⁵⁹ *Paris, Texas*, dir. by Wim Wenders (20th Century Fox, 1984); Shakespeare’s Globe, *As You Like It: Trailer*, online video recording, YouTube, 26 June 2018 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpcvWJAXp4k>> [accessed 13 April 2020]

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⁶² Photograph, from 'Portrait', *V&A Search the Collections* <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O71182/portrait-ensemble-vivienne-westwood/>> [accessed 23 April 2020]; photograph, from 'Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis', *Politivogue* <<https://www.politivogue.com/pages/jacqueline-kennedy>> [accessed 23 April 2020]

⁶³ Manuel Harlan, *Jonathan Cullen as Dr Caius, Tim Samuels as Shallow, Tom Padley as Slender, Katy Brittain as The Hostess of the Garter and Paul Dodds as George Page in The Merry Wives of Windsor*, photograph, from 'The Merry Wives of Windsor: Production Photos', *Royal Shakespeare Company* <<https://www.rsc.org.uk/the-merry-wives-of-windsor/past-productions/fiona-laird-2018-production/production-photos#&gid=1&pid=24>> [accessed 13 April 2020]

⁶⁴ Manuel Harlan, *The Merry Wives of Windsor, 2018: Evans, Pistol, Bardolph and Nym*, photograph, from *RSC Image Library* <<https://images.rsc.org.uk/action/viewAsset?id=258480&index=7&total=26&view=viewSearchItem>> [accessed 13 April 2020]

⁶⁵ Tristram Kenton, photograph, from Will Longman, 'Review – As You Like It at Shakespeare's Globe', *London Theatre*, 17 May 2018 <<https://www.londontheatre.co.uk/reviews/review-as-you-like-it-at-shakespeares-globe>> [accessed 13 April 2020]

⁶⁶ Tristram Kenton, photograph, from Fergus Morgan, 'As You Like It/Hamlet at Shakespeare's Globe – review round-up', *The Stage*, 21 May 2018 <<https://www.thestage.co.uk/review-round-ups/as-you-like-ithamlet-at-shakespeares-globe-review-round-up>> [accessed 28 April 2020]

⁶⁷ Tristram Kenton, photograph, from Andrzej Lukowski, "'As You Like It' review", *Time Out*, 7 March 2019 <<https://www.timeout.com/london/theatre/as-you-like-it-review>> [accessed 13 April 2020]

List of Abbreviations

The Globe	Shakespeare's Globe
NT	National Theatre
OP	'Original practices'
PaR	Practice-as-research
RSC	Royal Shakespeare Company
RTK	Rose Theatre Kingston
SBT	Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Introduction

It has been approximately 420 years since the peascod doublet fell out of fashion. This peculiar round-bellied garment—stiffened and stuffed with several pounds of padding—originally communicated a great deal of information about the man wearing it.¹ In the 1580s and ‘90s, the peascod doublet signalled that the wearer could afford to participate in the cutting-edge fashion trends of continental Europe.² The style’s French affiliations would have been noted by passers-by, along with the nature of the garment’s fabrics and surface adornment. For example, decorative cuts or slashes were a bold statement of wealth;³ cloth of silver indicated more specifically that the wearer was a baron, viscount, or member of the royal family.⁴ The peascod style was also associated with fertility, virility, and marriage: the peapod (after which the garment was named) symbolised these qualities in Elizabethan culture, and the doublet’s rounded form replaced the earlier codpiece as a sartorial exaggeration of a man’s genitalia.⁵

Today, we no longer have access to the many layers of meaning embedded in the peascod doublet—or indeed any other item of early modern clothing. The complex cultural codes that determined how these garments were originally ‘read’ have long been confined to history. Why, then, have doublets, hose, ruffs, and farthingales appeared in numerous UK Shakespeare productions staged since the turn of the twenty-first century? Between 1996 and 2019, 47 per

¹ Melanie Braun and others, *17th-Century Men’s Dress Patterns: 1600-1630* (London: Thames & Hudson in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 2016), p. 26.

² Jane Ashelford, *Dress in the Age of Elizabeth I* (London: Batsford, 1988), p. 152.

³ Cuts or slashes (known as ‘pinking’) revealed additional layers of expensive textiles and telegraphed that the wearer was above the thrifty practice of reworking old garments into new forms. For more on pinking, see Natasha Korda, “‘The Sign of the Last’: Gender, Material Culture, and Artisanal Nostalgia in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*”, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 43.3 (2013), 573–97.

⁴ The limitations around who could wear cloth of silver are detailed in a 1574 Sumptuary Statute regarding men’s apparel; *A Booke containing all such Proclamations, as were published during the Raigne of the late Queene Elizabeth*, British Library <<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/proclamation-against-excess-of-apparel-by-queen-elizabeth-i>> [accessed 14 February 2020]

⁵ Juana Green, ‘The Sempster’s Wares: Merchandising and Marrying in *The Fair Maid of the Exchange* (1607)’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 53.4 (2000), 1084–118 (pp. 1100-1).

cent of Shakespeare's Globe's main-house productions were set in the period of Shakespeare's lifetime. Elements of early modern dress appeared in four of the 26 stagings presented by the National Theatre during the same period, and in 15 productions staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC).⁶ The popularity of this form of design is puzzling for reasons other than the inaccessibility of the garments' original meanings: Shakespeare locates most of his narratives in times and places far removed from the context in which they were first staged. Medieval monarchies, Ancient Rome, the Mediterranean, and mythological realms all feature as settings in the playwright's works with greater regularity than Elizabethan/Jacobean England.⁷

This thesis scrutinises the curious practice of costuming Shakespeare's plays in early modern dress. I examine the artistic intentions underpinning a range of relevant productions to establish why this approach to design has appealed to contemporary designers and directors; I also consider how the garments presented on stage communicated to audiences. My intention is to unpick the ideas, assumptions, and desires that cluster around the clothing worn during Shakespeare's lifetime and to examine how these associations have been manipulated by theatre practitioners to mould the meanings of the playwright's works. What are these obsolete forms of dress *doing* in twenty-first-century Shakespearean performance? To what extent have

⁶ The four National Theatre productions featuring elements of early modern dress include *Hamlet* (2000; directed by John Caird, designed by Tim Hatley), *Much Ado About Nothing* (2007/8; directed by Nicholas Hytner, designed by Vicki Mortimer [set] and Dinah Collin [costume]), *Twelfth Night* (2011; directed by Peter Hall, designed by Anthony Ward), and *Twelfth Night* (2017; directed by Simon Godwin, designed by Soutra Gilmour). The total number of productions given here (26) excludes Education Productions. See Chapter Two and the Appendix for further details regarding the Shakespeare's Globe and Royal Shakespeare Company data.

⁷ The nature of 'setting' in Shakespeare's plays is complicated. In some plays, specific locations are identified in characters' speech (for example: 'This is Illyria, lady', *Twelfth Night* [1.2.1]; 'imagine me, / Gentle spectators, that I now may be / In fair Bohemia', *The Winter's Tale* [4.1.19-21]; 'In fair Verona, where we lay our scene', *Romeo and Juliet* [1.0.2]). In others, references to certain names, events, and/or objects locate the narrative in the context of a particular monarchy, past period, or mythology (the figures and happenings of *Julius Caesar* clearly relate to Ancient Rome). However, these settings are often layered with anachronisms. *Julius Caesar* contains many references to Elizabethan/Jacobean clothing (such as that Caesar 'plucked me ope his doublet' [1.2.257]) as well as describing a modern book (as opposed to a classical scroll; 4.2.298). There is therefore no straightforward way to define the playwright's approach to setting as represented in the texts; all line references in this thesis relating to Shakespeare's plays are taken from *The New Oxford Shakespeare*, ed. by Gary Taylor and others (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Elizabethan/Jacobean garments been appropriated to promote particular perspectives on the plays and their place in contemporary culture? Is the practice of staging the playwright's works in early modern dress fundamentally nostalgic, or does it indicate something more complex about how Shakespeare is conceived today?

This study descends from a particular line of works within the fields of Theatre, Shakespeare, and Costume Studies. Its lineage leads back to the advent of theatre semiotics. In *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (1980), Keir Elam establishes semiotics (which he defines as 'a science dedicated to the study of the production of meaning in society') as a fruitful means of understanding how theatre communicates.⁸ Elam adapts approaches associated primarily with linguistics to conceptualise performance as a system of signs, treating every object and body appearing on stage as a theatrical sign invested with signifying power.⁹ Scrutinizing relationships between *signifier* (an object/body) and *signified* (the meanings the object/body represents), *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* provides a system for analysing how performance produces meaning. These ideas have since been re-examined by Elaine Aston and George Savona in *Theatre as Sign System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance* (1991).¹⁰ Aston and Savona reframe the complex analytical systems introduced by Elam as a collection of strategies available for systematic application. Instigating the development of a 'language' with which to discuss performance (and dramatic texts) from a semiotic perspective, *Theatre as Sign System* aids the transition of theatre semiotics from theory to methodology.

⁸ Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 1.

⁹ Elam was not the originator of theatre semiotics. This approach was an invention of Prague School structuralists in the 1930s and '40s, and Tadeusz Kowzan, Patrice Pavis, and Anne Ubersfeld all published seminal works on the subject between 1975 and 1977. However, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* was the first study of its kind in English, and the first to offer both a system of semiotics and an exhaustive survey of the field as it stood at the time of publication; Jean Alter, 'The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama (Review)', *Poetics Today*, 2.3 (1981), 264–6 (p. 264).

¹⁰ Elaine Aston and George Savona, *Theatre as Sign-System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance* (London: Routledge, 1991).

The notion of studying performance through the lens of semiotics influenced Dennis Kennedy's *Looking at Shakespeare* (1993)—one of the first publications concerned purely with design for Shakespeare. Focusing broadly on scenography (rather than costume alone) in Shakespearean performance across the twentieth century, Kennedy positions design as the principal means by which a production's meanings are generated: 'the visual signs the performance generates are not only the guide to its social and cultural meaning but often constitute the meaning itself'.¹¹ *Looking at Shakespeare* treats scenography as a critical site for interpreting the changing values associated with the playwright's works, combining theatre semiology with cultural materialism to attend both to 'the meanings the artists inscribe in their work' and the 'meanings the spectators actually receive'.¹² Ultimately, Kennedy's study provides a range of insights into 'some of the complex cultural uses of Shakespeare in the century' while encouraging further research into how theatre design communicates to audiences.¹³

Though progress in establishing a field dedicated to design for Shakespeare has been gradual, several recent publications have responded to Kennedy's call. John Russell Brown and Stephen Di Benedetto's *Designers' Shakespeare* (2016) is a collection of essays about how various aspects of design have been used to create onstage worlds for the playwright's works.¹⁴ Building intentionally on *Looking at Shakespeare*, this edited collection provides a 'taste of how designers can offer alternative readings of Shakespearian texts'.¹⁵ Kennedy's survey-like approach to assessing how design practices evolved through the twentieth century is replaced by a case-study format: individual designers and organisational teams are afforded dedicated chapters; as a whole, *Designers' Shakespeare* is a series of snapshots capturing discrete

¹¹ Dennis Kennedy, *Looking at Shakespeare*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 5.

¹² Kennedy, p. 10.

¹³ Kennedy, p. xxii.

¹⁴ John Russell Brown and Stephen Di Benedetto, *Designers' Shakespeare* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

¹⁵ Brown and Benedetto, pp. 1-2.

moments in the history of design for Shakespeare (including the career of twentieth-century Czech designer Josef Svoboda, changing design trends at the RSC in the 1960s, and designer Ming Cho Lee's tradition-challenging practices in North America).

Patricia Lennox and Bella Mirabella's *Shakespeare and Costume* (2015) sees similar intentions applied specifically to costume design. The essays included in *Shakespeare and Costume* examine meanings generated by costume in historical and contemporary Shakespearean performance. Ranging from a discussion of festive livery practices on the early modern stage to an examination of how *Romeo and Juliet*'s Nurse was costumed between 1922 and 1936, the contributions assembled by this collection cover a broad range of contexts and practices. Significantly, the final section of *Shakespeare and Costume* is dedicated to interviews with contemporary designers (Jane Greenwood and Robert Morgan). While Kennedy's *Looking at Shakespeare* and Brown and Di Benedetto's *Designers' Shakespeare* both include references to original interview content, Lennox and Mirabella's *Shakespeare and Costume* brings practitioner voices centre-stage.

This thesis builds on the work of Kennedy, Brown and Di Benedetto, and Lennox and Mirabella by using the same investigative ethos to pursue a specific line of enquiry in depth. Like Kennedy, I consider design a key site in which production-specific meanings are generated and communicated. I treat visual elements of performance as indicators of the intentions underpinning individual stagings of Shakespeare's plays, and aim through my analyses to uncover broader trends in the playwright's evolving cultural significance. As has already been attempted in *Shakespeare and Costume*, my intention is to combine in-depth insight into theatre practitioners' processes with meticulous analysis of how costume has shaped the meanings of specific plays and productions. Rather than providing a broad survey of temporally and geographically diverse practices, however, I focus on a relatively narrow

spectrum of design practices. I will give a precise indication of my methodology and the scope of this project later in this introduction.

A second branch in this project's genealogy relates to the study of setting in Shakespearean performance. Existing somewhat separately from the study of design as a form of communication, this element of criticism considers theoretically how different period/geographical settings might impact on the meaning of the playwright's works. In *On Directing Shakespeare* (first published in 1977), Ralph Berry presents the possibilities of setting available to the director as four distinct categories: 'Renaissance', 'modern', 'period analogue', and 'eclectic'. Each 'has its rationale'.¹⁶ The central idea behind a 'Renaissance' approach is that 'the period of composition, or the period to which the author alludes, should be directly referenced in the costumes and settings'.¹⁷ This (expansive) category includes the form of setting I examine in this thesis—that which represents the period of Shakespeare's lifetime—but also 'mediaeval for the histories and Roman for the Roman plays'. Berry suggests that these historical settings 'will reflect the language, the concerns and assumptions of the text' because all correspond (in different ways) with cultural references embedded in the plays.¹⁸ Conversely, the 'modern' category relates to the practice of staging Shakespeare in modern dress. The plays' characters and narratives are relocated to the familiar context of the present day to promote the notion that the playwright is 'our contemporary' and to imbue the texts with a sense of immediacy.¹⁹ 'Period analogue' is Berry's label for productions that replace a play's original setting with an alternative historical context (such as the Edwardian era). Following this approach might contribute 'a mood, an aura' to a production, or instead function as an act of criticism, imposing 'a permanent layer over the text in the minds of the

¹⁶ Ralph Berry, *On Directing Shakespeare*, 2nd edn (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1989), pp. 13-23.

¹⁷ Berry, p. 14.

¹⁸ Berry, p. 14.

¹⁹ Berry, pp. 14-15.

audience'.²⁰ Finally, an 'eclectic' approach describes any form of setting that rejects a cohesive sense of time and/or place. Berry describes 'eclectic' productions as being underpinned by 'a desire to keep the options open', with 'consistency of costuming' being rejected in favour of more diverse kinds of visual communication.²¹

While useful in indicating the importance of setting for shaping the significance of Shakespeare's plays in performance, these categories are problematic. The all-encompassing 'Renaissance' category overlooks the diversity and complexity of the multiple, highly distinct approaches to setting it describes. The 'eclectic' label similarly simplifies a variety of practices into a relatively uncomplicated philosophy of staging. Temporal and geographical elements of setting are given little distinction in any of the four categories. But it is Berry's insistence on reducing setting into categories in the first place that is most limiting. Compartmentalising an entire spectrum of performance practices into clearly defined sets invites a simplistically comparative approach to interpreting setting. When considered from this perspective, the nuanced ideas underpinning individual productions may be overlooked while generalised conclusions are drawn around the significance and individualities of each category.

Despite these issues, Berry's categorisation of setting has proven influential. W. B. Worthen's 1997 *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (a seminal text in the study of Shakespeare in performance) uses Berry's categories as a basis for discussing this 'most visible dimension of the director's work'.²² Worthen repeats Berry's definitions for each category and adds additional detail, offering concise conclusions around what statement individual approaches to setting might make for contemporary audiences.²³ (Modern-dress productions 'universalize

²⁰ Berry, pp. 16-17.

²¹ Berry, pp. 20-1.

²² W. B. Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 63.

²³ Worthen, pp. 63-9.

Shakespeare by claiming the plays' relevance to contemporary life', for example, while 'Renaissance' productions 'use history as a metaphor for the recovery of authentically Shakespearean meanings'.²⁴ Bridget Escolme's chapter on costume in *Shakespeare and The Making of Theatre* helpfully asks several pointed questions about the supposed significance of these differing approaches to setting, but nevertheless compares how modern dress and 'period costume' function semiotically in performance.²⁵

This thesis deliberately breaks away from existing categorisations of setting, and from the comparative approach to analysis (described above) that usually follows. Rather than simply providing an overview of the possibilities afforded by an early modern setting, I explore the manifold ways in which Elizabethan/Jacobean dress has been manipulated in contemporary Shakespearean performance. I consider how such garments have functioned in productions with an overarching early modern setting as well as those that reject temporal cohesion in favour of eclecticism. My discussions range from the practicalities of historical reconstruction to the appeal of early modern sartorial culture as an embodiment of wonder, spectacle, and the supernatural. I am interested in the minutiae of modern design—how seams are sewn, whence fabrics are sourced—as well as the widespread cultural movements that have produced our modern relationship with the period of Shakespeare's lifetime. This is the first study to pay such close, extended attention to (what is often presented as) a single approach to setting—for Shakespeare or the work of any other dramatist. My findings indicate that Kennedy's *Looking at Shakespeare*, Berry's *On Directing Shakespeare*, and the publications following in their footsteps have merely scratched the surface of an extraordinarily fertile field of study.

²⁴ Worthen, pp. 66-7.

²⁵ Bridget Escolme, 'Costume', in *Shakespeare and the Making of Theatre*, ed. by Stuart Hampton-Reeves and Escolme (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 128-45.

My first act in rejecting Berry's categories is to question the labels currently used to describe productions staged with an Elizabethan/Jacobean setting. 'Renaissance'—the term introduced in *On Directing Shakespeare* to denote any setting that uses the period of Shakespeare's lifetime *or* the historical period indicated in the text—is too broad in meaning to function usefully in this context. Used to refer to a period of cultural 'rebirth' across Europe between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, 'Renaissance' has traditionally covered a vast array of developments in art, science, and politics.²⁶ Employing this term to refer specifically to the cultural context in which Shakespeare lived makes little sense. Moreover, Berry's slippage between using 'Renaissance' to refer to the period of the plays' composition and to a form of authorial intent (i.e. the setting indicated by the author is medieval, so modern productions should reflect the author's setting) has muddied the label's meaning in Shakespeare Studies. The term has been compromised as a result of its blurred associations.

Although the term 'early modern' is preferred by some as an alternative to 'Renaissance' (the latter suggests a sudden movement from primitivity to enlightenment, while the former, though just as tendentious, is instead suggestive of a more gradual period of development), breadth of meaning remains an issue.²⁷ The use of the word 'period' or the phrase 'period-dress' to describe productions staged with a setting reminiscent of Shakespeare's lifetime is also unhelpfully vague. This term is as applicable for productions staged in the Edwardian era as it is for those with an early modern setting. Specificity is required to differentiate between the many periods recreated and adapted by designers for contemporary performance.

²⁶ 'Renaissance, n.', in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/162352>> [accessed 17 April 2020]

²⁷ The meanings, histories, and applications of these two terms are discussed at length in Douglas Bruster, 'Shakespeare and the End of History: Period as Brand Name', in *Shakespeare and Modernity*, ed. by Hugh Grady (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 168–88.

In a book chapter titled ‘Shakespeare and the end of history: Period as brand name’, Douglas Bruster notes that ‘Renaissance’ and ‘early modern’ both ‘imply more than they actually say’ (in literary criticism and in modern culture more generally). These terms are not defined by the boundaries or contours of a period, but act as labels that ‘seek to suggest qualities in objects, practices, persons, and times that do not obviously possess them’.²⁸ Using labels assigned to the reigns of monarchs, meanwhile, is a somewhat more objective, clear-cut means of referring to a particular time period. Bruster writes that terms like ‘Elizabethan’ and ‘Jacobean’ have a factual basis while offering ‘a personal thickness’ and adding ‘personality to the mix’.²⁹ Essentially, each term refers to a specific span of time in the history of a particular country, but also gives a flavour of the culture that has come to be seen as representative of the time. These qualities are extremely useful for the purposes of my project. Referring quite precisely to the cultural context(s) in which Shakespeare lived while summoning widely understood images of its individualities, ‘Elizabethan’ and ‘Jacobean’ work well as labels for settings that reflect the period(s) of the playwright’s lifetime.

It is important to consider, however, that Shakespeare’s lifetime extended across the majority of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras, and the years during which the playwright’s works were produced falls almost equally between the two (illustrated in Figure 1, below). Using either ‘Elizabethan’ *or* ‘Jacobean’ to describe this approach to setting would therefore be inappropriate. Moreover, these terms have contrasting associations in contemporary culture—and, more importantly, in criticism of early modern drama. Susan Bennett notes in *Performing Nostalgia* that ‘the terminology of Jacobean has come to mean both more and less’ than an appellation for texts first produced during the reign of James I (1603-25). ‘Jacobean’ often

²⁸ Bruster, p. 169.

²⁹ Bruster, p. 170.

functions as an ‘aesthetic marker’ denoting ‘(moral) decay, excess and violence’.³⁰ These serious, dark, and radical tonal qualities are at odds with modern conceptions of the ‘Elizabethan’; Farah Karim-Cooper describes an “‘Elizabethan’ Shakespeare’ as ‘a Shakespeare laden with the myth of a “golden age” of merriment’.³¹ These terms thus come laden with complications. To choose one over the other would prioritise a particular period of the playwright’s career and invite assumptions around the stylistic tone of the setting the label is used to describe. Using both together in the form of ‘Elizabethan/Jacobean’ would seem an oversight of the terms’ divergent associations.

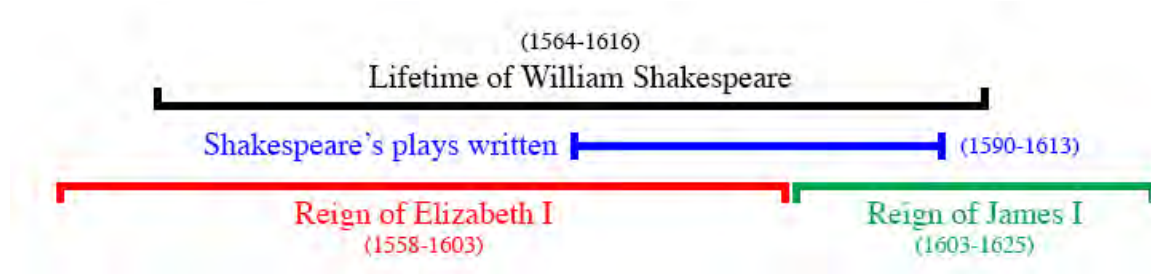


Figure 1. A timeline depicting the period during which Shakespeare’s plays were written in relation to the playwright’s lifetime and the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I.

To negotiate these issues, I use ‘Jacobethan’—an existing portmanteau of ‘Elizabethan’ and ‘Jacobean’ unencumbered by the associations outlined above. The *Oxford English Dictionary* lists this term as an adjective meaning ‘[o]f design: that displays a combination of the Elizabethan and Jacobean styles’.³² Its first recorded usage appears in John Betjeman’s *Ghastly Good Taste* (a tongue-in-cheek book about English architecture, published in 1933). Betjeman

³⁰ Susan Bennett, *Performing Nostalgia: Shifting Shakespeare and the Contemporary Past* (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 81-3.

³¹ Farah Karim-Cooper, ‘The Performance of Early Modern Drama at Shakespeare’s Globe’, in *Performing Early Modern Drama Today*, ed. by Pascale Aebischer and Kathryn Prince (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 53–69 (p. 62).

³² ‘Jacobethan, adj.’, in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online] <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/100551>> [accessed 17 April 2020]

uses ‘Jacobethan’ to avoid overcomplicating descriptions of early modern styles and influences:

The style in which the Gothic predominates may be called, inaccurately enough, Elizabethan, and the style in which the classical predominates over the Gothic, equally inaccurately, may be called Jacobean. To save the time of those who do not wish to distinguish between these periods of architectural uncertainty, I will henceforward use the term ‘Jacobethan’.³³

Helpfully for my purposes, the term was coined for the very purpose of encompassing the styles of the Elizabethan *and* Jacobean eras without being drawn into the complexities of specific period labels. ‘Jacobethan’ has since been adopted by art historians to describe Victorian interests in reviving architectural styles of the early modern era.³⁴ It has also been used in reference to a style of furniture and interior design otherwise known as ‘Tudorbethan’ or “‘sham” Tudor’, wherein Elizabethan- and Jacobean-inspired aesthetics are reproduced to fulfil nostalgic desires for tradition in the home.³⁵ ‘Jacobethan’ thus describes retrospective representations of Elizabethan and/or Jacobean styles (potentially also extending to those of the Henrician and Caroline eras). Crucially, a Jacobethan representation usually blurs design features from multiple periods, and reveals far more about the context in which it is produced than the period it seeks to reflect.

While the term’s origins reside in the realms of architecture and art history, ‘Jacobethan’ has been yoked more recently by those concerned with Shakespeare and early modern drama. Director Gregory Doran uses this word as a label for plays written during the period of

³³ John Betjeman, *Ghastly Good Taste; or, A Depressing Story of the Rise and Fall of English Architecture*, new edn (London: Blond, 1970), p. 41.

³⁴ David Howarth, *Images of Rule: Art and Politics in the English Renaissance, 1485-1649* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), p. 257.

³⁵ Deborah Sugg Ryan, *Ideal Homes, 1918–39: Domestic Design and Suburban Modernism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), n.p. Google ebook.

transition between the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras.³⁶ (Though James I ascended the throne in 1603, the aesthetic and dramatic styles associated with the Jacobean period would of course not have come into effect immediately, and nor were they without roots in the previous reign.) Doran curated two RSC seasons using this interpretation of the ‘Jacobethan’ as a point of departure.³⁷ Lucy Munro finds that the term is ‘increasingly used to describe early modern drama’ and suggests that, like ‘Jacobean’, it ‘carries with it certain assumptions regarding style and genre’.³⁸ The significance of the example Munro cites is unclear, however: reviewer Patrick Carnegy describes the protagonists of the RSC’s 2010 *Romeo and Juliet* as ‘hoodie kids of today suddenly enveloped in a menacing Jacobethan milieu’.³⁹ Munro suggests that ‘Jacobethan’ is deployed here in the same way as ‘Jacobean’ (meaning, as Bennett argues, the dark qualities that characterise the primary generic forms of Jacobean drama).⁴⁰ I would argue, however, that the meaning of ‘Jacobethan’ in Shakespeare Studies is yet to be fixed. The term has significant potential for describing modern confluences of the Elizabethan and the Jacobean, and for establishing retrospective conceptions of the period of Shakespeare’s lifetime as phenomena worthy of further attention.

Accordingly, I use ‘Jacobethan’ throughout this thesis to refer to settings that seek to reflect the period of Shakespeare’s lifetime without drawing specifically or solely on the stylistic associations of the Elizabethan or Jacobean eras. I occasionally use ‘Elizabethan’ or ‘Jacobean’

³⁶ Gregory Doran, ‘Happy Birthday Swan Theatre’, *Royal Shakespeare Company* <<https://www.rsc.org.uk/support/supporters-room/happy-birthday-swan-theatre>> [accessed 3 July 2017]

³⁷ These seasons include the 2002 ‘Jacobethan Season’, featuring ‘lesser known plays from this period’ (*The Island Princess*, *Edward III*, *Eastward Ho!*, *The Malcontent*, and *The Roman Actor*), and the 2006 Gunpowder Season (*Thomas More*, *The Old Law*, *Believe as You List* [retitled *Believe What You Will*], and *Sejanus: His Fall*). The same term was later used in marketing materials to describe the plays in the company’s 2014 ‘Roaring Girls’ season: *The Roaring Girl*, *Arden of Faversham*, and *The White Devil*; Doran, ‘Happy Birthday Swan Theatre’; qtd in ‘Nick Hern Books to publish RSC’s Roaring Girls season’, *Nick Hern Books* <<https://www.nickhernbooks.co.uk/nick-hern-books-to-publish-rscs-roaring-girls-season>> [accessed 18 February 2020]

³⁸ Lucy Munro, ‘The Early Modern Repertory and the Performance of Shakespeare’s Contemporaries Today’, in *Performing Early Modern Drama Today*, ed. by Aebischer and Prince, pp. 17–34 (p. 23).

³⁹ Qtd in Munro, p. 23.

⁴⁰ Munro, pp. 23–24.

when discussing productions that *do* make this distinction (for example, the second half of Chapter Three focuses on two stagings set explicitly in the court of Elizabeth I). I also introduce variations on ‘Jacobethan’ (such as ‘Jacobethan-inspired’) to differentiate between discrete approaches to representing the period through design. The meaning of and reasoning for such variations will become clear later in this thesis.

My methodology for this project draws on ideas associated with various areas of study. Broadly speaking, I analyse costumes designed for the stage to identify how they communicate to contemporary audiences. This locates my work in the realms of cultural materialism and theatre semiotics: I am interested in the processes through which meaning is constructed in society and take as my subject the sign-systems of costume design for Shakespeare. My approach is driven also by Aoife Monks’ call for scholars to look *at*, rather than *through*, costume. As Monks asserts in *The Actor in Costume*, ‘scholars are often trained to look beyond the surface of the visual landscape of the performance towards the meanings lying *beneath* that landscape’; we must consider costumes ‘*as costumes*’ to understand the many ways in which these garments shape constructions of character and production-specific interpretations of texts.⁴¹

Significantly, I use investigative and analytical techniques that are rarely seen in studies of this kind. I have completed practical training with some of the practitioners whose work I discuss (Jenny Tiramani and Luca Costigliolo) and I use these experiences as a basis for providing practice-led insight into costume design and construction processes, as well as the broader philosophies that underpin particular approaches to costuming Shakespeare. Additionally, I infuse each chapter with concepts that shed new light on the subjects I discuss—some of which are associated only tangentially with Shakespeare Studies. I refer to theories of experimental

⁴¹ Aoife Monks, *The Actor in Costume* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 8-11.

archaeology, cultural tourism, fairy tale, hauntology, the aesthetic ‘bodies’ of the actor, and more to provide discussions about the significance of individual seams, garments, and stagings. I will introduce each of these theories as they become relevant to my argument.

In order to examine the meanings that were *intended* to be communicated through individual productions’ costume design as well what actually appeared on stage, my work relies on diverse sources of evidence. Each comes with its own caveats. Most of the details I cite relating to production development processes are drawn from interviews I conducted as part of my research. Interviewing members of each staging’s creative team (usually the designer and/or director) has allowed me to dig deeply into the ideas and justifications underpinning specific design choices. Many of these conversations covered details that have not previously been available to researchers. As a result, this thesis provides new information about several key productions staged over the past two decades (including Shakespeare’s Globe’s 2016 *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* [dir. Emma Rice], the RSC’s 2016/17 *The Tempest* [dir. Gregory Doran], and Shakespeare’s Globe’s 2002 *Twelfth Night* [revived in 2003, 2012, and 2013; dir. Tim Carroll]). It is essential to acknowledge, however, that all these interviews were conducted after their related production closed. Some took place within a year of the staging’s final performance (Lez Brotherston, E. M. Parry), but others were separated from their source by a far longer stretch of time (Jenny Tiramani, Tom Piper). All interview insights are therefore given with the benefit of hindsight, and are limited by what the interviewee could remember about their experiences.

As Bridget Escolme considers in a 2010 article titled ‘Being Good: Actors’ Testimonies as Archive and the Cultural Construction of Success in Performance’, writing about theatre practitioners ‘as subjects and objects of study’ is a practice that carries delicate ethical obligations. Using interview content in a scholarly context involves weighing up interviewees’

testimonies alongside my own critical opinion—a process that produces certain tensions between the contrasting discourses of performance and academia.⁴² To ensure my engagement with practitioner perspectives is both academically thorough and ethically sound, I include the voices of designers, directors, dramaturgs, and costume-makers alongside information documented in diverse archival materials. Programme notes, promotional newspaper/magazine articles, and planning documents all feature at various points in this thesis, as well as references to costume designs and so-called ‘costume bibles’ (collections of materials illustrating how individual characters should be costumed in performance, often featuring fabric swatches, designs, reference images, and dressing notes). To analyse costumes as they appeared in performance, I consult photographs and production recordings. I also call on accounts given by theatre reviewers to consider how garments produced meaning for those who saw them. These forms of evidence are all, of course, far from objective in what they represent.⁴³ I use each source dialogically, acknowledging that each source provides a unique perspective on the issues under consideration.

Finally, before introducing the content of each of my chapters, I must be clear about the scope and limitations of the project as a whole. This thesis is concerned with productions of Shakespeare’s plays staged within the United Kingdom by professional theatre companies, with the 1997 opening of Shakespeare’s Globe functioning as a starting point for my period of study.⁴⁴ Setting these restrictions allows for a concentrated investigation into the significance

⁴² Bridget Escolme, ‘Being Good: Actors’ Testimonies as Archive and the Cultural Construction of Success in Performance’, *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 28.1 (2010), 77–91 (p. 80-6).

⁴³ See Kennedy (pp. 16-24) for a detailed discussion of the issues surrounding visual records of performance (including photographs, recordings, costume designs, drawings, and paintings). The significance and limitations of theatre reviews as evidence of performance (and the variation between academic and journalistic forms of review) are considered in depth in the opening chapter of Paul Prescott’s *Reviewing Shakespeare: Journalism and Performance from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁴⁴ While the terms ‘professional’ and ‘amateur’ are imperfect due to the unclear boundaries separating the forms of performance they describe, I use ‘professional’ to describe organisations operating within the theatre industry that employ staff (including actors, directors, designers, etc.) and pay wages. For more on the complexities of professional/amateur practice, see Michael Dobson, *Shakespeare and Amateur Performance: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

of Jacobethanism in twenty-first-century costume design for Shakespeare: focusing on a relatively short timeframe, a single canon of works, and a specific locale makes, I hope, for nuanced, detailed conclusions about these design practices and their place within broader cultural and historical movements. Using 1997 as a starting point (rather than 2000) means that I can discuss the institutional lifespan of the replica Globe in full. Of course, adopting this narrow focus necessarily involves excluding a considerable quantity of relevant subjects. Jacobethan costumes have played an important part in amateur, regional, and international stagings of plays by Shakespeare *and* his contemporaries. However, engaging with such a diverse range of (social, political, geographical, historical, financial) contexts is a task too broad for a single study of this scale. My attention is limited to productions staged by major UK performance institutions (mainly the RSC, Shakespeare's Globe, and the National Theatre), in part because these organisations are in the privileged position of being able to maintain accessible archives. While the practices of these organisations allow for several conclusions to be drawn about changing trends in Shakespearean performance, there is more work to be done in assessing the significance of Jacobethanism in other contexts. I articulate in my conclusion how the research reflected in this thesis might lead to further investigations.

The main content of this thesis is divided thematically into five chapters. Each focuses on select productions that exemplify a particular approach to representing the period of Shakespeare's lifetime through design. Organising my findings in this way allows for a detailed, concentrated exploration of multiple strands of Jacobethanism; each chapter engages with a subset of practices and related concepts to assess how discrete approaches to design have been used to shape the meanings of Shakespeare's plays. Interestingly, this thematic approach to structuring my overarching argument has resulted in a study that is loosely chronological. The chapters comprising this thesis chronicle trends and key developments in Shakespearean performance,

collectively constituting a comprehensive study of how Elizabethan and Jacobean aesthetics have been utilised across two decades of theatre practice.

In Chapter One, I examine the ‘original practices’ (OP) approaches to costume design and construction developed at Shakespeare’s Globe between 1997 and 2005. I begin here because OP costuming represents an attempt to reproduce with exactitude the tailoring and dressing practices of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Unlike my following chapters, which pay close attention to how theatrical costumes produce meaning for modern audiences, this discussion centres on reading recreated garments as archaeological experiments. I adopt this approach to counter previous academic perspectives on OP costuming, which have tended to question the value of reproducing garments that audiences cannot understand or in some instances even see. I suggest that such appraisals somewhat miss the point: examining the experimental processes carried out offstage is essential for understanding the significance of this particular form of design for Shakespeare. Further, I illustrate the extent to which the costume team’s practices evolved over the decade of Mark Rylance’s artistic directorship. Having completed practical training with key members of this team as well as conducting multiple interviews, I provide a new level of insight into the ideas and techniques that developed gradually over this period. I focus on the clothing created for *Henry V* (1997) and *Twelfth Night* (2002, 2003, 2012, 2013), demonstrating how the costume team’s differing interpretations and applications of evidence resulted in diverse manifestations of Shakespeare’s Globe’s OP brief.⁴⁵ I argue ultimately that modern reproductions of Elizabethan/Jacobean dress are *always* subject to significant adaptation; the space between historical accuracy and design-

⁴⁵ Shakespeare’s Globe’s 1997 *Henry V* was directed by Richard Olivier and designed by Jenny Tiramani. All iterations of *Twelfth Night* (2002, 2003, 2012, 2013) were directed by Tim Carroll and designed by Jenny Tiramani.

led interpretation in costumes designed for the stage, screen, and for heritage organisations is ripe for further scholarly interrogation.

Chapter Two focuses on productions that use the period of Shakespeare's lifetime as an onstage setting for the playwright's works without attempting to reconstruct any original performance conditions. Often referred to as the 'traditional' approach to staging Shakespeare, this practice raises a series of questions around audience expectations, organisational branding, and broader cultural interests in historically-inspired aesthetics. I chart a course through these territories by analysing relevant productions staged by three major UK organisations known for staging Shakespeare: the RSC (*Love's Labour's Lost*, 2008), Shakespeare's Globe (*The Taming of the Shrew*, 2012), and the National Theatre (*Much Ado About Nothing*, 2007/8).⁴⁶ What logic led the directors of these productions to select a Jacobethan setting, and how far did each staging's designer adapt historical styles to suit the tastes of modern audiences? Where does the notion of a Jacobethan-dress performance 'tradition' come from? To what extent are the RSC, Globe, and National Theatre invested in perpetuating such traditions? By considering practitioners' declared intentions and reviewers' comments in relation to theories of nostalgia and cultural tourism, and contextualising each production within wider performance histories, this chapter identifies key factors underpinning the past and present popularity of Jacobethan-dress Shakespeare.

While Chapters One and Two are concerned with the performance histories of organisations associated with Shakespearean performance, Chapter Three looks instead at the unlikely afterlives of specific Elizabethan icons. The ruff (a decorative form of neckwear popular during the period of Shakespeare's lifetime) and Queen Elizabeth I have each become connected with

⁴⁶ *Love's Labour's Lost* was directed by Gregory Doran with costume design by Katrina Lindsay. *The Taming of the Shrew* was directed by Toby Frow and designed by Mike Britton. *Much Ado About Nothing* was directed by Nicholas Hytner with costume design by Dinah Collin.

Shakespeare in the centuries since the Elizabethan era ended. Cultural narratives woven by far more recent generations of society continue to occupy a significant place in our modern cultural imagination. In Chapter Three, I unpick these deeply rooted associations to establish when and how they came into being. This process has been illustrated in detail by others in relation to the ‘double myth’ of Elizabeth and Shakespeare, but I am the first to genealogize and disrupt the now-familiar Shakespeare-ruff pairing. With these developments brought to light, I investigate how designers have drawn on these widely recognised associations in stagings of the playwright’s works. My findings indicate that ruffs were used in the National Theatre’s 2017 *Twelfth Night* and Shakespeare’s Globe’s 2017 *Othello* to confront Shakespeare’s transcendent reputation in contemporary culture.⁴⁷ The figure of Elizabeth I was introduced into *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Rose Theatre Kingston, 2010) and *Richard II* (RSC, 2007) to draw on specific myths and theories associated with the queen.⁴⁸ Ultimately, this chapter breaks new ground in elucidating how conceptions of ‘Shakespeare’ (and Elizabeth I) evolve dialogically between popular culture and performance. It establishes the extent to which costume design has shaped the playwright’s iconic image in the past, and provides evidence that the (largely fictional) ideas attached to these Elizabethan icons continue to evolve in contemporary Shakespearean performance through design.

Chapter Four focuses on a different form of Shakespearean fantasy. This chapter explores instances where Jacobethan costumes have been used to represent magical or otherworldly elements in Shakespeare’s plays. Shakespeare’s Globe’s 2016 *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* saw the play’s fairies clothed in anarchic deconstructions of Jacobethan dress, while the Athenian court favoured modern styles of clothing and the mechanicals were framed as

⁴⁷ The National Theatre’s 2017 *Twelfth Night* was directed by Simon Godwin and designed by Soutra Gilmour. Shakespeare’s Globe’s 2017 *Othello* was directed by Ellen McDougall and designed by Fly Davis.

⁴⁸ Rose Theatre Kingston’s 2010 *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* was directed by Peter Hall and designed by Elizabeth Bury. The RSC’s 2007 *Richard II* was directed by Michael Boyd and Richard Twyman and designed by Tom Piper.

Shakespeare's Globe volunteer stewards.⁴⁹ The RSC's 2016/17 production of *The Tempest* deliberately avoided specifying any particular period or location in its setting, but featured Iris, Ceres, and Juno wearing striking LED-lit gowns with recognisably Jacobethan design features.⁵⁰ I examine the instincts that led these fantastical/mythical characters to be defined via elements of early modern sartorial culture, pinpointing why Elizabethan/Jacobean dress is seen to generate wonder for twenty-first-century audiences. Crucially, I also consider how these particular productions were interpreted by critics as declarations of artistic/organisational intent. Photographs of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*'s riotous Jacobethan garments featured prominently in the critical discourse surrounding Emma Rice's premature departure from the Globe; the spectacular gowns worn by *The Tempest*'s goddesses have been (mis)identified by scholars as direct, intentional references to Inigo Jones' Jacobean masque designs. I identify notable differences between artistic intent and critical interpretation to draw attention to how cultural and organisational narratives are formed through—and after—performance.

In the fifth and final chapter of this thesis, I assess how Jacobethan garments function in productions defined by a temporally eclectic approach to setting. My intention here is to ascertain what Jacobethan costumes signify when interspersed with those reflecting other periods. Focusing on three productions staged during the summer of 2018—*Hamlet* and *As You Like It* at Shakespeare's Globe and the RSC's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*—I analyse how period aesthetics have interacted with genre, character, and narrative in specific performance contexts.⁵¹ Having identified limitations in the theories of eclecticism offered by Berry and Worthen (see above), I turn instead to Jacques Derrida's theory of hauntology and Judith

⁴⁹ Shakespeare's Globe's 2016 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was directed by Emma Rice with costume design by Moritz Junge.

⁵⁰ The RSC's 2016/17 *Tempest* was directed by Gregory Doran and designed by Stephen Brimson Lewis.

⁵¹ Shakespeare's Globe's 2018 *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* were co-directed by Federay Holmes and Elle While, and designed by E. M. Parry. The RSC's 2018 *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was directed by Fiona Laird and designed by Lez Brotherston.

Butler's conceptualisation of gender as performance to draw conclusions around the significance of this approach to design. I establish how eclectic design acted in *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* as a site of memory, representing the attempted recovery of 'ghosts' from plays' performance histories. In *Merry Wives*, elements of past and present cultures were fused to create a stylised, hyper-gendered world. I assess how specific design choices impacted on the interpretive possibilities available to audiences, focusing on the nature of the Windsor community in *Merry Wives* and the extent to which Rosalind's trajectory was recalibrated through costume in *As You Like It*. This chapter testifies ultimately to the multiplicity of ways in which eclectic design is used to generate meaning in Shakespearean performance while determining what Jacobethan garments *mean* when deployed independently.

Before delving into Chapter One, however, it is important to consider the historical context behind the practices I discuss in the main body of this thesis. The following pages lay foundations for key elements of my overarching argument.

A Brief History of Jacobethanism

The practice of staging Shakespeare's plays with Jacobethan costumes did not begin in the twenty-first century. Since the turn of the seventeenth century—when the plays had their début in London's public playhouses—the sartorial culture of the early modern era has played several significant parts in Shakespearean performance. In what follows, I introduce key moments from the past four centuries to establish how Jacobethanism in design for Shakespeare has developed through time. This history forms an essential foundation for the remainder of this thesis: the twenty-first-century practices I discuss in subsequent chapters are rooted variously in movements that originated during previous centuries. I will refer back to this concise chronology frequently to illustrate how recent developments in costume design relate to those that have come before. It is important to note that my account of this history is unfortunately (though necessarily) brief. A comprehensive investigation into the gradual evolution of Jacobethanism in costume design for Shakespeare would require its own book-length study. Such a study does not yet exist, however, and it falls outside the scope of my project to do more than map the developments most closely related to contemporary performance practices and philosophies.

The logical place to begin is to consider how Shakespeare's plays were costumed in their original performance contexts. During Shakespeare's lifetime, players are thought to have performed wearing primarily the clothing of their own period. Details of apparel documented in the Henslowe/Alleyn papers (relating to the business dealings of impresario Philip Henslowe) indicate that the Admiral's Men owned a broad range of garments in contemporary styles.¹ A document written in Edward Alleyn's hand (thought to have been produced in either

¹ For a detailed discussion of the garments documented in Henslowe's papers, see Jean MacIntyre, *Costumes and Scripts in the Elizabethan Theatres* (Canada: University of Alberta Press, 1992), pp. 75-97.

1598 or 1602) lists approximately 83 items under six headings: ‘Clokes’, ‘Gownes’, ‘Antik Sutes’, ‘Jerkings and Dublets’, ‘frenchose’, and ‘venetians’.² Most of the entries in this inventory describe styles and textiles typical of elite Elizabethan dress. For example, ‘[a] short velvett cap clok embroydered w^t Gould and Gould spangles’ references the fashionable early modern practice of adorning garments with metal sequin-like decorations (featured on items surviving in the Victoria & Albert Museum’s Fashion Collections and in portraits dating from the period). Short velvet cloaks appear in many portraits depicting Elizabethan nobility. ‘A dublett of blak velvett cut on silver tinsell’—another item listed by Alleyn—relates to an extremely expensive form of fabric (‘tinsel’) woven with threads of actual gold or silver ‘so called, because it glistereth or sparkleth like starres’.³ Venetians and ‘frenchose’ are two different cuts of men’s legwear worn during the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras.

While Alleyn’s inventory focuses primarily on items of great value, Henslowe’s papers refer also to garments that better reflect everyday Elizabethan attire. Hose made in canvas, doublets of leather, and cotton gowns feature in a now-lost inventory dated 1598, along with five shirts and four farthingales (a structured underskirt worn by women during the period).⁴ Unlike the costly textiles referenced in Alleyn’s inventory, these relatively low-status fabrics were not restricted by Elizabethan Sumptuary Statutes. A Royal Proclamation issued in 1574 decreed that cloth of silver and silk embroidered with gold or silver could be worn only by those above the rank of viscount and baron. Satin, damask, taffeta, and velvet were all similarly subject to status-determined regulation.⁵ There is thus clear evidence that early modern players had access

² Alleyn’s inventory is undated. Previous editors of the Henslowe/Alleyn papers disagree over when it was created. W. W. Greg dates the inventory to 1598, while R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert prefer 1602; see MacIntyre, p. 76; ‘MSS 1, Article 30, 01 recto: An Inventory of Theatrical Costumes in the hand of Edward Alleyn, c. 1590-1600’, *Henslowe-Alleyn Digitisation Project* <<https://www.henslowe-alleyn.org.uk/images/MSS-1/Article-030/01r.html>> [accessed 14 February 2020]

³ Qtd in Janet Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlock’d* (Leeds: Maney, 1988), p. 374.

⁴ *Henslowe’s Diary*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 318.

⁵ *A Booke containing all such Proclamations, as were published during the Raigne of the late Queene Elizabeth*, British Library <<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/proclamation-against-excess-of-apparel-by-queen-elizabeth-i.>> [accessed 14 February 2020]

to contemporary styles of dress associated with the entire hierarchy of social stations. Together with the appearance of comparable costume descriptions in actors' wills, the Henslowe/Alleyn papers suggest that early modern costuming practices reflected the fashions of the period with exactitude.⁶

Further evidence of links between playing apparel and contemporary dress survives. Thomas Platter—a Swiss visitor to London in 1599—noted in his diary that items of clothing worn by a company of players performing *Julius Caesar* (probably Shakespeare's play) originally formed the wardrobes of England's aristocrats:

The actors are most expensively and elaborately costumed; for it is the English usage for eminent lords or Knights at their decease to bequeath and leave almost the best of their clothes to their serving men, which it is unseemly for the latter to wear, so that they offer them for sale for a small sum to the actors.⁷

While the source of Platter's knowledge is unclear, such transactions would explain how the Admiral's Men came to possess garments associated with those of noble status. In *Costumes and Scripts in the Elizabethan Theatres*, Jean MacIntyre notes that other finery 'came from brokers (also called fripperers)' visited regularly by Henslowe's associates, and some garments may have been pawned to the impresario and never reclaimed.⁸ References to items of clothing embedded in early modern plays support Platter's account; the styles of garment listed in inventories and wills do indeed appear to have featured in performance. Doublets alone are referred to directly in *Julius Caesar* (1.2.257), *Cymbeline* (3.4.168), *1 Henry IV* (2.4.139),

⁶ Many references to playing apparel appear in actors' wills. For example, Augustine Phillips bequeathed to his apprentice his 'mouse Coloured veluit hose and a white Taffety dublet A blacke Taffety sute my purple Cloke'; qtd in E. A. J. Honigmann and Susan Brock, *Playhouse wills: 1558-1642* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 73.

⁷ *Thomas Platter's Travels in England, 1599*, trans. by Clare Williams (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), p. 167.

⁸ MacIntyre, p. 78.

Hamlet (2.1.76), *The Tempest* (2.1.92), and other Shakespeare plays.⁹ There is therefore good reason to believe that documentary evidence relating to the Admiral's Men reflects the costuming practices followed in Elizabethan and Jacobean public playhouses on a wider scale.



Figure 2. The c.1595 sketch known as the Peacham drawing, positioned at the top of a folio sheet with a transcript of passages from Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* inked in below (held in the library of the Marquess of Bath, Longleat House).

Significantly, surviving pictorial evidence believed (by some) to be associated with early modern performance appears to tell a different story. The Peacham drawing—an oft-cited depiction of a Roman scene, thought to have been created around 1595—represents a rather more eclectic mixture of different styles of dress (see Figure 2).¹⁰ While most figures sketched into the scene wear sixteenth-century clothing (doublets, hose, venetians, contemporary forms

⁹ These are only a handful of the many direct references to clothing featuring in plays by Shakespeare (and in those by other early modern dramatists). For more on how such references function(ed) in early modern drama, see: Bridget Escolme, 'Costume, Disguise and Self-display', in *Shakespeare's Theatres and the Effects of Performance*, ed. by Farah Karim-Cooper and Tiffany Stern (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 118-40; Robert I. Lublin, *Costuming the Shakespearean Stage* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2011).

¹⁰ The date, subject, and purpose of the Peacham drawing is unclear, and has attracted significant academic debate. A cryptic inscription featuring alongside the drawing has been interpreted variously as signifying 1594, 1595, 1604, 1605, 1614, or 1615. See: June Schlueter, 'Rereading the Peacham Drawing', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 50.2 (1999), 171-84; Herbert Berry, 'The Date on the "Peacham" Manuscript', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 17.2 (1999), 5-6; Richard Levin, 'The Longleat Manuscript and *Titus Andronicus*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 53.3 (2002), 323-40.

of armour, and a loose gown with embroidered sleeves), the central character wears a laurel wreath, sandals, and a swag of fabric approximating the appearance of a toga. Asserting that the drawing reflects a theatregoer's experience of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, Stephen Orgel argues that 'the inconsistency and anachronism' of its costumes are 'clearly essential' to their meaning: '[t]he costumes are designed to indicate the characters' roles, their relation to each other, and, most important, their relation to us'.¹¹ When read as a reliable representation of early modern costuming practices, then, the Peacham drawing suggests that Elizabethan dress functioned in this context to position characters (in terms of status, gender, religion, age, etc.) within the highly codified sartorial culture of the period, while historical design features indicated where and when the narrative was set.

However, it is inadvisable to draw conclusions purely from the Peacham drawing. There is no conclusive evidence that the illustration is actually of a Shakespeare play in performance, or that it relates to the activities of a professional playing company. We might therefore conclude with confidence that Shakespeare's plays were probably originally enacted by figures who looked—for the most part—like members of Elizabethan society. While it is possible that contemporary clothing was intermingled anachronistically with sartorial references to past periods, the groundwork for this theory is dubious.¹²

It was not until two hundred years later that Jacobethan dress was first used to give Shakespeare's plays an illusory, historical setting. The practice of staging the playwright's works primarily in the clothing of the day had continued throughout the seventeenth century, and remained standard practice through most of the eighteenth. Actor-manager David Garrick had begun to introduce elements of historical costume into his productions by the 1750s

¹¹ Stephen Orgel, 'Shakespeare Illustrated', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Popular Culture*, ed. by Robert Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 67–92 (p. 69).

¹² My discussion here is limited to approaches to costuming thought to have been practiced in public playhouses. For details of what is known about design for court masque, see MacIntyre, pp. 49–75.

(evidenced by letters dating from the period and Hogarth's famous portrait *Mr. Garrick in the character of Richard the 3d*).¹³ Historically-inspired garments were limited to plays' central characters, however: Henry Siddons wrote in 1822 that, while Garrick's Richard was 'correct' (meaning historical in appearance), 'the other characters were attired in embroidered coats and waistcoats, cocked hats, powdered heads, bags and court swords'.¹⁴ It was not until the 1780s that the period of the playwright's lifetime was considered suitable as a setting for the entirety of a Shakespeare play. In paintings in the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery (1789-1806), and contemporaneously in a production of *Hamlet* staged by John Philip Kemble, Shakespeare's characters were for the first time rooted retrospectively and cohesively in the visual culture of the Elizabethan era.¹⁵

The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery—a project intended by its instigator John Boydell to stimulate the development of a British school of history painting—opened its doors in London 'as a wave of English nationalism swept the country'.¹⁶ Shakespeare had by this time been promoted posthumously to the lofty status of national poet. Beginning around the turn of the eighteenth century, the playwright's reputation was reworked (partly through the activities of Garrick) to establish Shakespeare as the supreme symbol of British culture.¹⁷ Boydell's Gallery

¹³ In a letter dated July 27, 1750, Garrick proposes that a forthcoming production of *King John* be staged with the characters dressed 'half old English, half modern'. On December 13, 1777, Garrick wrote of *Macbeth* that '[t]he Ancient dresses are certainly preferable to any Modern ones'. Hogarth's portrait depicts the actor-manager wearing an Elizabethan doublet, hose, and ruff (though this does not necessarily mean that this is what Garrick wore on stage for the role: eighteenth-century portraits of actors in costume often add historical details and backdrops that do not reflect theatrical practice); *The Letters of David Garrick*, ed. by David M. Little and George M. Kahrl, 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), I, p. 152; *The Letters of David Garrick*, ed. by Little and Kahrl, III, p. 1204; Stephen Orgel, *Imagining Shakespeare: A History of Texts and Visions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 32-7.

¹⁴ Qtd in David Thomas, *Restoration and Georgian England 1660-1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 333.

¹⁵ The paintings in the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery did not depict Shakespeare's plays as they appeared in theatrical performance; the playwright's works were used as the subject of a new school of art (see below).

¹⁶ Rosie Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic* (London: published for The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2013), p. 1.

¹⁷ See Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

was a product of this process. In the words of Rosie Dias: '[f]or Boydell [...] the public interest and patriotism prompted by Shakespeare made the playwright an obvious choice for the basis of a national school of painting'.¹⁸ Crucially, the Gallery's act of combining literature with history resulted in a radical reimagining of Shakespeare as a historical subject.¹⁹ Plays that had previously been staged in modern dress (including *Othello*, *As You Like It*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Twelfth Night*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Measure for Measure*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *All's Well That Ends Well*) were represented with their characters wearing doublets, hose, plumed hats, and ruffs, irrespective of any setting indicated textually.²⁰ The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery thus established a visual link between the time of the author and the content of his plays to construct a new sense of Englishness for the present.

Sometime between 1783 and 1801, Kemble adapted his long-running production of *Hamlet* to feature Jacobethan-inspired clothing. The staging opened initially with the actor-manager playing Hamlet in 'a modern court dress of rich black velvet' with his hair 'in powder'; the costume pictured in Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait (see Figure 3)—comprising a small ruff, feathered hat of an early Elizabethan style, doublet, hose, simple leather shoes, and a floor-length, fur-edged cloak with sleeves—'was to be adopted a little later'.²¹ It is not clear exactly when Kemble replaced his modern outfit with a Jacobethan-inspired equivalent, but an

¹⁸ Dias, p. 7.

¹⁹ Orgel, p. 75.

²⁰ Though many of these paintings are now lost, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Collections feature a folio book of approximately 98 prints 'engraved from pictures, purposely painted by the very first artists, and lately exhibited at the Shakspeare [*sic*] gallery'. The majority of the prints in this book feature Jacobethan dress (usually altered in style to suit eighteenth-century tastes). The artists responsible for producing the Jacobethan-inspired paintings in the Gallery include Joseph Wright, Francis Wheatley, Angelica Kauffman, Robert Smirke, Thomas Kirk, William Hamilton, James Durno, William Hodges, John Downman, and John Opie; Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT), Boydell's graphic illustrations of the dramatic works of Shakspeare, 1804.

²¹ Arthur Colby Sprague; qtd in *Shakespearean Criticism*, ed. by Joseph C. Tardiff, 194 vols (United States of America: Gale Research International Limited, 1984-2020), XXI (1993), p. 37; see also Richard W. Schoch, *Shakespeare's Victorian Stage: Performing History in the Theatre of Charles Kean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 153.

illustration dated 1785 (published in Bell's Shakespeare) shows the figure wearing a coat cut in an eighteenth-century style, without the distinctive doublet and ruff featuring in the Lawrence portrait and other subsequent images. It is therefore possible that Kemble's *Hamlet* was the first production to be influenced directly by Boydell's innovations in historicising the playwright's works. Regardless of its influences, this staging is believed to be the first Shakespeare production staged in Jacobethan dress (aside from the plays' original performances).²² It therefore represents the genesis of Jacobethanism in costume design for Shakespearean performance.



Figure 3. Left: Sir Thomas Lawrence's 1801 portrait of John Philip Kemble as Hamlet. Right: James Egan's 1838 engraving of the portrait, included here to show clothing details that are not easily identifiable in photographic reproductions of Lawrence's portrait.

²² Orgel, p. 75.

While Boydell's and Kemble's interests in promoting the Elizabethan origins of Shakespeare's works seemingly stemmed from earlier nationalistic efforts to elevate the playwright to the status of national poet, Kemble's *Hamlet* contributed to the development of a more politically charged form of English nationalism. Nicola J. Watson argues that Kemble's historically-inspired Shakespeare productions formed part of a conservative political movement to reformulate English cultural identity, along with Water Scott's emulation of Shakespeare's historical dramas in his own historical novels. Watson describes the 'late eighteenth century's general interest in historicising Shakespeare [...] as a reassuringly counter-revolutionary (or "anti-Jacobin") cultural strategy' developed in the wake of the French Revolution.²³ Stagings of the playwright's works were set in a specific historical period to promote the playwright's work to the status of actual history and 'defuse contemporary radical politics'.²⁴ Though much of Watson's argument relates to the archaeologically exact productions staged by Charles Kemble (John Philip Kemble's brother) after John Philip's retirement in 1817, it was evidently in *Hamlet* that the Kembles' historically-inspired approach to staging Shakespeare originated.²⁵ Relocating *Hamlet* from a contemporary setting to one that was legibly Jacobethan effectively reframed the play as a product of the past (as opposed to a politically pertinent narrative about the downfall of a monarchy). Presenting Shakespeare as history in the manner introduced by Boydell's Gallery and Kemble's *Hamlet* paved the way for the historically-specific, 'pictorial' performance practices of the nineteenth century.²⁶ As a result, these early developments in Jacobethanism became inextricably linked with conservatism, patriotism, and traditionalism.

²³ Nicola J. Watson, 'Kemble, Scott, and the Mantle of the Bard', in *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, ed. by Jean I. Marsden (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), pp. 73-92 (p. 74).

²⁴ Watson, p. 78.

²⁵ Watson focuses particularly on Charles Kemble's landmark 1823 staging of *King John*, which featured costumes researched and designed by antiquarian James Robinson Planché; see Schoch's *Shakespeare's Victorian Stage* (particularly Chapter Two) for further insight into how the antiquarian designs commissioned by John Philip Kemble during the final years of the eighteenth century paved the way for later archaeologically exact, historicist Shakespeare productions.

²⁶ See Richard W. Schoch, 'Pictorial Shakespeare', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Sarah Stanton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 58-75 (p. 59).

This will prove significant in Chapters Two and Three of this thesis: the continuation of historically-inspired design practices into the twentieth century (perhaps most notably at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and subsequently the Royal Shakespeare Company) has resulted in such associations remaining prominent in twenty-first-century culture.

A second wave of Jacobethanism came at the turn of the twentieth century, almost 100 years after Lawrence painted Kemble as Hamlet. The Victorian era had been characterised by the historically-inspired approach to staging Shakespeare instigated by John Philip Kemble and Charles Kemble. The practice of framing the playwright's works as living history paintings became increasingly elaborate: spectacular scenic and lighting effects, live animals, and reconstructed archaeological artefacts were all put to the purpose of realising Shakespeare's plays for Victorian audiences.²⁷ William Poel revolted against these pervasive practices. Seeking a more 'authentic' reflection of Shakespeare than he felt was offered by his contemporaries, the director promoted the belief that the playwright's works should be staged using 'only those stage appliances and accessories which were usually employed during the Elizabethan period'.²⁸

Poel founded the Elizabethan Stage Society (1894-1905) to put these principles into practice. In 1893, Poel commissioned the construction of a replica Elizabethan stage space—informed by the 1599/1600 building contract for the Fortune playhouse (included in the Henslowe/Alleyn papers) and the De Witt drawing of the Swan Playhouse that had been discovered just five years previously.²⁹ Photographs of productions staged in the so-called 'Fortune fit-up' raise doubts around the exactitude of Poel's practices (see Figure 4). The extent

²⁷ Charles Kean, W. C. Macready, Samuel Phelps, Henry Irving, and Herbert Beerbohm Tree were among those to follow this 'pictorial' approach to staging Shakespeare. See: Schoch, 'Pictorial Shakespeare'; Schoch, *Shakespeare's Victorian Stage*.

²⁸ William Poel, *Shakespeare in the Theatre* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968), p. 204.

²⁹ Poel, p. 205; Marion O'Connor, *William Poel and the Elizabethan Stage Society* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey in association with the Consortium for Drama and Media in Higher Education, 1987), pp. 28-9.

to which the performance space corresponded with the details described in the Fortune contract is questionable, as is the supposed ‘archaeological exactitude’ of Elizabethan clothing.³⁰ The presence of a balcony, recess, and two doors nevertheless marked a major move away from the established approach to stage design in place at the time. Rather than referencing the period of the playwright’s lifetime to promote the plays’ place in national history, Poel sought to reconstruct the *practicalities* of early modern performance in a bid to realise the author’s presumed intentions and restore the texts’ ‘original’ meanings.



Figure 4. The ‘Fortune fit-up’ in use during a performance of *Measure for Measure*, directed by William Poel in 1893 (photograph from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Collections).

Poel’s approach was extremely influential. The director’s emphasis on replicating early modern playing conditions inspired an architectural movement of Jacobethanism that continues to influence theatre design today. Poel’s Fortune fit-up (and the ideas underpinning it) inspired

³⁰ O’Connor, p. 32.

Nugent Monck's Maddermarket Theatre in Norwich, Tyrone Guthrie's modernist assimilation of such antiquarianism in his 'open stages' at the Stratford Ontario Festival Playhouse and the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis, and later Shakespeare's Globe, the 2008 remodelling of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, the Rose Theatre Kingston, and many other theatre spaces around the world.³¹ Further, this second wave of Jacobethanism paved the way for directors and designers to seek alternative means of representing the original 'spirit' and 'intention' of Shakespeare's plays in performance. For example, Poel's innovative methods inspired Barry Jackson to translate the early modern approach to setting for a 1920s audience. Jackson's controversial productions aimed through the use of modern dress to make Shakespeare's characters more accessible to the audience, better approximating the way in which they would have been understood in their original sixteenth-/seventeenth-century context.³² Poel's decision to 'set' his Shakespeare productions in a replica Elizabethan playhouse thus redefined what it meant to represent the period of Shakespeare's lifetime in stage and costume design. The director's approach was catalytic in the development of several approaches to staging the playwright's works that form the basis of Shakespearean performance today.

Most pertinent to this thesis, however, is the fact that Poel's reconstructive approach to staging Shakespeare preceded the 'original practices' (OP) approaches to performance that have emerged in recent decades. The director's commitment to researching and recreating early modern staging conditions laid foundations for the techniques now associated with Shakespeare's Globe (and the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, Virginia). The

³¹ For more on Nugent Monck, see Franklin J. Hildy, 'Playing Places for Shakespeare: The Maddermarket Theatre, Norwich', in *Shakespeare Survey* 47 (1994), 81-90; for more on Tyrone Guthrie and the Stratford Ontario Festival Playhouse, see: J. L. Styan, *The Shakespeare Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Robert Shaughnessy, 'Tyrone Guthrie', in *Great Shakespearians: Poel, Granville Barker, Guthrie, Wanamaker*, ed. by Cary M. Mazer (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 98-150.

³² See Claris Glick, 'William Poel: His Theories and Influence', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 15.1 (1964), 15-25 <<https://doi.org/10.2307/2867949>>

'archaeological exactitude' of the clothing reconstructed at Shakespeare's Globe between 1997-2005 will be considered at length in Chapter One.

Above all, this brief history of Jacobethanism illustrates that the practice of staging Shakespeare in Jacobethan dress is in fact multiple, discrete practices. The notion of presenting the playwright's works with a Jacobethan-inspired setting (introduced by Boydell and Kemble) has an origin story entirely different from that of reconstructive performance. Neither of these approaches reflect the realities of how early modern costumes communicated to audiences. Jacobethanism in twenty-first-century costume design is similarly diverse, with different applications of Elizabethan/Jacobean dress having developed from the distinct philosophies and histories of performance discussed here. The question of what recent revolutions and evolutions in Jacobethanism can reveal about Shakespeare's role in contemporary culture is this thesis' central concern.

Chapter One

‘Original Practices’ Costume Design at Shakespeare’s Globe:

Practice as Experiment and Research

London, 1997. Jenny Tiramani stands before a clothing rail, inspecting the collection of colourful garments hanging from it: a scarlet velvet gown edged with gold embroidery; a red and blue chequered linen tabard emblazoned with hand-painted golden lions and fleur-de-lis motifs; a soft honey-yellow doublet, dyed with onion skins and urine; a cloth of silver peascod doublet. ‘The process has been different for me’, explains the designer. ‘It’s been quite nerve-wracking at times, because the clothes have been making themselves and I haven’t always been in control of them’.¹ No costume designs were drawn as part of the garments’ development process; documentary evidence of early modern dress had dictated every element of their design and construction.²

These were the first of many costumes to be created at Shakespeare’s Globe using the tailoring techniques of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras.³ Led by a desire to re-establish the conditions in which Shakespeare’s plays were staged originally, Tiramani and her team began an intensive, decade-long process of research and experimentation. Such a project had not been attempted before; this radical approach to design moved pointedly against the costume construction practices used widely in theatre, film, and television at the time of the theatre’s opening. It was met with a significant degree of criticism. What is the point of recreating

¹ *Henry V at the Globe*, online video recording, YouTube, 18 June 2018 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HI4oHBt6cvw&t=306s>> [accessed 3 March 2020]

² Tiramani drew no costume designs for any of the productions she designed at Shakespeare’s Globe, other than a handful of drawings created expressly for the purpose of being auctioned for fundraising endeavours. This represents a significant deviation from the norm in professional theatre design; Jenny Tiramani, interview with Ella Hawkins (London, 15 April 2019).

³ ‘Original practices’ costumes were referred to at Shakespeare’s Globe as ‘clothing’ rather than ‘costume’. This distinction was made to reflect that the Globe’s costume team recreated ‘real’ Elizabethan and Jacobean clothing, rather than producing historically-inspired garments using modern techniques. I discuss this further on pp. 51-2.

obsolete garments using processes that audience members will never see? Why bother respecting Elizabethan symbolism or reconstructing sartorial signifiers of status if these meanings are inaccessible to modern spectators? Ultimately, what do twenty-first-century practitioners hope to achieve by embarking on the impossible task of bringing the past to life? These questions have troubled critics since the notion of recreating historical garments at Shakespeare's Globe was first conceived. Scholarship has yet to see any study that engages with these issues directly, while focusing purely on the work of the theatre's costume team as it evolved over time.

In this chapter, I examine the intentions behind the so-called 'original practices' (OP) approach to design developed at Shakespeare's Globe (hereafter 'the Globe') between 1997 and 2005.⁴ My goal in doing so is to provide a detailed account of the journey undertaken by Tiramani and her team of cutters, makers, and dressers during this period and to offer new insight into the purpose of their labour. Pursuing this line of enquiry requires an analytical approach unlike any of those featuring in my subsequent chapters. While in later discussions I foreground the matter of how Jacobethan costumes communicate to modern audiences, this chapter focuses primarily on activities conducted offstage. Here I investigate the practicalities of recreating historical garments to elucidate a unique branch of Jacobethanism in twenty-first-century design for Shakespeare. The details I provide come from several encounters with members of the Globe's original costume team: I have conducted interviews, attended 'dressing events', and completed practical training with key individuals associated with OP design (Tiramani, Luca Costigliolo, Melanie Braun, Claire Thornton, and Hattie Barsby).⁵ I am therefore able to

⁴ As I explain later in this chapter, I also consider how the Globe's costume team developed their work further in the years interceding Mark Rylance's 2005 departure as Artistic Director and the theatre's 2012 revival of *Twelfth Night*.

⁵ Tiramani and her colleagues have led many events during which an individual is dressed from their foundations to outer garments in front of an audience. Each recreated garment is introduced and explained by the designer as it is added to the body, providing an in-depth insight into how the outfit relates to historical evidence.

scrutinise how historical evidence was interpreted to create wearable garments for the stage and consider the ideas that justified exerting such a considerable amount of energy on rediscovering elements of the past.

My argument revolves primarily around the clothing created for two Globe productions staged several years apart: *Henry V* (1997) and *Twelfth Night* (staged first in 2002, and revived in 2003, 2012, and 2013). I demonstrate how these contrasting applications of OP design represent two very different ‘experiments’ into theatre and dress history. While the former was a first attempt at establishing how Shakespeare’s plays might have been performed at the turn of the seventeenth century, the latter saw the theatre’s resources utilised to advance knowledge of how Elizabethan garments were cut and constructed. Identifying these differences illustrates the significant extent to which OP design practices changed during the period in which they were in use, but also allows for wider conclusions to be drawn about the ‘point’ of recreating historical garments. I reframe the Globe costume team’s work as a form of experimental archaeology. Seen through this lens, OP design can be understood as a rigorous methodology for establishing how clothing was made and worn during the period of Shakespeare’s lifetime. This perspective has not yet entered into academic discourse—largely, perhaps, because the costume team’s findings appear to have relatively little to do with Shakespeare. I argue that OP costume design represented a radical means of engaging with the past through performance. The culmination of the costume team’s work generated new information about early modern material culture while contributing significantly to the appeal and impact of the Globe’s later OP productions.

Though this chapter is dedicated specifically to OP costume design, it is necessary first to locate these practices within the wider context of Shakespeare’s Globe (or Shakespeare’s Globe

Theatre, as it was known in 1997). The story of how the Globe came into being has already formed the subject of numerous monographs, edited collections, and journal articles; rather than repeat this much-discussed narrative at length, I will outline only the elements that relate directly to the development of OP costuming.⁶

Sam Wanamaker—the actor and director responsible for instigating the reconstruction project—asserted in 1990 that ‘[t]he point of rebuilding the Globe [...] is to rediscover the original intentions of the staging, how the plays were performed and how they communicated with their audience, and to find a modern way of doing the plays with the same physical elements’.⁷ Through conducting in-depth research, using historically-accurate materials, and rediscovering elements of early modern craft, the reconstructed Globe would (supposedly) enable theatre practitioners and historians to make important discoveries about how Shakespeare’s plays were originally performed and understood as well as influencing new developments in modern theatre practice.⁸ The idea that the reconstructed theatre would provide a space for experimentation with early modern playing conditions was echoed by academics associated with the project. In 1989, eight years before the theatre’s official opening, Andrew Gurr (the project’s chief academic advisor) wrote:

The project is above all an educational experiment, an experiment in staging Shakespeare under conditions different from any London has known since the early seventeenth century. [...] The total design [including an exhibition complex] is an educational milieu where the tangible environment can be recreated and experiments

⁶ Many of the works I refer to here appear in the footnotes of the following pages (see Gurr, Purcell, Mulryne and Shewring, Conkie, Worthen, Carson and Karim-Cooper, Kiernan). See also: Barry Day, *This Wooden ‘O’* (London: Oberon Books, 1996); Paul Prescott, ‘Sam Wanamaker’, in *Great Shakespeareans: Poel, Granville Barker, Guthrie, Wanamaker*, ed. by Cary M. Mazer (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 151-210.

⁷ Qtd in Welton Jones, ‘The Globe, a British treasure, resurrected by an American’, *San Diego Union*, 18 February 1990, pp. E4-E5 (p. E5).

⁸ Mark Rylance, ‘Research, Materials, Craft: Principles of Performance at Shakespeare’s Globe’, in *Shakespeare’s Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 103–14 (pp. 103-4).

conducted to enable us to recover more of what Shakespeare, the genius of his age, did with and for his age.⁹

The Globe reconstruction project was, in short, an attempt to recreate the physical surroundings for which the playwright's works were written. It was an 'experiment' in the sense that it would allow scholars and practitioners to explore how the plays functioned (acoustically, spatially, temporally, interactively, etc.) in an approximation of their original performance space. Wanamaker's vision saw the past brought into conversation with the present to reinvigorate modern Shakespearean performance.

From its outset, the project was ruled by the principle of 'authenticity'. Wanamaker insisted that the new Globe 'had to be as faithful a copy as scholarship and theatre historians could get it of Shakespeare's original theatre'.¹⁰ In response to the many counter-arguments raised by academics, architects, and those responsible for enforcing building regulations (namely that compromises must be made to ensure the comfort and safety of modern audiences), Wanamaker maintained the view that authenticity should be prioritised wherever possible. J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring explain in *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt* (1997) that this was the 'only defensible path' for the rebuilding experiment: 'once swerve from the aim of exactness and authenticity and the result will be compromise, muddle and mish-mash'.¹¹ In practice, this approach meant patching together fragmentary pieces of evidence to construct a 'best guess' of the Globe's original form. Scholarly analysis of pictorial and textual sources was considered alongside the expertise of archaeologists, historians, craftsmen, architects, and engineers to ground every aspect of the reconstruction in historical evidence.¹² The experiment

⁹ Andrew Gurr and John Orrell, *Rebuilding Shakespeare's Globe* (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1989), p. 25.

¹⁰ Andrew Gurr, 'Shakespeare's Globe: A History of Reconstruction', in *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, ed. by J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 27-47 (p. 33).

¹¹ J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring, 'The Once and Future Globe', in *Shakespeare's Globe Rebuilt*, ed. by Mulryne and Shewring, pp. 15-25 (p. 17).

¹² Gurr, pp. 35-6.

would work only if the precise shape and textures of the 1599 Globe were recreated with exactitude, so the argument went.¹³ Only a full-scale reconstruction built using the same materials, processes, and dimensions as the original structure would allow for fruitful investigations into how Shakespeare's plays were first performed.

As numerous scholars have attested, Wanamaker's insistence on 'authenticity' generated heated debate.¹⁴ Using 'original materials' did not mean building with four-hundred year old beams, wattle, and daub, but creating precise copies or simulations of construction materials used at the turn of the seventeenth century.¹⁵ Moreover, the 'original' upon which the reconstructed Globe is based has been lost.¹⁶ The fragmentary nature of surviving evidence relating to the 1599 structure (and the practices deployed within it) means that achieving a precise copy of the original is impossible.¹⁷

It is worth pausing briefly on this point to consider what exactly Wanamaker meant by 'authenticity'. The shifting nature of this concept has long incited debate among scholars concerned with anthropology and tourism; the Globe is one of many modern projects to draw attention to the concept's various flaws. The version of 'authenticity' championed by Wanamaker (and others involved in the early stages of the project) appears to have related to definitions of the term centring on objective truth. Gordon Waitt suggests that, 'conventionally', 'authenticity' is associated with accuracy, genuineness, reality, and actuality.¹⁸ This meaning forms the first entry for 'authenticity' in the *Oxford English*

¹³ Gurr and Orrell, pp. 18-9.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the theatre's movement away from 'authenticity', see Stephen Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Mark Rylance at the Globe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 21-4.

¹⁵ Rob Conkie, *The Globe Theatre Project: Shakespeare and Authenticity* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 2006), pp. 2-3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ For more on authenticity and the architecture of Shakespeare's Globe, see Valerie Clayman Pye, 'Shakespeare's Globe: Theatre Architecture and the Performance of Authenticity', *Shakespeare*, 10.4 (2014), 411-27.

¹⁸ Gordon Waitt, 'Consuming Heritage: Perceived Historical Authenticity', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27.4 (2000), 835-62 (p. 846).

Dictionary: ‘The fact or quality of being true or in accordance with fact; veracity; correctness. Also [...] accurate reflection of real life, verisimilitude’.¹⁹ Essentially, to aim for absolute authenticity is in this sense an attempt to locate the truth. According to this definition an ‘accurate reflection’ of reality qualifies as ‘authentic’.

‘Genuineness’ relates to a slightly different definition of the term. Lionel Trilling asserts that the provenance of ‘authenticity’ is ‘in the museum, where persons expert in such matters test whether objects of art are what they appear to be, and therefore [...] worth the admiration they are being given’.²⁰ This definition demands that an object be *the* original in order to be considered ‘authentic’; if an ‘accurate reflection’ of a work of art were to be assessed according to these criteria, it would be considered fake. The blurred lines between these different meanings of ‘authenticity’ illustrate why Wanamaker’s vision attracted support and criticism with equal ferocity. The project *could* be guided by an aim that prioritised accuracy over compromise (where such a choice was possible), but could never hope to achieve an end product that was *genuine*.

It is important to note, however, that academic appraisals of ‘authenticity’ have exposed further ambiguities and limitations associated with this concept.²¹ In 1988, sociologist Erik Cohen conceptualised authenticity as a ‘continuum leading from complete authenticity, through various stages of partial authenticity, to complete falseness’.²² The scholar posits that it is in the experience of the individual that such a measurement can be made (rather than there being an absolute truth), and that interpretations of authenticity differ between individuals according

¹⁹ ‘Authenticity, n.’, in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/13325>> [accessed 10 March 2020]

²⁰ Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 93.

²¹ Ning Wang, ‘Rethinking Authenticity in Tourism Experience’, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26.2 (1999), 349–70 (p. 349).

²² Erik Cohen, ‘Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism’, *Annals of Tourism Research*, 15.3 (1988), 371–86 (p. 378).

to context, experience, and expectations. For example, ‘intellectuals’ and ‘experts’ will likely have strict criteria of authenticity, while ‘most rank-and-file members of society’ will be content with ‘much wider, less strict’ criteria.²³ While this claim is overly simplistic in its characterisation of these groups, it nevertheless helpfully establishes authenticity as ‘a social construction to be negotiated’, rather than ‘an absolute to be received’.²⁴ The question of whether an object or experience is ‘authentic’ is inherently subjective; any quest for ‘truth’ (such as that pursued by Wanamaker) is undermined by its fundamental untenability.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the fixation on authenticity at the heart of the Globe project troubled critics long before the theatre opened. One newspaper article published in 1995 noted that ‘complete authenticity is impossible’ and asked ‘[w]here must authenticity stop?’;²⁵ another declared that ‘[a] spectre haunts the new Globe on the South Bank: the spectre of authenticity’.²⁶ Critics feared that pursuing this aim would result in the theatre being ‘a mausoleum for tourists’—‘an historical curio which is the theatrical equivalent of Madame Tussauds’.²⁷ The project was referred to by many as ‘Stratford-upon-Thames’ or ‘Shakespeare-in-Disneyland’.²⁸ ‘At best’, the forthcoming Globe was ‘dismissed as the product of a misguided nostalgia for a style of production and acting that had not existed for 400 years’; at worst, it was ‘little more than a mock-Elizabethan theme park’ or ‘a lifeless museum for fogeyish Bardophiles’.²⁹ Much of this criticism was grounded in a feeling that prizing historical accuracy equated with preserving Shakespeare as an Elizabethan artefact. Journalist Adrian

²³ Cohen, p. 376.

²⁴ Waitt, p. 846.

²⁵ Robert Gore-Langton and Rowan Moore, ‘The often-mocked rebuilding of the Globe nears completion’, *Daily Telegraph*, 4 August 1995, n.p.

²⁶ ‘Dramatic conflict’, *Sunday Times*, 1 October 1995, n.p.; the Globe being ‘haunted’ by ‘spectres’ of the past forms a major point of my discussion in Chapter Five (see pp. 260-6).

²⁷ Qtd in John Cunningham, ‘Welcome to the house of fun’, *Guardian*, 22 July 1995, n.p.; ‘Global relic’, *The Stage*, 10 August 1995, n.p.

²⁸ Kate Stratton, ‘The story of “O”’, *Time Out*, 3 July 1996, pp. 12-13 (p. 12).

²⁹ Robert Winder, ‘Curtain’s up at the bawdy Globe’, *Independent*, 21 August 1996, n.p.; Stratton, ‘The Story of “O”’.

Turpin (*Independent*) described the Globe's potential offerings as 'a Bard fossilised in Elizabethan amber'.³⁰ James Wood (*Observer*) asserted that 'You cannot memorialise a writer in this cryogenic fashion... the idea of a writer for theatre, whose very medium is one of reappropriation and reperformance, condemned to this frozen repetition, is a bit ridiculous'.³¹ Commentators were evidently concerned about how 'authentic' aims would manifest in the theatre's performance practices (and what kind of audiences it would attract) more than the technicalities around what this term was intended to mean.

The question of how the philosophy behind the reconstruction project would translate into performance was determined after Wanamaker's death in 1993. Wanamaker's vision for the new Globe had included the idea that the venue would dedicate at least one production of every season to exploring the playing practices available to the Lord Chamberlain's/King's Men at the turn of the seventeenth century.³² During a 1995 Globe conference (titled 'Within *this* Wooden O'), fifty academic (and other) attendees voted on 'which aspects of "authenticity" they wished to see re-enacted, from trying out original pronunciation ("exclusively in favour") to casting boys in female roles ("a perfect if unexpected deadlock")'.³³ Stephen Purcell writes:

The attendees were 'three-to-one against' the introduction of intervals, almost entirely in favour of 'authentic' costuming, and unanimous, apparently, in decreeing that staging and interpretive decisions should be sought from the text itself 'as opposed to other forms of directorial control and authority'.³⁴

Before the theatre's first production had been conceived, a tension between the desire to include 'authentic' Elizabethan production elements and the need to respect the expectations of the modern theatre industry was established. The conference attendees were unanimous on

³⁰ Adrian Turpin, 'House of Bards', *Independent*, 4 August 1995, n.p.

³¹ Qtd in 'The smell of the crowd', *Observer Review*, 1 June 1997, pp. 3-4 (p. 3).

³² Pauline Kiernan, 'Findings from the Globe Opening Season, *Henry V*', *Shakespeare's Globe Research Bulletin*, 2 (1998), p. 6.

³³ Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre*, p. 20; Conkie, p. 191.

³⁴ Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre*, p. 20.

the re-enactment of more aesthetic elements of performance while being less keen on those that conflicted with modern ideas about gender equality and audience/actor comfort. Wanamaker's insistence on absolute authenticity was relaxed into an approach where select practices were knowingly 'cherry-picked' for experimentation through performance.³⁵

The Globe staged fifteen productions between 1997 and 2005 that followed this brief of (selective) 'authentic' experimentation.³⁶ When the theatre first opened, this strand of its work was referred to as 'authentic practices'. External criticism and internal discomfort engendered by the Globe's relationship with authenticity led to this approach being relabelled 'original practices' around 1999.³⁷ These issues of terminology emerged partly because the distinction between 'authentic' and non-authentic productions was far from clear-cut. *All* productions staged at the Globe were performed in a replica performance space with shared light (both 'original' elements of performance); the theatre's cherry-picked approach to historical experimentation meant that every production developed in line with the theatre's 'authentic' brief featured both 'original' and modern elements.

According to a production catalogue published as an appendix to *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, every one of the fifteen stagings categorised as OP featured 'an "original practices" approach to period dress'. Other 'authentic' early modern performance practices were used inconsistently. Eight OP productions had all-male casts, and 13 featured reconstructions of Elizabethan and Jacobean music performed on reconstructed period

³⁵ Alan C. Dessen, "'Original Practices' at the Globe: A Theatre Historian's View", in *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Carson and Karim-Cooper, pp. 45–53 (p. 49); W. B. Worthen, *Theatre, Technicity, Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 109.

³⁶ Between 1997 and 2002, each Globe season featured one or two 'authentic' or 'original practices' productions alongside two or three modern productions. These modern productions were initially referred to as the theatre's 'free hand' work, but this label was later replaced with 'modern practices'; Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre*, p. 22.

³⁷ Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre*, p. 23.

instruments. Only two were performed with ‘original’ pronunciation.³⁸ Individual performances of early productions were staged without intervals, but this practice was soon abandoned.³⁹ Some productions appear to have involved the experimental use of cue-scripting as part of their rehearsal processes (usually near the beginning of rehearsals). This practice was always layered with far more modern rehearsal techniques, however, and no attempts were made to replicate an early modern repertory or rehearsal schedule.⁴⁰ The theatre tactfully ignored historical evidence that black actors did not appear on the early modern stage, and manoeuvred around the matter of women having been absent from Elizabethan and Jacobean public performance by variously staging OP productions with all-male, all-female, and mixed-gender casts.⁴¹ Presumably, some of these decisions were made to ensure the theatre’s practices adhered to Equity guidelines and ethical standards.⁴² Most importantly, however, the extent to which the theatre’s use of ‘original’ practices varied over time illustrates the exploratory, evolving nature of Globe OP performance. Each production featured a unique combination of ‘original’ elements; to understand how, why, and to what effect these practices were employed, we must approach the theatre’s OP work as a series of fifteen individual, highly nuanced investigations.

It is curious that the question of what ‘an “original practices” approach to period dress’ actually meant has received little critical attention to date. This production element evidently served as a defining feature of OP performance at the Globe, but it has not been subject to the same level of scrutiny as the theatre’s other practices (such as its reconstructed music, cosmetics, actor-

³⁸ Further, ‘original’ pronunciation was not used for the entirety of these two productions’ runs. Only select performances featured this experimental production element; ‘Appendix Four: Shakespeare’s Globe Productions 1996-2007’, in *Shakespeare’s Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Carson and Karim-Cooper, pp. 239-42.

³⁹ See, for example: ‘The Life of Henry the Fifth.’ (programme note), *Henry V* by William Shakespeare (London: Shakespeare’s Globe, 1997), pp. 6-7 (p. 7).

⁴⁰ Don Weingust, ‘Authentic Performances or Performances of Authenticity? Original Practices and the Repertory Schedule’, *Shakespeare*, 10.4 (2014), 402–10 (p. 402).

⁴¹ Ayanna Thompson, *Passing Strange: Shakespeare, Race, and Contemporary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 98; ‘Appendix Four’, *Shakespeare’s Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*.

⁴² Equity is the UK trade union representing actors.

audience relationships, original pronunciation, etc.). Most studies on the significance of the Globe's OP work refer to costume only tangentially. Alan C. Dessen notes in passing that 'period dress' was among the theatre's 'definite strengths' during this period.⁴³ Christie Carson acknowledges that 'Tiramani has become one of the foremost experts in the field of early modern clothing by spending many years studying the material practices of the period', but provides no further details of the developmental process to which she refers.⁴⁴ In *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Mark Rylance at the Globe*, Stephen Purcell considers briefly how specific OP costumes contributed to actors' experiences in performing gender.⁴⁵ Rob Conkie describes individual reconstructed garments created by the Globe's costume team in his introduction to *The Globe Theatre Project: Shakespeare and Authenticity*.⁴⁶ His purpose in doing so, however, is to exemplify broader issues of authenticity that surrounded the theatre's early activities more generally.

Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment (2008) includes a chapter by Tiramani that defines OP stage and costume design as it was practiced at the Globe until 2005. The designer explains that the theatre's approach to recreating Elizabethan and Jacobean dress was guided by the same principles that had inspired the construction of the theatre itself. The design team would use only materials available in 1600 (linen, wool, leather, and silk) and create garments that related 'to those listed in the inventories and wills of actors or mentioned in the plays of the early 1600s'.⁴⁷ Costumes (or 'clothing', as it was referred to at the theatre) would be constructed by hand and based on surviving patterns and garments of the period. Early modern

⁴³ Dessen, p. 45.

⁴⁴ Christie Carson, 'Mark Rylance, Henry V and "Original Practices" at Shakespeare's Globe: History Refashioned', in *Filming and Performing Renaissance History*, ed. by Mark Thornton Burnett and Adrian Streete (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 127–45 (p. 133).

⁴⁵ Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre*, p. 180.

⁴⁶ Conkie, pp. 1-12.

⁴⁷ Jenny Tiramani, 'Exploring Early Modern Stage and Costume Design', in *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Carson and Karim-Cooper, pp. 57–65 (p. 61).

iconography was to be respected where possible—particularly the symbolic use of colour—and Globe actors were trained to wear and use their clothing in a manner that would have been deemed appropriate in Elizabethan society.⁴⁸

Crucially, although a single set of principles guided the approach to OP costume design developed by Tiramani and her team, these principles were not applied uniformly to the design of all OP productions staged at the Globe. Tiramani explains:

Using primary evidence from the past always requires an act of interpretation to produce a possible reconstruction from it. There is not enough evidence to definitively produce an ‘original practices’ production of *Henry V* with the amount of medieval clothing used (or not) in 1599 [...] There are many possible early modern interpretations of the design for each play and every OP production we did in the first ten years at the Globe proposed a particular interpretation of the evidence we have.⁴⁹

In a brief article published in *Costume* in 2000, the designer articulates more specifically what form these acts of interpretation took during the theatre’s first years in operation. Tiramani explains that her costume team had ‘never copied either surviving items of clothing or those shown in portraits’ but rather ‘tried to make original pieces governed by the same constraints and rules’.⁵⁰ This article also outlines key sources (namely publications by dress historian Janet Arnold, discussed below) and some of the limitations the team had encountered by this time (such as the repercussions of budget restrictions and the availability of ‘authentic’ materials).

While these details provide valuable insight into the nature of the Globe’s reconstructive costuming practices, they do not do justice to the extensive, innovative journey undertaken by the theatre’s costume team between 1997 and 2005 (and in the period between Rylance’s 2005 departure as Artistic Director and the 2012 revival of *Twelfth Night*). The significant extent to

⁴⁸ Tiramani, ‘Exploring Early Modern Stage and Costume Design’, p. 62.

⁴⁹ Tiramani, ‘Exploring Early Modern Stage and Costume Design’, p. 57.

⁵⁰ Jenny Tiramani, ‘Janet Arnold and the Globe Wardrobe: Handmade Clothes for Shakespeare’s Actors’, *Costume*, 34.1 (2000), 118–22 (p. 119).

which costume design practices varied between the fifteen productions categorised as OP has not yet been established in any depth, and details of how historical evidence was interpreted and adapted to form individual items of clothing for modern performance remain unpublished. It is this gap in scholarship I intend to fill. In what follows, I introduce specific garments (re)created for *Henry V* and *Twelfth Night* to illustrate how the Globe's original reconstructive philosophy manifested in the intricacies of costume design and construction. As well as highlighting marked differences between the processes followed by the theatre's costume team for these productions, I consider how this work functioned as a series of interrelated 'experiments'. Establishing how OP costume design was conceptualised and valued by its creators is essential for understanding the significance of this element of modern Shakespearean performance.

Henry V opened on Saturday 14 June 1997 as part of the Globe's Opening Season. In keeping with Wanamaker's vision—that at least one production of every season should be staged as 'authentically' as possible—it was decided that *Henry V* 'should be performed according to the principles of reconstructed authenticity'.⁵¹ The production was developed with a clear understanding that only select elements of the staging would form part of the 'authentic' experiment. Director Richard Olivier took the 'authentic practices' brief to mean that the production would 'undertake to explore certain authentic production methods or styles', but not that they were 'trying to make the whole thing as it would have been in the sixteenth century'.⁵²

The 'authentic' practices incorporated into *Henry V* were varied: the text was cut by about twenty per cent to reduce the performance time, the cast consisted of fifteen men, and the

⁵¹ Conkie, p. 4.

⁵² Kiernan, p. 6.

production was staged without an interval on five occasions. ‘Authentic’ (period-appropriate) weapons were used, and incidental music ‘consisted of arrangements of original material’ played on period instruments (including a sackbut, cornett, natural trumpet, slide-trumpet, curtal, and drum).⁵³ Investigation of the original (late-sixteenth-century) approach to costuming *Henry V* proved a major focus for the creative team: Pauline Kiernan’s Research Bulletin for the production states that it involved ‘extensive historical costume research and practice by Jenny Tiramani. The *Henry V* costume team hand-stitched and dyed all clothing with original materials using dress-making methods of the period, with original fastenings, including undergarments that would not necessarily be seen’.⁵⁴ This approach to design did not extend to the stage and prop design (though rushes were strewn across the stage floor). Kiernan notes that it was ‘not possible for stage design and stage management to construct and make everything with original materials, tools and methods because of budget restrictions’.⁵⁵ From this very first Globe OP production, costume was prioritised above other material production elements in the distribution of the theatre’s budget.

The clothing created for *Henry V* was the costume team’s first attempt at creating ‘real’ Elizabethan garments. Tiramani had no previous experience in dressing actors in the clothing of this period. In fact, the designer explains that her preference has always been to stage Shakespeare in *modern* dress.⁵⁶ Designing Elizabethan costumes was ‘the last thing [she] wanted to do at the time’.⁵⁷ Mark Rylance initially shared a similar view. The actor had an ‘unhappy relationship’ with being dressed in Jacobethan costumes due to past experiences in

⁵³ It is worth noting also that Katherine was played by a young man (Toby Cockerell), meaning that the production could engage to an extent with evidence around boy players; Kiernan, pp. 2-7.

⁵⁴ As I note in further detail on p. 66, this claim made by Kiernan was not actually true. The costume team were still using sewing machines for some clothing elements in 1997; Kiernan, p. 7.

⁵⁵ Kiernan, p. 52.

⁵⁶ Staging Shakespeare in modern dress also formed an important element of the Globe’s work between 1997 and 2005. Tiramani dedicates a portion of her ‘Exploring early modern stage and costume design’ chapter to this subject (pp. 58-60).

⁵⁷ Tiramani, interview.

theatre and film; the use of modern fastenings and materials in such garments had limited the extent to which he felt he could become immersed in his performance.⁵⁸

Soon after his appointment as the Globe's first Artistic Director in 1995, and before Tiramani had been employed as a member of the theatre's creative team, Rylance commissioned the designer to write a report on the costuming possibilities available to the theatre.⁵⁹ This report (completed in 1996) found no 'convincing' representations of Elizabethan dress in existing UK costume collections. In Tiramani's view, the costumes provided by leading suppliers (including Angels Costumes, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the BBC, and other organisations) bore little resemblance to the actual shape and construction of early modern clothing.⁶⁰ The report recommended instead that the Globe consider recreating real, surviving garments from the period of Shakespeare's lifetime.⁶¹ This distinction between 'costume' and 'clothing' is significant. Unlike established approaches to theatrical costume design, which often centre on creating an *impression* of historical dress that will be comprehensible to contemporary audiences (see Chapter Two), recreating 'real' garments would (in theory) reject any form of compromise and represent a search for the 'truth' of how early modern dress was made and worn.⁶² This proposed philosophy is in many ways another manifestation of Wanamaker's quest for 'authenticity'. Accordingly, it raises the very same issues as those outlined on pp. 42-3—namely that attempts to locate objective truth are always undercut by the matter of subjective interpretation. Most important for the purposes of this discussion, however, is that

⁵⁸ Tiramani, interview; in a 1997 documentary about the opening of Shakespeare's Globe (titled *Henry V at the Globe*), Rylance explains that he tended to find historical costumes 'fake or phoney', as though they had been 'made from mum's old curtains and put together with velcro'. This, of course, is a notably modern, Stanislavskian (and un-Elizabethan) notion of acting; *Henry V at the Globe*.

⁵⁹ Rylance and Tiramani had collaborated previously on several projects (including controversial productions of *The Tempest* [1991] and *Macbeth* [1995], staged by Rylance's company Phoebus' Cart). It was because of this existing relationship that Rylance approached Tiramani to conduct the report.

⁶⁰ Tiramani, interview.

⁶¹ Tiramani visited museum collections in Munich and Nuremberg as part of her research for the 1996 report, looking closely at surviving garments to understand their construction. She explains that she 'fell in love with the real thing', finding them entirely different from Elizabethan theatrical costumes she had seen; Tiramani, interview.

⁶² Tiramani discusses this search for 'truth' in a 1999 voice recording held in the Shakespeare's Globe Exhibition.

OP costume design had a point of origin notably different from those design processes practiced at other theatre (and film) organisations operating at the time. From its outset, the reconstructive work conducted by the Globe's costume team was, more than any existing approach to theatrical costume design, rooted in the realm of dress history.

Putting this reconstructive philosophy into practice for *Henry V* proved challenging—partly due to the fragmentary nature of surviving evidence, but also because Tiramani and her team began with little to no knowledge of early modern dressing and tailoring techniques. The designer approached Janet Arnold—a leading expert in dress history—for advice on how to proceed.⁶³ In addition to studying Arnold's research into the cut, construction, and materials of Elizabethan dress, Tiramani consulted Henslowe's Diary to understand what sort of garments might have made up an early modern playing company's wardrobe (particularly the c.1602 clothing inventory in Alleyn's hand, detailing approximately 83 items).⁶⁴ Jean MacIntyre's *Costumes and Scripts in the Elizabethan Theatres* (1992) provided further insight into Elizabethan costuming practices, and M. Channing Linthicum's *Costume in the Drama of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (1936) shaped the designer's understanding of the relationship between early modern dress and drama.⁶⁵ Essentially, this combination of sources brought physical and pictorial evidence of early modern dress (relating broadly to the clothing worn by the nobility and royalty of the period) into conversation with documents of early modern performance. Relatively few details of Elizabethan/Jacobean costuming practices survive: as with the reconstruction of the Globe building itself, recreating this element of early modern performance involved combining information from diverse forms of evidence.⁶⁶

⁶³ Tiramani, interview.

⁶⁴ The specific Arnold publications consulted by Tiramani were *Patterns of Fashion 3: The cut and construction of clothes for men and women c.1560-1620* (London: Macmillan, 1985) and *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd* (Leeds: Maney, 1988); Tiramani, interview.

⁶⁵ Tiramani, interview.

⁶⁶ See 'A Brief History of Jacobethanism' (particularly pp. 23-7) in this thesis for details of this evidence.



Figure 5. Janet Arnold's illustration of the c.1600-5 suit included in her 1985 *Patterns of Fashion 3*, alongside a photograph of Mark Rylance's Henry wearing a garment that appears to be based on the pattern (photographer unknown).



Figure 6. Photographs of the c.1600-5 suit featuring in Arnold's 1985 *Patterns of Fashion 3* (photographs by Janet Arnold).

Photographs of the 1997 production illustrate how the costume team used elements from these sources to create (what was believed to be) the closest possible representation of what would have been worn by members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men around 1599. Henry's (Rylance's) doublet is evidently an adapted reproduction of Pattern 12 in Arnold's *Patterns of Fashion 3* (depicted in Figure 5), which is taken from an English suit dating from c.1600-5.⁶⁷ The Globe team appear to have followed this pattern relatively closely for the overall shape of the garment: the padded 'peascod' belly, collar, shoulder wings (the structured pieces of fabric that loop around the top of the arm), and skirt tabs (the flaps of fabric coming away from the lower edge of the garment) are all present in the reconstruction. There are also clear elements of simplification and alteration in terms of the detail in the garment, however. The original had 42 button closures down the front side and five at each wrist; the reproduction has eleven large buttons down the front and none at the wrists. This was perhaps for ease of dressing the actor and speeding up costume changes, though it is more likely that the alteration was made because of time constraints during the construction process. Hand-sewing buttonholes requires a good deal of time and skill. The process of creating 52 buttons and buttonholes would have extended the construction time significantly. Henry's doublet has been made in reproduction cloth of silver; the original is purple-brown velvet with a stylised design featuring sprays of leaves and curling stems (illustrated in Figure 6). The braided details on the reproduction are made of the same cloth of silver as the base fabric, while the original uses a combination of silk and gold metal threads to make the braiding stand out from the base fabric.

Making this doublet in cloth of silver meant that the recreated garment related to items in Alleyn's 1602 inventory. No purple or brown doublets are listed in this document, but it does refer to a 'cloth of silver cott' (coat) and a 'cloth of silver Jerkin' (close-fitting jacket). Further,

⁶⁷ This suit is thought to have been worn by the 13th Lord Willoughby de Eresby (to the Coronation of James I), and is now owned by the Grimsthorpe and Drummond Castle Trust; Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion 3*, p. 74.

a cloth of silver doublet or jerkin would have been worn only by the highest-ranking members of society at the turn of the seventeenth century, as I mention in the introduction to this thesis. A 1574 Sumptuary Statute issued by Elizabeth I declares: ‘None shall weare in his apparel any Cloth of Syluer excepte All degrees aboue Vicountes, and Vicountes, Barons, and other persons of lyke degrees, in Dublets, Jerkins, lynnynges of Clokes, Gownes, and Hose’.⁶⁸ The doublet was therefore appropriate for the character of King Henry in terms of colour and fabric, and would have been recognised as such by an early modern audience. For this outfit, then, the Globe’s costume team combined information from a range of historical sources to create the closest possible representation of what may have been worn for the play’s first performance. Compromises were made—partly due to the limited nature of the available evidence, and (probably) partly due to time constraints—but the resulting garments were intended to reflect the practicalities and storytelling possibilities of an early modern player’s/playing company’s wardrobe.

This approach to design was followed for other characters in the production. Katherine (Toby Cockerell) appears to have worn an adapted version of *Patterns of Fashion 3*’s Pattern 41 (see Figure 7). Gold braiding is positioned on Katherine’s bodice and skirt in a style similar to the garment from which the pattern was taken (the burial gown worn by Eleanora of Toledo in Florence following her death in 1562); red velvet appears in Alleyn’s inventory in multiple places and was restricted by Sumptuary Statutes to the highest ranks of Elizabethan society. Unlike the extant garment, however, the skirt in the *Henry V* reconstruction is open-fronted. This alteration usefully brought the style of the garment more in line with that of c.1600 English

⁶⁸ *A Booke containing all such Proclamations, as were published during the Raigne of the late Queene Elizabeth*, British Library <<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/proclamation-against-excess-of-apparel-by-queen-elizabeth-i>> [accessed 14 February 2020]

garments included in Arnold's publications, lessening the problem of the gown's early date and Italian origin.⁶⁹

In some cases, the costume team's reliance on the limited contents of *Patterns of Fashion 3* led to questionable applications of historical evidence. Figure 8 depicts several 'lords of England' in 5.2 all wearing recreations of the loose c.1605-15 gown documented in Pattern 36, complete with shag lining (a fur-like textile). The surviving garment on which this pattern is based would certainly be suitable for men of aristocratic status: made in rich purple silk damask and linked to Sir Ralph Verney (d. 1615), this gown clearly was created for early modern nobility. Further, its English provenance and early-seventeenth-century date places it pleasingly close to the original performance of *Henry V* in 1599. However, the garment in question survives (at Claydon House, Buckinghamshire) alongside a matching nightcap and slippers.⁷⁰ It was evidently created as a form of loungewear—a notion supported by the fact that this style of garment is (to my knowledge) absent from portraits of the period. This is not to say definitively that loose gowns of this kind were never worn outside the home, nor that loose gowns did not feature in the costume collections of early modern playing companies. But it seems unlikely that a gathering of lords at court would have been seen (or represented in playhouses) wearing near-identical items of loungewear. It is clear that this first attempt at OP costume design relied heavily on the limited contents of Arnold's *Patterns of Fashion 3*, and that the use of this publication as a kind of costume catalogue resulted in garments that were unlikely to have been worn on the early modern stage.⁷¹

⁶⁹ For pictorial examples of how dress styles evolved during the reign of Elizabeth I, see Arnold, *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*.

⁷⁰ Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion 3*, p. 98; Melanie Braun and others, *17th-Century Men's Dress Patterns: 1600-1630* (London: Thames & Hudson in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 2016), p. 8.

⁷¹ Indeed, in 2000 Tiramani noted: 'Using the scale patterns in [*Patterns of Fashion*] to make the variety of outfits needed for our actors, it seemed at first that the choices were relatively few and we might "run out" of patterns!'; Tiramani, 'Janet Arnold and the Globe Wardrobe', p. 120; Janet Arnold's contribution to the Globe's early practices (through her published work as well as advice the historian provided personally) was recognised by her being awarded the Inaugural Sam Wanamaker Award for services to Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in July 1998.



Figure 7. Toby Cockerell's Katherine (left; photographer unknown) appears to wear an adapted version of Arnold's Pattern 41 (right), which is taken from the Italian burial gown of Eleanora of Toledo (dated to around 1562).



Figure 8. Two of several lords witnessing the betrothal of Katherine and Henry in 5.2 (right; photograph by Starstock) wearing garments based on the casual gown detailed in Arnold's Pattern 36 (left).

Importantly, creating adapted versions of surviving early modern garments formed part of a wider effort to rediscover historical clothing construction practices. For *Henry V*, Tiramani looked to the living history movement for expertise in using Elizabethan textiles and techniques.⁷² The designer approached Mark and Ruth Goodman (both members of the Tudor Group and leading figures in the living history community) for practical help in hand-making early modern clothing.⁷³ A team of around eight people with experience in this area were gathered by Mark and Ruth Goodman and commissioned to hand-make all the ‘rough clothes’ that would feature in *Henry V* (i.e. loose-fitting clothing made in general shapes as opposed to recreations of surviving tailored garments).⁷⁴ As highlighted in the programme produced to accompany the production, the work conducted by this group included knitting hose for the company using hand-spun wool. ‘No Calvin Klein underwear here’, begins Tiramani’s programme note; ‘the actors are entirely dressed in recreated clothing of the period’.⁷⁵

While the Globe’s experiments in recreating Elizabethan clothing have been ignored for the most part in criticism of OP performance, these hand-knitted hose have proven exceptionally interesting to scholars. Indeed, the notion of reconstructing early modern undergarments is used in multiple academic arguments as the prime example of what is problematic (or at least curious) about this approach to staging Shakespeare. Conkie asks on the very first page of *The Globe Theatre Project: Shakespeare and Authenticity*: ‘why would someone want to wear undergarments which have been designated as authentic’? Paul Prescott positions the Globe’s efforts in recreating early modern underwear as evidence of the futility of OP performance:

⁷² ‘Living history’ involves the replication of past objects and practices, usually as a means of bringing the past to life for educational and/or entertainment purposes. See, for example: ‘About Us’, *The Sealed Knot* <<http://www.thesealedknot.org.uk/about-us>> [accessed 15 April 2020]

⁷³ Tiramani, interview.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Jenny Tiramani, ‘Extensive research has gone into the clothes that will be worn for this production’ (programme note), *Henry V* by William Shakespeare (London: Shakespeare’s Globe, 1997), p. 5.

Clearly the most obvious obstacle to authenticity is the irredeemably contemporary audience, which, no less than the roar of a 747's engine overhead, is a constant reminder of the impossibility of stepping back in time, of fully restoring the Shakespearean stage. How can early modern, if inevitably invisible, underwear hope to compete with the semiotic burden of a postmodern, highly visible audience?⁷⁶

These perspectives circle back to the point that 'authenticity' can never truly be achieved, and suggest that the labour exerted to recreate these garments is wasted if the viewer cannot see them or access their original/intended meanings.

Stephen Purcell has been among those to counter such arguments—primarily by emphasising the value of combining academic research with artistic practice. In a 2017 article dedicated to the subjects of 'practice-as-research' (scholarly research conducted primarily via performance practice) and OP performance, Purcell asserts the potential held by these distinct but related approaches to researching theatre history.⁷⁷ 'Practice-as-research' (PaR) is framed by the scholar as a productive means of generating knowledge: 'PaR projects facilitate what the social anthropologist Tim Ingold has called "knowing *from the inside*", a form of knowledge that inheres "in skills of perception and capacities of judgement that develop in the course of direct, practical and sensuous engagements with our surroundings"⁷⁸. Projects of this kind tend to be located in university theatre studies departments, and are iterative processes developed to explore open-ended research questions over a period of time. Purcell gives as an example (among several other projects) 'performance laboratories' held regularly at the University of Warwick between 2009 and 2013.⁷⁹ These 'laboratories' were "experimental 'trial and error' processes" in which students were presented with "performance problems" and invited "to

⁷⁶ Paul Prescott, 'Inheriting the Globe', in *A Companion to Shakespeare and Performance*, ed. by Barbara Hodgdon and W. B. Worthen (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 359-75 (p. 362).

⁷⁷ Stephen Purcell, 'Practice-as-Research and Original Practices', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 35.3 (2017), 425-43.

⁷⁸ Purcell, 'Practice-as-Research', p. 426.

⁷⁹ Purcell's other examples include: Bridget Escolme's workshop production of *Coriolanus* in Minnesota (2006), Dani Bedau and D. J. Hopkins' 'Shakespeare Laboratory' at San Diego State University (2013), and Andy Lavender's work on a multimedia production of *The Tempest* (2009-13); 'Practice-as-Research', pp. 428-30.

investigate these problems through embodied action”’. They were ‘brought back together on a weekly basis to continue these investigations, “informed by dramaturgical research, archival study and previous experiments”’.⁸⁰ Essentially, PaR served in this context as a methodology for furthering knowledge through experience. It was *research* as a result of the reflexive processes built into the project and the evolving, open-ended nature of the students’ investigations. The process was productive in that it allowed ideas to be played out practically, generating new or refined understandings of the subject matter that would not have been reached via theoretical investigation.

While PaR methods reside primarily in the realm of academia, comparable practices are identifiable in work conducted by theatre organisations. Purcell goes on to consider the application and efficacy of (what he refers to as) ‘OP-style PaR’—where historically-focused research questions form the basis of open-ended investigations carried out in professional performance. For example, the question ‘How did [early modern] cosmetics look once applied to human skin?’ was pursued at the Globe as part of Farah Karim-Cooper’s research in this area. White face-paint was used in individual OP productions to test Karim-Cooper’s theories about staging doubles and emphasising moments of metatheatricality and irony in Shakespeare’s plays (such as Olivia protesting in *Twelfth Night* that her beauty is natural).⁸¹ As with the PaR project outlined above, experimenting with early modern cosmetics was an iterative process. Karim-Cooper’s questions were ‘not necessarily answered’ by trialling historical practices on the Globe stage, but the process of doing so ‘helped to reshape [her] thinking and forced [her] to ask more focused questions’.⁸² When viewed in this light, Purcell argues, OP performance can be understood as a useful means of refining and advancing thought

⁸⁰ Qtd in Purcell, ‘Practice-as-Research’, p. 429.

⁸¹ Farah Karim-Cooper, ‘Cosmetics on the Globe Stage’, in *Shakespeare’s Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. by Carson and Karim-Cooper, pp. 66-77 (pp. 66-72).

⁸² Karim-Cooper, p. 67.

around theatre history. The ‘experiment’ of OP work ‘is not necessarily’ a futile, ‘pseudo-scientific’ attempt to locate the facts of past practices; it manifests more as ‘practice that tries new things, that deliberately runs the risk of failure—that does not seek, but rather stands in opposition to historical “authenticity”’.⁸³

A similar perspective is put forward by Sarah Dustagheer, Robert Jones, and Eleanor Rycroft in their introduction to a special edition of *Shakespeare Bulletin* centring on the relationship between research and practice. Dustagheer, Jones, and Rycroft foreground the notion that reconstruction ‘offers itself as a process, rather than a finished thing’, and that ‘[m]odern productions are not *direct* evidence for anything, but they unquestionably provide useful speculative starting points for the analysis of early modern drama’.⁸⁴ The act of rebuilding the past is a productive means of making discoveries—partly *because* reconstruction requires certain gaps in knowledge to be filled in order for a finished article to exist.⁸⁵

These contributions work helpfully towards establishing why (or, rather, how) OP performance can be taken seriously as a method of research. Purcell’s and Dustagheer et al.’s emphasis on *process* draws attention to the importance of appreciating the methods behind OP work, rather than focusing on the ‘authenticity’ or modern significance of its end products. To dismiss ‘invisible’ Elizabethan undergarments as a doomed attempt at time travel is to miss the point of recreating these garments. Similarly, suggesting that the costume team’s efforts were wasted because of garments’ inaccessibility to modern actors and audience members overlooks the value and impact of the work carried out in the Globe’s workrooms.

⁸³ Purcell, ‘Practice-as-Research’, pp. 437-8.

⁸⁴ Sarah Dustagheer, Oliver Jones, and Eleanor Rycroft, ‘(Re)Constructed Spaces for Early Modern Drama: Research in Practice’, *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 35.2 (2017), 173–85 (p. 175).

⁸⁵ Dustagheer, Jones, and Rycroft, p. 175.

Painting a full picture of the processes used by the costume team for *Henry V* involves looking beyond existing conceptualisations of OP performance; OP costume design was rooted in a specific research methodology that exists quite apart from PaR and OP. While these latter terms both emerged during the 1990s to describe (and legitimise) practices developed in relation to theatre history and performance, the research philosophy adopted by Tiramani and her team has existed elsewhere for more than a century.⁸⁶ The approach I refer to is experimental archaeology—a method of researching historical artefacts and processes practiced widely in the field of archaeology. To understand exactly why the Globe costume team expended their efforts on hand-knitting hose and recreating other obsolete forms of dress, it is essential to observe their work through this lens.

Experimental archaeology centres on the replication of artefacts or past processes, and is used to test hypotheses, to gather data, and to give researchers an experiential insight into how historical objects were made and used. Considered ‘an important discipline for retrieving and examining evidence about past human individuals, economies and societies’, experimental archaeology is practiced on a variety of scales and in a wide range of contexts as a means of understanding the past.⁸⁷ Common examples of this approach include flint knapping (the process of fracturing and shaping natural flint to form sharp tools and similar), historical smelting (extracting metal from ore samples), and spinning and weaving (creating fabric). Practices such as these are used regularly to explore the processes involved in creating objects found in archaeological sites, and to allow archaeologists to test objects’ durability, usability, and effectiveness in a way that is not possible with the original artefacts. A core goal is to enable the researcher to understand how the objects they study were originally made, and to shed light on the likely cause of wear marks and imperfections.

⁸⁶ Purcell, ‘Practice-as-Research’, pp. 425-8.

⁸⁷ John Coles, *Experimental Archaeology* (London: Academic Press, 1979), p. vii.



Figure 9. This photograph depicts a 2011 experimental investigation into Neolithic tree felling practices (conducted as part of the Ergersheim Experiments; photograph by Bullenwächter).

The clearest way to explain how experimental archaeology actually generates information about the past is to outline how the method has been employed in individual archaeological research projects. In the Ergersheim Experiments—a series of archaeological experiments conducted annually in Germany since 2011—reconstructed Early Neolithic tools are used to investigate how large trees were felled and wood worked during this period (see Figure 9).⁸⁸ The excavation of several Early Neolithic wells had demonstrated that Stone Age woodworking reached a far higher level of accomplishment than scientists previously believed was possible based on tools that had been dated to the period. To investigate the functionality of these tools in practice, scientists and students from a range of universities, heritage

⁸⁸ 'Home', *Ergersheimer Experimente* <<https://www.ergersheimer-experimente.de/index.php/en/>> [accessed 24 April 2020]

administrations, and museums work with archaeo-technicians and laymen to attempt a range of felling and woodworking techniques using reconstructed versions of archaeological finds. Published findings from the Ergersheim Experiments have concluded that, contrary to popular opinion among scientists, the Early Neolithic adzes (axe-like cutting tools) recovered during archaeological digs are perfectly capable of felling large hardwood trees, and other stone tools certainly can work wood and leave a high quality finish. By replicating past objects and practices, the Ergersheim contributors have shown that the practicalities of prehistoric life were not as scientists had previously believed. Widely accepted theories were disproved conclusively as a result of these reconstructive experiments; new theories continue to develop as the experiments are refined and advanced each year.

Experimental practices have also been applied on a larger scale to investigate the skills required to build and maintain major historical structures. The Viking Ship Museum in Denmark has reconstructed several Viking ships since 1990. Based on archaeological ship finds, and constructed using the methods, materials, and tools believed to have been used by Viking boat-builders, the full-scale reconstructed ships are tested to establish their sailing capabilities.⁸⁹ Each stage of the reconstruction process is documented and analysed to provide additional data about the practices of the period. In France, meanwhile, a team of fifty craftspeople (including quarrymen, stonemasons, woodcutters, carpenter-joiners, blacksmiths, tile makers, and rope makers) are in the process of constructing a thirteenth-century castle.⁹⁰ The project (titled Guédelon Castle) aims to ‘recreate the site organisation and construction processes that might have existed on a thirteenth-century building site’.⁹¹ Though the castle is not intended to replicate a specific historical structure, it is being built using only the techniques and materials

⁸⁹ ‘Full-day cours [sic] “Learn to sail a Viking ship”’, *Vikingskibs Museet* <<https://www.vikingskibsmuseet.dk/en/news/archive/2017/august/article/full-day-cours-learn-to-sail-a-viking-ship-1/>> [accessed 15 April 2020]

⁹⁰ ‘Introduction’, *Guédelon* <https://www.guedelon.fr/en/introduction_75.html> [accessed 18 March 2020]

⁹¹ ‘Experimental archaeology’, *Guédelon* <https://www.guedelon.fr/en/experimental-archaeology_78.html> [accessed 18 March 2020]

available to builders of the period. Guédelon is intended to offer scientific, historical, and educational insight into medieval culture and construction practices: archaeologists and architectural historians view the project as an opportunity to put their ideas and research ‘to the test’; visitors to the site gain practical insight into medieval craft and construction.⁹²

These examples show that there are several similarities between experimental archaeology and PaR/OP-style PaR. Much like the theatre research projects discussed by Purcell, experimental investigations in archaeology centre on the idea of ‘knowing *from the inside*’. Knowledge is generated through an iterative, reflexive process; theories are tested and research questions refined as experiments progress over an extended or open-ended period. Practice and personal experience form the basis of practitioners’ work. But there are also important distinctions to be made between these methods. PaR and OP-style PaR work operates for the most part without physical historical artefacts forming the basis of its investigations into theatre history. Aside from the extremely limited archaeological remains of the 1599 Globe and other early modern playhouses (and surviving performance spaces such as Middle Temple Hall), PaR/OP practitioners simply do not have access to artefacts of early modern performance. These research methods therefore enter into difficulty when claiming to ‘test’ the material conditions used for staging Shakespeare’s plays at the turn of the seventeenth century.⁹³ In experimental archaeology, replication is treated as a valid, valuable research method because archaeologists *do* have access to surviving artefacts (or structures) and *can* rely on reconstructions behaving in a manner similar to their originals. An ‘accurate reflection’ of a historical artefact can provide new insight into the significance and functionality of the ‘genuine’ article to which it relates.

⁹² Qtd in ‘Experimental archaeology’, *Guédelon*.

⁹³ Paul Menzer problematises the scientific language used to describe OP work in ‘Afterword: Discovery Spaces? Research at the Globe and Blackfriars’, in *Inside Shakespeare: Essays on the Blackfriars Stage*, ed. by Paul Menzer (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2006), pp. 223–30.

This is what the Globe's costume team hoped to achieve by reconstructing the clothing worn during Shakespeare's lifetime. By recreating surviving garments using the techniques and materials available to Elizabethan and Jacobean tailors, Tiramani and her colleagues could investigate how items of dress were made and worn when the playwright's works were written and first performed. For Tiramani, 'experimental archaeology is the only way to have hands-on experience of it, where you can talk from the first person—otherwise you're just an outsider looking in. If you haven't tried to do it, then you haven't come across all the issues'.⁹⁴ Only by hand-knitting hose could the costume team understand fully how surviving examples had been crafted (such as those preserved in the tomb of Eleanora of Toledo), what mechanisms were needed to keep the garment in place on the leg, and how they became worn and old over time.⁹⁵ Working through the process of recreating an extant doublet would result in a new understanding of how the original had been drafted and cut, how it moved, the extent to which it affected the shape of the wearer's torso, and whether or not it was restrictive to wear.⁹⁶ These experimental processes were in many ways imperfect for *Henry V*: budget limitations resulted in historically-inaccurate (synthetic) fabrics being used for some garments, and it was not until 1999 that the costume team began making *every* element of OP clothing by hand (straight seams were sewn by machine for the 1997 and 1998 OP productions).⁹⁷

None of this escapes the fact that the experimental archaeology of OP costume design had little to do with Shakespeare. The artefacts that formed the basis of the costume team's investigations held no relation to early modern performance. Indeed, the attempts to adapt features of extant garments to bring their design in line with items listed in Alleyn's inventory had a detrimental impact on the rigour of the team's reconstructive work. As a result, the design for *Henry V*

⁹⁴ Tiramani, interview.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Tiramani, interview.

⁹⁷ Tiramani, 'Janet Arnold and the Globe Wardrobe', p. 119.

occupied murky territory in terms of its function as an OP ‘experiment’. This production provided an interpretation of the limited evidence for how Shakespeare’s plays were costumed at the turn of the seventeenth century, but shortfalls in resources and expertise led to various missteps and compromises. However, *Henry V* represented the beginning of a process that would become significantly more refined over time. It was not until later that the costume team’s reconstructive operations would develop into their most productive form.

Five years after *Henry V* had set the scene for OP performance at the Globe, *Twelfth Night* began its long and lucrative life as the pinnacle manifestation of the theatre’s OP work. This production, directed by Tim Carroll and designed by Jenny Tiramani, is remembered as the theatre’s most extravagant and commercially successful OP experiment.⁹⁸ The 2002 *Twelfth Night* was developed to be staged at Middle Temple Hall in London on the four-hundredth anniversary of the play’s first documented performance (which took place in the very same venue).⁹⁹ It then relocated to Shakespeare’s Globe for a longer run. The production’s intense popularity with audiences resulted in it being revived on multiple occasions: in 2003 and 2012 at Shakespeare’s Globe, in London’s West End in 2012, and on Broadway in 2013.

As I will explore during the final part of this chapter, *Twelfth Night* represents the culmination of the costume team’s OP experiments. Its design saw a vast collection of skills and sources put to the purpose of creating an onstage world for Shakespeare’s play that was, to modern

⁹⁸ The lofty status of this production was recognised in the British Library’s 2016 *Shakespeare in Ten Acts* exhibition: it was one of ten ‘landmark performances’ chosen from across the four centuries since Shakespeare’s plays were first staged; see *Shakespeare in Ten Acts*, ed. by Gordon McMullan and Zoë Wilcox (London: The British Library, 2016).

⁹⁹ William Poel staged *Twelfth Night* at Middle Temple Hall in 1897, 295 years after its Elizabethan performance at the venue. Poel’s three performances of the play in the venue took place before his ‘Fortune fit-up’ (discussed on pp. 32-5 of this thesis), however, rather than using the venue’s original aesthetics; Marion O’Connor, ‘Reconstructive Shakespeare: Reproducing Elizabethan and Jacobean Stages’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Sarah Stanton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 76–97 (pp. 83-4).

eyes, strikingly opulent. Historical evidence was used selectively to suit twenty-first-century tastes. Crucially, however, this work also resulted in remarkable contributions being made to the field of dress history. The experiments conducted during the development process for *Twelfth Night* (particularly when the 2002 outfits were remade entirely for the production's 2012 revival) extended knowledge of how surviving Elizabethan and Jacobean garments were made and worn. In addition to examining these developments in further detail, I articulate how OP costume design functioned ultimately as a combination of experimental archaeology and a unique approach to design for Shakespeare.

The design, cast, and performance space for *Twelfth Night* changed over the course of its lifetime, but the same three key 'original practices' always formed the basis of its staging: the production featured 'specially arranged period music, an all-male cast and authentic Elizabethan dress'.¹⁰⁰ The programme for the 2002 Globe production makes a bold claim: 'This production is the most authentic that the Globe Theatre Company has staged to date'.¹⁰¹ This statement, written by Zoë Gray (a member of the theatre's Communications Department), proved provocative in the ongoing debate surrounding 'authenticity' at the theatre. It was repeated widely in the production's reviews.¹⁰² Purcell notes that, '[w]hen *Twelfth Night* was revived the following year, Gray's essay was reprinted in the new programme with a modified opening sentence, in which the production was described instead as "the most thorough-going attempt to recreate sixteenth-century theatre practices that the Globe Theatre Company had attempted"'.¹⁰³ *Twelfth Night* clearly took place during a critical phase of the theatre's ongoing negotiations with 'authenticity'. Importantly, it was not simply the language used to describe the theatre's reconstructive practices that changed between 1997 and 2003. In the Globe's

¹⁰⁰ Zoë Gray, 'Clothing Twelfth Night' (programme note), *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare (London: Shakespeare's Globe, 2002), pp. 24-6 (p. 24).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre*, p. 24.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

costume department (as in other areas of the theatre's work), the nature of practitioners' engagement with the past shifted annually.

In the period between *Henry V* and the first iteration of *Twelfth Night*, the Globe's costume team established a departmental culture grounded in continuous research and experimentation. Each year, the team travelled together to museums in continental Europe (Italy, Sweden, and Germany) to scrutinize the cut and construction of surviving garments preserved in their collections.¹⁰⁴ Each garment featured a unique collection of details and techniques; every element that was unfamiliar to the team would be put into practice in the next OP Globe production.¹⁰⁵ For example, a visit to the Museo Parmigianino in Reggio Emilia, Italy, inspired the Globe's cutters and tailors to try padding their recreated trunk hose with a layer of horsehair. Doing so improved the shape of these garments dramatically, achieving a form comparably voluminous to those featuring in Elizabethan portraits, and made the hose spring back into shape after being squashed.¹⁰⁶ Other visits led to experiments around the placement of eyelet holes (resulting in the discovery of solutions for fixing garments in place on the body) and the use of various materials for giving garments structure and shape (including vellum, paper, cardboard, whalebone, straw, and split peas).¹⁰⁷ Trying new techniques in each production was an essential element of OP costume research and design. Rather than becoming wedded to a narrow set of techniques for drafting, cutting, and constructing garments, the Globe's costume department explored as wide a range of Elizabethan and Jacobean practices as was possible. This was a sizeable development from the team's initial reliance on Arnold's *Patterns of*

¹⁰⁴ Luca Costigliolo, interview with Ella Hawkins (Skype, 26 February 2020).

¹⁰⁵ On the matter of this variety of techniques, Costigliolo explains: 'tailors all over Europe used sometimes the same technique [to make the same kind of garment], sometimes they had their own, sometimes there were techniques which might have been specific to an area, or they might have been widespread but not everything survives, so you've got to look for that example that survives somewhere in the world'; Costigliolo, interview.

¹⁰⁶ Costigliolo, interview.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Fashion and the living history community. Original findings relating to the fit and function of early modern garments were beginning to emerge from the theatre's OP costuming activities.

While Gray's programme note for *Twelfth Night* proved problematic in its choice of terminology, it nevertheless reflected that the 2002 production featured a wider range of Elizabethan tailoring techniques than had previously been attempted within a single Globe staging. Gray reports: 'Many items are held together with individual pins, with handmade wooden buttons individually wrapped in silk thread, and by handmade laces known as points, with tips of metal known as aglets'.¹⁰⁸ The costume team 'used only materials which would have been available at the time' of the play's first performance ('linen, silk, wool and leather') and explored '[a]uthentic geometric cutting practices and tailoring techniques'.¹⁰⁹ An element of the design not mentioned in Gray's note is that the 'straight' shoes made by hand for the production were finished with modern rubber soles to avoid the actors slipping on the Globe's oak stage.¹¹⁰ The tension between replicating 'authentic' Elizabethan items and adhering to modern health and safety requirements continued to limit the extent to which historical accuracy could be achieved at the reconstructed theatre.¹¹¹

The clothing created for *Twelfth Night* represented an approach to OP design that was different entirely from that of *Henry V*. Rather than forming a 'best guess' at what might have been worn for the play's original performance, the design for *Twelfth Night* was crafted as a version of 'Elizabethan' that would appeal to the tastes of twenty-first-century audiences.¹¹² The garments designed for the play's characters were inspired primarily by aristocratic portraits and extant

¹⁰⁸ Gray, 'Clothing Twelfth Night'.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ 'Straight' means that the shoes are not made differently for the left/right feet; the shoes gradually mould to the shape of each foot as they are worn in.

¹¹¹ Jenny Tiramani, Hattie Barsby, and Melanie Braun, "'Twelfth Night' Dressing Event', public talk (London: The School of Historical Dress, 5 January 2018).

¹¹² Tiramani, interview.

garments of the period. As a whole, the production's costume design formed a pristine, highly selective, and aesthetically pleasing representation of early modern fashion.¹¹³ The 'experiment' of OP design was in this case not to explore the costuming possibilities available to the Lord Chamberlain's Men in 1602. It was to bring to life forms of dress that had not been worn for four centuries, with Shakespeare's characters providing a base onto which these early modern fashions were mapped. This slippage between what early modern *actors* wore, and what Shakespeare's *characters* would wear if they were living Elizabethans, is significant.¹¹⁴ Effectively, this approach to design bridged a gap between two distinct forms of Jacobethanism. As I explain in my 'Brief History of Jacobethanism' (pp. 23-35), past practitioners have tended either to reconstruct the original conditions of Shakespearean performance *or* use the period of the playwright's lifetime as an onstage setting for the plays. Tiramani's design for *Twelfth Night* reconstructed the sartorial culture of the Elizabethan nobility, locating the play's characters materially in the world in which they were created (as opposed to the playhouse in which the play was first performed). This raises further questions around what OP costume design can claim to reveal about *Shakespeare*; I will return to these issues later.

¹¹³ I use the broad term 'early modern' deliberately here (as opposed to 'Elizabethan' and/or 'Jacobean') as styles from across continental Europe were knowingly included in the design for *Twelfth Night*.

¹¹⁴ This slippage seems to be rooted quite strongly in Tiramani's thinking around recreating Elizabethan clothing for Shakespearean performance. When discussing her experience of compiling the 1996 report commissioned by Rylance (see p. 51), the designer notes: 'I went to Germany [to view extant garments in museum collections], even though I knew it wasn't all particularly *English*—but then, nor are most of Shakespeare's characters'. Additionally, Tiramani explains that the OP costume design for the Globe's 1998 *Merchant of Venice* drew on historical Venetian cultural practices (specifically that Venetian Patrician men over the age of 25 wore black). The costume design for *Merchant* thus focused on recreating the sartorial culture of sixteenth-century Venice, rather than the theatrical costuming culture of the Elizabethan and Jacobean public stage; Tiramani, interview.



Figure 10. A c.1600 portrait of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton (left), and the outfits created for Sebastian and Viola in the 2013 Broadway staging of *Twelfth Night* (right; photograph by Sara Krulwich).

The identical outfits designed for Sebastian and Viola (for the 2012 and 2013 iterations of the production) provide a useful example of how this approach to design worked in practice. A c.1600 portrait of Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton (to whom Shakespeare dedicated *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*) inspired the overall aesthetic of the outfit.¹¹⁵ The style of the twins' doublets, hair, stockings, shoes, and gloves is closely comparable to those featuring in the portrait (see Figure 10).¹¹⁶ The illusion of 'panes' (vertical strips of fabric) on the trunk hose was taken from a surviving garment held in The Metropolitan

¹¹⁵ Tiramani, Barsby, and Braun.

¹¹⁶ This straight-fronted doublet style was selected instead of a padded 'peascod' design (previously used for Rylance's Henry V) to emphasise the androgyny of the twins; Tiramani, Barsby, and Braun.

Museum of Art (New York), and the sword hanger was based on a surviving example in The Wallace Collection (South German, c.1610-1620).¹¹⁷ The twins' collars, cuffs, and gloves were hand-embroidered with a blackwork design taken from a surviving piece of fabric (pictured in Figure 11).¹¹⁸ The design of the outfit was influenced further by Elizabethan Sumptuary Laws and symbolism: fabrics were selected that would be appropriate for the characters' social status (according to statutes issued by Elizabeth I), and their doublets were lined in pink—a lining colour common in the early modern period, believed to provide protection from harm.¹¹⁹

As well as appealing to modern tastes as a result of their sleek, monochromatic design, these outfits used historical evidence selectively to create an effect that was, above all, aesthetically pleasing. Tiramani's decision to create wigs made of silk threads for the twins (as well as for Rylance's Olivia) was driven more by her own principles of style than those of historical accuracy. The designer explains that she was 'so unhappy with other alternatives' that she drew on references with little relevance to the design of the production as a whole.¹²⁰ Using these wigs was 'not a *complete* fantasy of [hers]'; 'there *is* a reference to Elizabeth [I]'s silk women making her false hair, and there *are* Renaissance references to silk and metal thread wigs'.¹²¹ However, their presence in *Twelfth Night* represented a deliberate manipulation of evidence; these wigs were symptomatic of the production's gravitation towards the most handsome elements of early modern material culture—even when the inclusion of such items would result in deviations from the actualities of historical dressing practices.

¹¹⁷ Tiramani, Barsby, and Braun.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Gray, 'Clothing Twelfth Night'.

¹²⁰ Tiramani, interview.

¹²¹ Ibid.

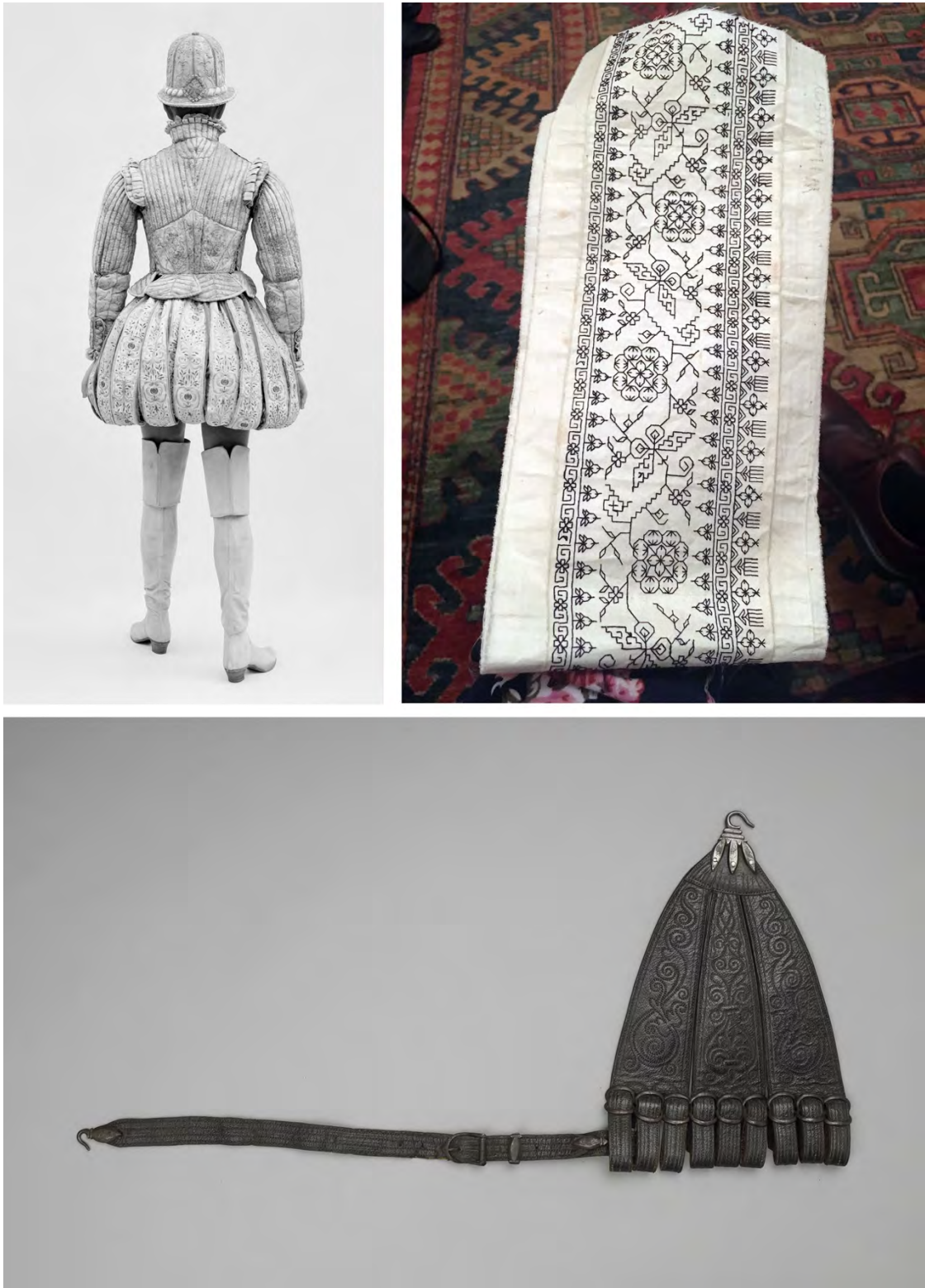


Figure 11. Clockwise from top left: the extant hose on which those worn by Sebastian and Viola were based (held at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York); the blackwork sample that inspired the characters' collars and sleeves (owned by The School of Historical Dress); and the sword hanger that formed the basis of the adapted reconstructions discussed above (part of The Wallace Collection).



Figure 12. The somewhat simpler outfits created for Sebastian and Viola in the 2002 iteration of the production (photograph by Colin Willoughby).

Significantly, this emphasis on achieving aesthetic splendour and imbuing garments with the intricate details of extant garments was present far more in the 2012 revival of *Twelfth Night* than it was in the original 2002 production. In 2002 (and 2003), Sebastian and Viola wore doublets made from a blackwork-embroidery-effect silk linen supplied by Hopkins (a company specialising in recreated historical fabrics).¹²² Their hose was of a simpler style than the complex paned garments detailed above, and no blackwork embroidery adorned the characters' collars or cuffs (see Figure 12). While the twins' silk wigs formed a point of continuity through all iterations of the production, it is clear that other elements of Tiramani's design were subject to significant revision between 2002 and 2012.

The reasons for such refinements can be identified by tracing the development of the dress worn by Rylance's Olivia. This dress (now arguably an iconic garment in the history of Shakespearean performance) was made twice over the course of *Twelfth Night*'s lifetime: first in 2002, and again for the production's 2012 revival. Both versions were based on a pattern published in Arnold's *Patterns of Fashion 3*, taken from a c.1598 garment held in the collections of Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich (pictured in Figure 13).¹²³ Rather than recreating the extant dress in its original colours (a rich russet velvet with gold and silver metal lace edging), the costume team opted to make it in a black fabric patterned with a design that survives on a scrap of early modern stamped silk velvet (see Figure 14). A *New York Times* article (informed by an interview with Rylance) reports that this dress was intended to reflect what an Elizabethan aristocrat in mourning would have worn.¹²⁴ It was decorated with bugle beads—a sartorial practice referenced in Arnold's *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*—and

¹²² This fabric (named 'Hilliard') is used widely in the heritage industry and is supplied only by Hopkins; *Hopkins Fabrics* <<http://www.hopkinsfabrics.co.uk/>> [accessed 19 March 2020]

¹²³ This dress was worn by Pfalzgräfin Dorothea Sabina von Neuburg for her 1598 burial; Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion 3*, p. 113; Costigliolo, interview.

¹²⁴ Ben Brantley, 'How Mark Rylance Became Olivia Onstage', *New York Times*, 14 August 2016 <<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/15/theater/how-mark-rylance-became-olivia-onstage.html>> [accessed 15 March 2020]

worn with a lace ruff (made using a *genuine*, surviving piece of 1590s cutwork lace).¹²⁵ Additionally, Rylance requested that the design include lace wrist ruffs to hide his ‘masculine’ hands—further evidence of the design having been developed selectively to suit twenty-first-century ideals.¹²⁶

While these core design elements remained the same in both versions of Olivia’s dress, cutter Luca Costigliolo used the second iteration of the outfit as an opportunity to experiment with a wider range of Elizabethan practices than had gone into making the first. First, Costigliolo used a different pair of bodies (corset) as the basis for the foundation over which the dress would be worn. The 2002 outfit had included a recreation of the bodies worn by the wooden funeral effigy of Elizabeth I (preserved at Westminster Abbey). For the 2012 production, the cutter recreated the structured undergarment that had survived alongside the extant dress (documented in Arnold’s Pattern 47) that had inspired the outfit as a whole.¹²⁷ The Elizabeth I bodies are fully boned (meaning every inch of the garment [excluding the shoulder straps] is stiffened with whalebone); the pair worn originally beneath the dress in Pattern 47 are notably lightweight, with the sides and bust area left soft and unboned. Trying an alternative style of bodies in 2012 allowed for conclusions to be drawn around how different forms of undergarment affected the shape of the torso, and how far bodies and dresses worn originally as a pair correspond with one another in design and construction.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Arnold notes that these ‘tube-shaped glass bead[s], frequently black, [were] used to ornament wearing apparel’ during the Queen’s lifetime; *Queen Elizabeth’s Wardrobe Unlock’d*, p. 361; Costigliolo, interview; Tiramani, interview.

¹²⁶ Jenny Tiramani, *The Nature of Fabrics*, practice-led weekend course (London: The School of Historical Dress, 25-26 November 2017); *Dressing an Italian countess*, online video recording, Royal Academy, 11 December 2014 <<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/video-dressing-an-italian-countess>> [accessed 15 April 2020]; it is also worth noting here that Rylance’s casting as Olivia worked against historical evidence that women’s parts were originally played by boys.

¹²⁷ Costigliolo, interview.

¹²⁸ Costigliolo, interview.



Figure 13. Above: Arnold's drawing of the extant dress on which Olivia's outfit was based (left), and the second iteration of the dress cut by Costigliolo (right; photograph by Joan Marcus). Below: The first iteration of Olivia's dress, pictured in the 2003 revival of *Twelfth Night* (photograph by John Tramper).





Figure 14. The handwoven fabric commissioned for the 2012 *Twelfth Night* (right) alongside the fifteenth-/sixteenth-century stamped velvet fabric on which the pattern was based (left; photograph my own).



Figure 15. The precise eighteenth-century loom on which the fabric was hand-woven, pictured in the process of producing a length of cut and uncut velvet (photographer unknown).

Second, Costigliolo incorporated into the second dress various techniques he had encountered (in extant garments, during museum visits) since making the first. For example, he added a thin layer of padding to the bodice to avoid there being any gap between the dress and the pair of bodies worn beneath—an addition that made Rylance’s torso appear more like the curved, conical shape captured in early modern portraits. The cutter also included a mysterious construction detail preserved in some extant dresses—a felt guard (a strip of fabric positioned at a garment’s edge) around the hem of a dress’ petticoat—to better understand its purpose. This detail had a marked impact on how the train of Rylance’s dress behaved when worn: the 2002 version (made without a felt guard) had to be kicked into place every time the actor changed direction; in the 2012 dress, the structure provided by the guard meant the train followed the direction of the actor of its own accord.¹²⁹

While these elements of *Twelfth Night*’s costume design were unknown to all except those involved in creating the production, one amendment to the design of Olivia’s dress is mentioned in the *Playbill* produced to accompany the 2013 Broadway run. The note (written by Tiramani) specifies that the design featured ‘hand-woven silk velvet [...] from Genoa, Italy’.¹³⁰ While the 2002 version of this dress was made in a fabric supplied by Hopkins (like the first doublets made for Viola and Sebastian), the 2012 garment was created in material commissioned and woven expressly for the purpose.¹³¹ The fabric was a ‘cut and uncut’ silk velvet—a particularly luxurious, expensive textile worn by Elizabethan nobility—woven on a historical loom at a rate of just 30-50cm per day.¹³² (‘Cut and uncut’ refers to the process used to weave a pattern with multiple textures. Some silk threads stand away from the fabric’s flat

¹²⁹ Costigliolo, interview.

¹³⁰ Jenny Tiramani, ‘Striving for Authenticity’ (programme note), *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare (New York City: Belasco Theatre, 2013), n.p.

¹³¹ This fabric was a silk wool, named in the Hopkins catalogue as ‘Seymour’; Costigliolo, interview; *Hopkins Fabrics*.

¹³² Tiramani, *The Nature of Fabrics*.

surface in loops; some of these loops are cut open by the weaver with a razor to give specific areas of the design a rich, fluffy texture. See Figure 15.) The pattern woven into the fabric was the same as that featuring on the silk wool supplied by Hopkins for the 2002 iteration of the dress.

As with all elements of OP performance, several compromises were made in the process of recreating the quality of textile that would have been available to Elizabethan tailors. To transfer the strapwork pattern from the scrap of fabric on which it survives onto the loom, it was programmed into a computer and resized. The loom on which it was woven dates from the eighteenth century, rather than the sixteenth century.¹³³ Because of financial constraints, the design was woven using a lesser thread count than would have been ideal; as a result, the pattern on the recreated fabric has a slightly jagged, pixelated appearance. The silk threads used to weave it were not hand spun and were dyed black using modern materials and methods.¹³⁴ Nonetheless, commissioning this fabric required significant financial investment; was this expense worthwhile, given the questionable nature of the hand-woven fabric's 'authenticity' and its notable similarity to the machine-made material used in 2002?¹³⁵

Twelfth Night was not the first OP production to feature fabrics that had been hand-woven in Genoa. The Globe's costume team had discovered quite quickly that modern, machine-made fabrics do not have the same qualities as the hand-woven fabrics used to make clothing in the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods.¹³⁶ Historical fabrics often have double the thread count of their modern equivalents, making them far stronger and thicker and affecting the way in which

¹³³ Tiramani, *The Nature of Fabrics*.

¹³⁴ Qtd in Ali Maclaurin and Aoife Monks, *Costume: Readings in Theatre Practice* (London: Palgrave, 2015), p. 24.

¹³⁵ Tiramani, *The Nature of Fabrics*.

¹³⁶ In the Shakespeare's Globe Exhibition voice recording referenced above (dating from 1999), Tiramani explains: 'fabrics such as the linens and silks that we can buy now have far fewer threads, often, to the square inch, so they don't quite have the same qualities as some of the clothes that were made before. It's therefore harder for us to make our seams in the same construction methods sometimes, because our fabrics won't hold quite as well'.

they hang and move. Unlike their modern equivalents, hand-woven velvets have a paper-like texture, do not stretch when manipulated, and do not fray when cut.¹³⁷ Though these may seem overly fastidious points, the tailors in the theatre’s costume department found they had to use double layers of fabric to give garments the support they needed, and this was leading to significant deviations from historical practice.¹³⁸ Similar issues arose from the fact that modern silk threads are far thinner than those that survive in extant Elizabethan garments. From around 1999, the costume team began ordering (buttonhole twist) thread from Italy as no equivalent product was available in England at the time.¹³⁹ Budget limitations made acquiring hand-woven fabrics more difficult. It was not until *The Winter’s Tale* (2005) that the team could afford to make a complete gown from hand-woven cut velvet, though previous productions had featured specific dress components (such as sleeves) made from scraps of fabric woven by Giuseppe Gaggioli—the team’s contact in Genoa.¹⁴⁰

The fact that Olivia’s dress was remade in specially commissioned, hand-woven silk velvet epitomizes the costume team’s eventual use of the Globe’s resources to break new ground in dress history research. Rather than being intended purely to serve Shakespeare—to rediscover lost meanings in the plays, or to transport modern audience members back in time to an ‘authentic’ form of Shakespearean performance—the approach to design developed by Tiramani and her team provided research opportunities that were inaccessible to other historians. By recreating historical fabrics and experimenting with construction techniques that can be identified only by consulting museum collections, paintings, and archival documents, OP costume design generated new knowledge about early modern material culture. Working

¹³⁷ Tiramani, *The Nature of Fabrics*.

¹³⁸ Tiramani, Barsby, and Braun.

¹³⁹ Costigliolo, interview.

¹⁴⁰ It is worth noting that these links with Italy were not established for the purpose of recreating any ‘original’ element of the early modern tailoring industry. Threads were sourced by Costigliolo’s mother, and Gaggioli is the cutter’s personal friend; Costigliolo, interview.

intensively on this project over a ten-year period (with further developments occurring after the Globe's OP era ended in 2005) meant that this research could develop iteratively, with increasing nuance. Productions like *Twelfth Night* played host to a multitude of small-scale archaeological experiments, with each attempted historical process shedding new light on a highly specific element of early modern cutting, tailoring, and dressing practices. Remaking the same garments with different details allowed for additional theories to be tested and further conclusions drawn. OP costume design went further than refining practitioners' thinking and enabling better research questions to be formed. These reconstructive practices produced answers that have actually made a tangible impact on how dress history is now studied. In addition to publishing several new pattern books—some of which continue the *Patterns of Fashion* series begun by Arnold—the team now share their findings widely through public talks and demonstrations, and in practical courses taught at The School of Historical Dress (founded by Tiramani and her colleagues in 2011 to promote the study of historical clothing and dressmaking).

Must we conclude, then, that OP design ultimately revealed little about Shakespeare? Did the experiments conducted in the Globe's costume workrooms move away from the aims established by Wanamaker, or shape the meaning of the plays in a way that twenty-first-century audiences could understand? In terms of rediscovering 'original intentions' for how these texts should be performed, OP costume design encountered the same difficulties that plague any attempt of this kind. Establishing authorial intent remains as impossible as time travel; experimenting with hand-knitted hose and hand-woven velvet can provide no conclusive insights into how Shakespeare intended his plays to be staged. Similarly, the Globe's costume team would struggle to substantiate any claim that their work discovered new details of how the plays were first performed or how they communicated with their original audiences. Interpreting evidence of Elizabethan costuming practices for *Henry V* allowed actors and

audience members to experience a ‘best guess’ of what the original performance looked like. But, as suggested by Tiramani, OP costume design ‘probably didn’t get close’ to how Shakespeare’s plays were costumed originally.¹⁴¹ There is simply not enough evidence to recreate Elizabethan or Jacobean theatrical costumes, and no amount of historical expertise can reconstruct the semiotic experience of early modern audience members.

There was, however, a further element of Wanamaker’s vision: the Globe was reconstructed with the view that the project would locate ‘a modern way of doing the plays with the same physical elements’.¹⁴² In theory, rediscovering elements of early modern craft through in-depth research and experimentation would produce new developments in theatre practice. It is in this respect that the Globe’s costume team made a tangible impact in Shakespearean performance. The reviews for the theatre’s 2002 *Twelfth Night* indicate that this production’s recreated clothing formed a central element of its appeal for critics (and presumably also for audience members). Rylance’s performance as Olivia was tied inextricably to his outfit: the actor ‘glided about in a black veil and gown’;¹⁴³ his corset ‘strongly define[d] his hilariously reined-in, touching, and geisha-like Olivia’.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, Oliver Cotton’s Malvolio ‘pompously frown[ed] above his dazzling white ruff’.¹⁴⁵ Albie Woodington’s Sir Andrew Aguecheek ‘totter[ed] on matchstick legs under the weight of a giant ruff and tall-crowned hat’.¹⁴⁶ Descriptions of this kind appear with comparable frequency in reviews of the production’s various revivals. Tiramani’s design for *Twelfth Night* won two awards: the 2003 Laurence Olivier Award for Best Costume Design, and the 2014 Tony Award for Best Costume Design for a Play.

¹⁴¹ Tiramani, interview.

¹⁴² Qtd in Jones, ‘The Globe, a British treasure, resurrected by an American’.

¹⁴³ Benedict Nightingale, ‘Working the Night Shift’, *The Times*, 29 January 2002, pp. 14-15 (p. 14).

¹⁴⁴ Paul Taylor, ‘A Night to Remember’, *Independent*, 2 February 2002, p. 9.

¹⁴⁵ Nightingale, ‘Working the Night Shift’.

¹⁴⁶ Dominic Cavendish, ‘Dizzy heights of Illyrium delirium’, *Daily Telegraph*, 24 May 2002, p. 24.

It is clear that OP costume design did eventually mould the meaning of Shakespeare's plays in a way that twenty-first-century audiences could appreciate, and that it did so while making new discoveries in the study of dress history and early modern material culture. This approach to costume design for Shakespeare centred ultimately on using techniques from the past to create a new kind of onstage world for the playwright's works. This is true for *Twelfth Night*, at least; further research is needed to establish how OP design manifested in the thirteen productions not covered by this chapter.¹⁴⁷ I have in this discussion suggested that Shakespearean scholarship would benefit from more nuanced engagement with OP costume design—particularly in terms of probing its variable nature and acknowledging processes enacted *offstage*. This chapter has demonstrated the extent to which modern reproductions of Elizabethan and Jacobean dress are subject to interpretation and adaptation, even when practitioners go to great lengths to rediscover the actualities of past practices. Interrogating the space between historical evidence and modern interpretation has proven productive for identifying the intentions underpinning individual garments and productions. A similar exercise might usefully be conducted to understand better the purpose of 'authentic' costumes designed for the screen and for heritage organisations. The question of how and why such garments evidently hold great appeal for twenty-first-century critics and audience members forms the focus of the following chapter.

¹⁴⁷ The other Globe productions categorised as featuring OP costume design are: *The Merchant of Venice* (1998), *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1999), *Hamlet* (2000), *Richard II*, *Richard III*, *Edward II*, and *The Taming of the Shrew* (2003), *Romeo and Juliet*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *Measure for Measure* (2004), *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* (2005); 'Appendix Four', *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*.

Chapter Two

Tradition, Nostalgia, and Tourism:

Jacobethan-Inspired Costuming and the Shakespeare Institution

'Will this be a traditional Shakespearean performance or modern rendition? [...] We would like to book tickets in advance for friends, and they are not interested in a modern adaptation'.¹

Questions such as this one, posted in the 'Comments' section of a Shakespeare's Globe webpage for the company's 2018 *Othello*, are frequently posed to box office staff at UK theatres known for staging Shakespeare.² Some theatre audience members clearly view a historical setting as being the conventional (or 'proper') approach to realising the playwright's works in performance. In this chapter, I consider how the idea of a historical-dress Shakespeare 'tradition' has become embedded in twenty-first-century culture. Focusing on the activities of three major UK Shakespeare institutions—the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the National Theatre—I examine the intentions that have underpinned specific productions staged in recent years with an overarching Jacobethan-inspired setting.

While Chapter One involved close consideration of the processes involved in constructing (and reconstructing) specific items of Elizabethan/Jacobean clothing for modern performance, this chapter attends instead to the broader cultural and organisational contexts that have produced Jacobethan-dress stagings of Shakespeare. Introducing new insight from personal interviews with relevant practitioners alongside close analysis of each production's adapted Jacobethan costumes, and considering the appeal and impact of these garments in relation to ideas around nostalgia and cultural tourism, I unpick some of the complexities that surround this approach

¹ Arati Devasher, Comment on 'Othello / Shakespeare's Globe', *Shakespeare's Globe* (2018) <<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/whats-on-2018/othello>> [Accessed 7 August 2018]

² Personal conversations with past and present members of Royal Shakespeare Company Front of House staff.

to Shakespearean performance. To what extent are Jacobethan-dress productions intended to meet audience expectations, or to continue a particular performance tradition? Are these Shakespeare institutions driven by a responsibility or desire to represent Shakespeare's plays in a certain way? How far are Elizabethan and Jacobean styles adapted to convey meaning in a modern performance context, and how might the resulting garments feed into the widespread appetite for historically-inspired design in modern Western culture? As well as giving a fresh perspective on the significance of specific productions categorised by critics and audience members as 'traditional', this chapter identifies how the practice of performing Shakespeare in historical dress has been perpetuated by organisations reputed nationally and internationally for their stagings of the playwright's works.

Before going any further, it is first worth pausing briefly on my use of the term 'Jacobethan-inspired' to describe the approaches to costume design discussed in this chapter. While this portion of my thesis is dedicated primarily to considering the wider contexts surrounding Jacobethan-dress Shakespeare, it also engages with a particular approach to costume design that differs from those discussed in my other chapters. I use 'Jacobethan-inspired' to refer to costumes that appear early modern in style, but that are not intended to be historically accurate or specific. These costumes communicate a clear *impression* of the Renaissance era for modern audiences, and are inspired by fashions from this period, but the designers and makers who produce the costumes do not limit themselves to the practices or styles of the early modern period (unlike the practitioners who developed the 'original practices' approach considered in the previous chapter). Historical aesthetics are usually adapted to communicate production- and character-specific information to modern audiences, and the appearance and/or function of the final product is always more important than the authenticity of the processes followed to create it. In contrast to the stagings considered in my later chapters, which decontextualize and repurpose specific, recognisable early modern signifiers (often presenting these historical

elements in a noticeably anachronistic manner) or feature Jacobethan aesthetics to separate fantastical spaces in Shakespeare's plays from their 'real-world' counterparts, the Jacobethan-inspired productions discussed here all involve early modern aesthetics being used to create an overarching setting for the entirety of the play represented.

This particular historically-inspired approach to design is, I believe, the style preferred by those who seek 'a traditional Shakespearean performance'. As I explain in detail below (and as I touch on in my *Brief History of Jacobethanism*; see pp. 27-35), the practice of staging Shakespeare in historically-inspired costumes can be traced back to the turn of the nineteenth century. It can thus understandably be seen as a 'custom [...] handed down by non-written means (esp. word of mouth, or practice) from generation to generation', or a practice 'which is generally accepted and has been established for some time within a society'.³ The connection between this approach to incorporating Jacobethan aesthetics into modern Shakespearean performance, the relevance and prevalence of the term 'tradition' in this context, and the role played by major UK theatre institutions in producing and maintaining performance trends is the reason for my consideration of these elements collectively within a single chapter.

In the autumn of 2008, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) staged a new production of *Love's Labour's Lost* as part of a season curated around a star actor. David Tennant had been enticed back to Stratford-upon-Avon to play Hamlet after rising to international fame as the Tenth Doctor in the BBC's *Doctor Who*. The RSC's preference for inter-production ensemble casting and repertory scheduling meant there was an opportunity for Tennant to play a second part while based in Stratford-upon-Avon. Gregory Doran, the 'curator' of the 2008 season, felt

³ 'Tradition, n.', in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/204302>> [accessed 16 Jan 2019]

that Berowne would be ‘a really good part’ for the actor, and one which contrasted well with Hamlet because of its relative lightness of tone.⁴ *Love’s Labour’s Lost* would also provide ideal parts for other actors who had been cast in *Hamlet*: Oliver Ford Davies could play both Holofernes and Polonius, Mariah Gale the Princess of France as well as Ophelia, and Edward Bennett could play the King of Navarre and Laertes. The decision to stage the comedy was made; the production opened in the Courtyard Theatre on 8 October 2008.

This *Love’s Labour’s Lost* was one of relatively few RSC Shakespeare productions to be staged in recent years with an overarching Jacobethan-inspired setting. Only five per cent of stagings between 2006 and 2016 were set in the period of Shakespeare’s lifetime. (In comparison, 39 per cent of productions were staged in modern dress and 24 per cent with an eclectic setting that combined multiple period styles.)⁵ It also, however, continued a historical-dress performance tradition that threads through (and beyond) the company’s 58-year history. Doran’s 2008 *Love’s Labour’s Lost* was the seventh production of the play to be staged by the RSC; all six of the company’s previous stagings had similarly been set in a period of the past (three were staged in Jacobethan dress [1965, 1973, 1978], two in Edwardian dress [1984, 1990], and one in the fashions of the early twentieth century [1993]; see Figure 16 and Figure 17). The scattering of *Love’s Labour’s Losts* staged elsewhere in the UK over the past century gave the play comparable treatment. Shakespeare’s Globe’s only staging of the play featured a Jacobethan setting (as did Hugh Hunt’s 1949 production at the Old Vic; see Figure 18),⁶ while several earlier productions were set in the eighteenth century (Tyrone Guthrie’s 1932

⁴ Doran uses the term ‘curator’ to describe his role overseeing the development of an entire RSC season (as opposed to directing a single production). He did not become Artistic Director of the RSC until 2012; Gregory Doran, interview with Ella Hawkins (Stratford-upon-Avon, 19 December 2018).

⁵ See p. 110 and the Appendix (p. 308) for further details around how these figures have been calculated.

⁶ Shakespeare’s Globe’s only production of *Love’s Labour’s Lost* was staged in 2007, with a revival in 2009 (directed by Dominic Dromgoole; designed by Jonathan Fensom). Although the play has been performed in the venue on other occasions, this is the only in-house production to have been staged at the Globe in its 24-year history; G. R. Hibbard, ‘Introduction’, in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, by William Shakespeare, ed. by Hibbard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 1-90 (p. 8).

production at the Westminster, Peter Brook's 1946 staging in Stratford-upon-Avon, and the BBC's 1984 screen adaptation).⁷ Kenneth Branagh's 2000 film was set in the world of 1930s Hollywood musicals 'to capture the wit, wordplay, and music' of the play (see Figure 19).⁸

This clear preference for a historical setting can be explained by the fact that *Love's Labour's Lost* is a play built on elements that now serve to emphasise its pastness. The euphuistic nature of the text—its highly ornate and sophisticated use of language and linguistic features—situates it firmly in a historical literary style,⁹ and much of the play's terminology and references are now obsolete.¹⁰ Further, the now-historical setting specified in Shakespeare's text firmly underpins the nature of the plot, the world-view of the characters, the play's social strata, and the ways in which its primary characters communicate. The Court of Navarre—the single location in which the play's action unfolds—provides a space in which the play's aristocratic characters (the King of Navarre, the Princess of France, and their attendants) engage in complex wordplay and court one another with love letters and masques. Relocating the action of the play to an updated setting would likely prevent it from making sense.

⁷ H. R. Woudhuysen, 'Introduction', in *Love's Labour's Lost*, by William Shakespeare, ed. by Woudhuysen (London: Bloomsbury, 1998), pp. 1-106 (p. 95).

⁸ *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and others (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 774.

⁹ The *OED* defines 'euphuism' as 'the name of a certain type of diction and style which originated in the imitation of Lyly's *Euphues* [published in 1578] [...] and which was fashionable in literature and in the conversation of cultivated society at the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th cent. [...] The chief features of "euphuism" in the proper sense are: the continual recurrence of antithetic clauses in which the antithesis is emphasized by means of alliteration; the frequent introduction of a long string of similes all relating to the same subject, often drawn from the fabulous qualities ascribed to plants, minerals, and animals; and the constant endeavour after subtle refinement of expression'; 'Euphuism, *n.*', in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/65059>> [accessed 24 September 2018]

¹⁰ Granville Barker notes that certain lines in the text appear to require the equivalent of explanatory footnotes for audiences to appreciate its allusion and meaning, giving as an example: 'Bone, bone for benè: Priscian a little scratched. 'Twill serve.' (5.1.23-4); Harley Granville Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare*, rev. edn (London: Batsford, 1972), p. 413.



Figure 16. A 1975 revival of the RSC's 1973 *Love's Labour's Lost*, directed by David Jones and designed by Tazeena Firth. The costume design for this production related loosely to Stuart fashions (photograph by Reg Wilson © RSC).



Figure 17. A 1985 revival of the RSC's Edwardian-inspired 1984 *Love's Labour's Lost*, directed by Barry Kyle and designed by Bob Crowley (photograph by Reg Wilson © RSC).



Figure 18. Shakespeare's Globe's 2009 production of *Love's Labour's Lost*, directed by Dominic Dromgoole and designed by Jonathan Fensom (photograph by John Haynes).



Figure 19. Kenneth Branagh's 2000 film adaptation of *Love's Labour's Lost*, inspired by the world of 1930s Hollywood musicals (costume design by Anna Buruma; screengrab from film).

In addition to the play's setting and narrative seemingly being inextricable from a historical social and cultural context, *Love's Labour's Lost*'s characters are somewhat lacking in qualities or experiences that would make them particularly relatable for a modern audience. As suggested by Harley Granville Barker in his *Prefaces to Shakespeare*, the play's characters are not timeless in the way other Shakespearean characters are seen to be. While Hamlet, Falstaff, Rosalind, and Imogen are 'compact of qualities which fashion cannot change'—so much so that barriers of dramatic convention and alien habits or tricks of speech are 'of small enough account with them'—the same cannot necessarily be said for Rosaline and Berowne's 'word-gymnastics', Holofernes' jargon, or Armado's antics.¹¹ It is thus easy to see why *Love's Labour's Lost* is now staged most frequently with a historical setting (either in the period of Shakespeare's lifetime, or in an alternative period onto which the play's social structures and aristocratic narrative can be easily mapped). In the words of Granville Baker:

As satire it means nothing to us now. [...] We can at best cultivate an historical sense of [the characters]. There remains the verse, and the pretty moving picture of the action. Our spontaneous enjoyment will hang upon pleasant sounds and sights alone, sense and purpose apart.¹²

Importantly—as well as being tied in various ways to the styles and structures of past centuries—*Love's Labour's Lost* is characterised by a sense of artificiality. To mention only the datable elements of the play here would be to miss much of its point; artifice runs through almost all elements of *Love's Labour's Lost*. The Court of Navarre is presented as an invented, special space that is seemingly 'marked off from the pressures of social reality'.¹³ As suggested by J. Dennis Hudson, the world of the play is 'carefully insulated against pain'.¹⁴ The arrival of the messenger Monsieur Macardé in 5.2, who announces the death of the Princess of

¹¹ Granville Barker, p. 414.

¹² Granville Barker, p. 421.

¹³ Louis Montrose, 1977; qtd in *The New Oxford Shakespeare*, p. 773.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

France's father, cuts through the sense of folly that has surrounded the narrative until that point. The crafted nature of the world of the play is mirrored in its manipulation of language: the self-conscious deployment of rhetorical tropes and figures (such as Dumaine and Berowne's questioning of Longaville's contribution to the rhyme scheme in 1.1.97-9) draws attention to the contrived nature of characters' conversations. *Love's Labour's Lost* therefore encourages the development of an onstage setting that is an invented, non-realistic reflection of a past period.¹⁵

It was primarily these elements of the text that led Doran to select a Jacobethan setting for the RSC's 2008 production. The director explains that, in his view, the play 'rejoices in its own period', and that he wanted his staging to 'allow it to be of [that] period'. Doran was also 'quite taken with some of the possibilities—the various theories of why [the play] was written and where the early performances might [have been]' (particularly the idea that the play had first been performed at Place House in Titchfield—the family home of the Southampton family).¹⁶ Importantly, the decision to set this *Love's Labour's Lost* in the past was made with the wider arc of the RSC's 2008 season and its star actor in mind. Doran wanted the production to contrast with the 'smudged but clearly contemporary' world that characterised *Hamlet*, and considered the potential appeal of David Tennant in 'doublet and hose and tights' early in the creative process.¹⁷ The director also notes that the production's setting 'wasn't too literal'. The mirrored stage floor used for *Hamlet* was kept in place for *Love's Labour's Lost*, and the action took place around a large tree with 'leaves' made of brightly coloured shards of Perspex.¹⁸ This

¹⁵ For more on issues of setting regarding *Love's Labour's Lost* (and *Much Ado About Nothing*), see: Michael Dobson, 'Costume drama: Margaret, Innogen, and the problem of *Much Ado About Nothing* in modern performance', in *Shakespeare en devenir*, 13 (2018) <<https://shakespeare.edel.univ-poitiers.fr/index.php?id=1497>> [accessed 25 March 2020]; Michael Dobson, *Shakespearean comedy and the curse of realism*, online video recording, YouTube, 12 March 2018 <<https://youtu.be/7rQRawLV1nY>> [accessed 25 March 2020]

¹⁶ Doran, interview.

¹⁷ Doran, interview.

¹⁸ Ibid.

historically-inspired but deliberately non-naturalistic setting ensured that the production would reflect the tone and appropriately contextualise the content of Shakespeare's text.

While Francis O'Connor's set design for the production created a figurative environment in which the play's narrative could unfold, Katrina Lindsay's costume design provided the primary means by which an imagined version of the Elizabethan period was created and communicated. Early modern styles of dress were adapted and updated to prioritise artifice over historical accuracy while ensuring that modern audience members could recognise the period in which the play had been written and first performed. The cut of the garments designed for the play's principal characters (the King of Navarre, the Princess of France, and their attendants) appeared to date them (stylistically) quite specifically to the Elizabethan period, but the fabrics selected for the garments' construction created a glossy, sleek onstage aesthetic that felt somewhat more modern than historical.



Figure 20. Ferdinand, Berowne, Dumaine, and Longaville in 1.1 of the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2008 *Love's Labour's Lost* (photograph by Ellie Kurttz © RSC).



Figure 21. The Princess of France (seated) and her attendants wait to be received at the Court of Navarre (photograph by Ellie Kurttz © RSC).



Figure 22. Katherine (left) and Maria (right) in the RSC's 2008 *Love's Labour's Lost* (photograph by Ellie Kurttz © RSC).



Figure 23. One of several surviving early modern garments featuring the popular scrolling vine embroidery pattern referenced in the print of Katherine’s gown (Victoria and Albert Museum).

Ferdinand (King of Navarre), Berowne, Longaville, and Dumaine wore trunk hose, canyons, and venetians—styles of legwear that were popular during Shakespeare’s lifetime.¹⁹ These lower garments were paired with co-ordinating doublets, which were worn over linen undershirts complete with visible neck and wrist ruffles. The voluminous trunk hose worn by Berowne, Dumaine, and Longaville (see Figure 20) all featured a top layer of panes (vertical strips of fabric)—a design feature popular during the Elizabethan era—and the characters’ doublets also featured decorative elements drawn from early modern fashions. The regularly spaced diagonal cuts through the top layer of Berowne’s doublet reference a tailoring practice popular in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, for example. All four doublets featured some form of stiffened shoulder wing (the structured pieces of fabric that loop around

¹⁹ Trunk hose are full, bag-like breeches (worn by Berowne, Dumaine, and Longaville in Figure 20). Canyons are a more fitted style of legwear (an optional addition to trunk hose) which extend from the bottom of trunk hose to the knee (worn by Berowne and Dumaine). Venetians are a longer (knee-length), slimmer style of legwear (worn by Ferdinand).

the top of the arm) and skirt tabs (the flaps of fabric coming away from the lower edge of the garment) to give the garments the highly recognisable silhouette associated with the period in which Shakespeare lived. This collection of historically-specific design features communicated to the audience that this *Love's Labour's Lost* was to unfold in an aristocratic Elizabethan setting, but was complicated by the appearance of the materials from which the garments had been crafted. The outfits designed for Ferdinand, Dumaine, and Longaville were constructed from soft suede and luxurious taffeta-, silk-, and satin-effect fabrics in rich shades of cream, gold, and grey, and were worn over pristine, skin-tight white tights and cream high-heeled shoes. (Berowne's doublet and hose were made from suede in a darker shade of blue-grey, differentiating the shrewd character from his somewhat more naive companions.)

An equivalent approach to design was followed for the Princess of France, Maria, Rosaline, and Katherine. These characters wore gowns with visible contrasting foreparts (the skirt piece showing in the centre-front split of the overskirt) and square or curved necklines. The bodices of the gowns were partly boned (fully boned across the centre-front; semi-boned around the sides and back), and the actors wore rolls (also known as 'bumrolls') to give the actors' bodies the exaggerated conical silhouette fashionable during the Elizabethan period.²⁰ The characters' outfits were accessorised with a period 'sugar loaf' style hat (Rosaline), a small ruff (the Princess), feather plumes (see Figure 21), and bodice jewellery (Maria in Figure 22).²¹ While these design elements all served to date the style of the outfits to the period of Shakespeare's lifetime, the garments were crafted from fabrics of a similar aesthetic to those detailed above.

²⁰ A roll (or 'bumroll') is a padded, sausage-like object tied around the hips to give the wearer a more voluminous silhouette below the point where a gown's skirt meets its bodice.

²¹ The distinctive 'sugar loaf' style of hat is conical in shape with a rounded top, named due to its similarity to the shape in which sugar was produced and sold until the nineteenth century.



Figure 24. The Princess of France wore an elaborate cream-gold gown with embroidered, printed, and textured floral and vine patterns (photograph by Ellie Kurtz © RSC).

The gowns worn by the Princess of France, Maria, and Katherine were made in rich silk-satin effect fabrics in cream-gold, pale pewter, and warm silver-grey. Katherine's gown was made of a fabric featuring a scrolling stem and flower pattern, which referenced a style of embroidery found on many surviving women's garments from the Elizabethan/Jacobean periods (see Figure 22 and Figure 23). The overskirt and bodice of Maria's gown was embroidered with a large floral pattern in glossy silver-white thread (see Figure 22), and the gown worn by the Princess of France was an elaborate combination of embroidered/beaded floral bodice panels, a glittering overskirt with a vine pattern formed of pearlescent glass bugle beads and sequins, and foreparts featuring a floral pattern in blue and metallic gold (see Figure 24). Rosaline's gown was darker in tone, linking the character aesthetically to Berowne, but was like the outfits of her companions in its floral imagery and silk-satin sheen. While the floral patterns and 'embroidery' featuring on these fabrics made the garments *appear* early modern in style (as a result of specific historical references and/or a more general impression of the extravagance and intricacy of past fashions), the highly modern fabrics were lightweight and glossy (rather than having the heavy, matte qualities of early modern textiles), and sleekly smooth (as opposed to being heavily textured by layers of threads used to hand-embroider patterns onto plain fabric, as in Figure 23).

The carefully chosen scheme of colours and textures used in the costume design for the play's central characters was a significant element of the production's adaptation of historical aesthetics, and, ultimately, in its construction of an onstage world for Shakespeare's text. While the wide range of Jacobethan styles featuring in the cut and accessorising of the garments placed the action quite firmly in the period of the playwright's lifetime, the pale colour palette and sleek fabrics gave the onstage world of the play a subtly fanciful, fantastical feel. By avoiding the heavier velvets, darker tones, and jewel encrustations often found in Elizabethan portraits, Lindsay's costume designs could move beyond historical specificity and instead

create an imagined version of the past. This was furthered by the incorporation of various modern elements: many actors kept their modern hairstyles, several doublets were worn half-unbuttoned to make the garments appear more like smart-casual jackets (depicted in Figure 20), and it was decided during rehearsals that the women would not wear hooped skirts—presumably to give their gowns more natural movement and to avoid the conical or barrel shapes created by Spanish or French farthingales.²²

It is clear from critical reviews that Lindsay’s costume design proved a defining feature of the RSC’s 2008 *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. The frequency with which reviewers commented on the costumes is unusual: almost every review of the production describes the onstage aesthetic and its impact. Charles Spencer (*Telegraph*) wrote that the production took place ‘in a world both natural and artificial, like the play itself, and, though the actors wear extravagant Elizabethan costumes, the production’s sensibilities are surprisingly modern’; Doran ‘succeed[ed] in transforming a play that can seem dry and sterile into something approaching a feelgood hit’.²³ Importantly, a striking trend can be identified when looking at the language used in relation to the onstage aesthetic across the entire collection of reviews for this *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. The words used to describe the design in these articles build a picture of a production that clearly fulfilled some sort of desire in those who saw it. The garments worn on stage are described variously as ‘extravagant’,²⁴ ‘courtly’, ‘handsome’, ‘sumptuous’,²⁵ ‘splendid’,²⁶ ‘lavishly pretty’,²⁷ ‘a delight’,²⁸ and ‘pleasingly Elizabethan’.²⁹ The production ‘always look[ed]

²² Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT), *Love’s Labour’s Lost* Production Records, Rehearsal Notes.

²³ Charles Spencer, ‘Review: David Tennant in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* at the RSC’s Courtyard Theatre’, *Daily Telegraph*, 10 October 2008 <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/charles-spencer/3561924/Review-David-Tennant-in-Loves-Labours-Lost-at-the-RSCs-Courtyard-Theatre.html>> [accessed 2 September 2018]

²⁴ Spencer, ‘Review’.

²⁵ Roz Laws, ‘Lording it on stage’, *Sunday Mercury*, 12 October 2008, n.p.

²⁶ Nicholas de Jongh, ‘Review of *Love’s Labour’s Lost*’, *Evening Standard*, 9 October 2008, n.p.

²⁷ Karen Fricker, ‘*Love’s Labour’s Lost*’, *Variety*, 14 October 2008 <<https://variety.com/2008/film/awards/love-s-labour-s-lost-2-1200471592/>> [accessed 2 September 2018]

²⁸ Laws, ‘Lording it on stage’.

²⁹ Fricker, ‘*Love’s Labour’s Lost*’.

gorgeous’ and ‘generated immense pleasure’—seemingly as a direct result of the appearance of its costumes.³⁰ These responses are effusive: the experience of seeing these sleek, Jacobethan-inspired costumes appears to have given the viewer an intense feeling of indulgence. Although critical responses to a production can of course only provide a limited insight into its wider reception, there are clear signs that the 2008 *Love’s Labour’s Lost* was also pleasing to its wider audience.³¹ The production records document most performances as being met with highly positive reactions: almost all dates during the production’s five-and-a-half-week run were recorded by the Stage Manager as featuring ‘[a] well received performance with many rounds throughout the evening’, and several performances received ‘partial ovations’.³² This response was undoubtedly in part due to the popularity of David Tennant and the production’s many comic moments, but demonstrates nevertheless that the 2008 *Love’s Labour’s Lost* held great appeal for a broader audience.

Before situating the 2008 *Love’s Labour’s Lost* within the wider institutional context of the Royal Shakespeare Company—an area I explore in detail below—I first want to dig deeper into the desires that appear to have been fuelled by this historically-inspired production. The emphatic response to Lindsay’s costume design provides a significant opportunity to examine the appeal and impact of historical aesthetics for modern audiences. These ideas are central to this thesis as a whole: to fully understand the significance of Jacobethan-inspired costume design in twenty-first-century stagings of Shakespeare, it is crucial to think through the factors that drive the widespread popular appetite for experiences that in some way transport the viewer to the past.

³⁰ Benedict Nightingale, ‘The Doctor brings the house down’, *The Times*, 10 October 2008, n.p.; Patrick Carnegy, ‘Review of Love’s Labour’s Lost’, *Spectator*, 22 October 2008, n.p.

³¹ See p. 16 in the introduction to this thesis for more on the matter of using theatre reviews as evidence.

³² SBT, *Love’s Labour’s Lost* Production Records, Stage Manager’s Reports, 4-8 October 2008.

Although very little has been written to date about the impact of historically-inspired aesthetics in stagings of Shakespeare (or indeed in theatre more generally), comparable ideas have been considered in studies of heritage cinema and costume drama.³³ The notion that historical aesthetics generate a strong sense of pleasure in these contexts is a recurring theme in publications concerned with the content, reception, and significance of screen productions set in the past. Claire Monk writes that the subject of her analysis (*Carrington* [1995]) ‘treats’ its audiences to ‘the visual, literary and performative period pleasures’ associated with the heritage film,³⁴ for example, and Andrew Higson highlights ‘the pleasures of period costume’ as a particularly appealing element of films within this genre.³⁵ Tana Wollen usefully goes further by unpacking the particularities of this phenomenon. Emphasising the role of (perceived) quality and excellence in the production values of certain highly successful screen fictions of the early 1980s (*Chariots of Fire* [1981], *Brideshead Revisited* [1981], and *Jewel in the Crown* [1984]), Wollen suggests that the palpable expense of ‘lavish’ representations of British heritage hold a powerful appeal for audiences.³⁶ Historical settings provide designers with ample opportunities for recreating the ornate textures and styles of past periods; the large budgets afforded to screen productions, their interest in representing historical fashions and locations ‘authentically’, and the camera’s ability to capture intricate details of design combine to create and communicate this heightened sense of expense and quality to audiences.³⁷ This element of appeal (in these particular screen productions) was doubtless furthered by

³³ ‘Heritage cinema’ (also referred to as ‘the quality costume drama’) is a label used to describe films ‘set in the past, telling stories of the manners and properties, but also the often transgressive romantic entanglements of the upper and upper-middle class English, in carefully detailed and visually splendid period reconstructions’; Andrew Higson, *English Heritage, English Cinema: Costume Drama since 1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 1.

³⁴ Claire Monk, ‘Sexuality and the Heritage’, in *Sight and Sound*, 5.10 (1995), 32-4 (p. 32).

³⁵ Higson, p. 1.

³⁶ Tana Wollen, ‘Over Our Shoulders: Nostalgic Screen Fictions for the 1980s’, in *Enterprise and Heritage: Crosscurrents of National Culture*, ed. by John Corner and Sylvia Harvey (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 178–93 (p. 189).

³⁷ Amy Sargent, ‘Making and selling heritage culture: style and authenticity in historical fictions on film and television’, in *British Cinema, Past and Present*, ed. by Justine Ashby and Andrew Higson (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 301–15 (p. 302).

connections with the ‘high cultural values and respectability’ of English literary classics,³⁸ the casting of ‘the most established of British actors’ in key roles, and perceived links to theatrical traditions in the productions’ approach to scripting and characterisation.³⁹ Wollen finds the ‘unusual visual pleasure’ of these productions to be the primary reason for their popularity; the high-budget aesthetics of such films and television series ‘made texture, rather than the cut and thrust of the plot, give these fictions their distinction’.⁴⁰

The similarities between the historically-inspired screen fictions of heritage cinema and costume drama (as detailed by Wollen, Higson, and others) and the RSC’s 2008 *Love’s Labour’s Lost* are clear. The sense of quality and expense communicated through the selection of fabrics, textures, and adornments of Lindsay’s Jacobethan-inspired costume design, the casting of the highly popular British actor David Tennant as Berowne, and the production being underpinned by the literary and cultural weight of Shakespeare and the RSC (explored in further detail below) all came together to form a winning combination of enticing elements. Further, the critical responses to *Brideshead Revisited* and *Jewel in the Crown* were remarkably similar to the overall impression given by the reviews for *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. The prolific attention given to both films is described by Wollen as being ‘almost entirely complimentary’; the words used to describe *Brideshead* included superlatives like ‘monumental’, ‘seductive’, ‘sumptuous’, and ‘lavish’.⁴¹ Lindsay’s costume design for *Love’s Labour’s Lost* undoubtedly gave this particular production a place in the broader, highly popular market created by heritage cinema and period drama, and in doing so opened it up to the same critical debates that have concerned those interpreting the significance of such screen productions.

³⁸ Wollen is referring here to the fact that many historically-inspired screen fictions are adaptations of English literary classics (including some modern classics); Wollen, p. 189.

³⁹ Wollen, p. 189.

⁴⁰ Wollen, p. 190.

⁴¹ Wollen, p. 189.

While these points go some way to explain and complicate the appeal of historically-inspired costumes for modern audiences, there is a more fundamental concept in need of exploration to unpack why productions set in the past have proven so popular with theatre, cinema, and television audiences. Nostalgia—a complex and much-debated phenomenon—is an important motivating factor to consider here. Although this term often has negative connotations, the concept it describes is widely seen to be a primary factor in the popularity of historically-inspired design. As explained by Erin Sullivan, the term ‘nostalgia’ was invented in 1688 by medical student Johannes Hofer to express the emotional and mental symptoms seen in soldiers fighting far from home; ‘nostalgia’ combines the Greek *nosos* (return to the native land) with *algos* (suffering or grief) literally to mean ‘the pain that [comes] from the intense but unfulfilled desire to go home’.⁴² The term was used in a pathological sense throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to describe the ‘disease’ of homesickness,⁴³ but lost credibility as a disease category by the turn of the twentieth century.⁴⁴

Today, ‘nostalgia’ is used to describe various manifestations of a feeling of sentimental longing for something that has been lost. In the words of Malcolm Chase and Christopher Shaw, ‘[t]he home we miss is no longer a geographically defined place but rather a state of mind’; nostalgia is a site ‘occupied by ideas and structures of feeling which have a family resemblance’.⁴⁵ On a personal level, this sense of longing might be for a memory of a past period of a person’s life, or for familiar surroundings that are temporarily or permanently unreachable. The term also describes a more collective manifestation of the same wistful emotion: the ‘sentimental imagining or evocation of a period of the past’. My interest here lies in this shared yearning for

⁴² Erin Sullivan, ‘Historical Keyword: Nostalgia’, in *The Lancet*, 376.9741 (2010), 585.

⁴³ ‘Nostalgia, *n.*’, in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/128472>> [accessed 10 September 2018]

⁴⁴ Sullivan, p. 585.

⁴⁵ Malcolm Chase and Christopher Shaw, ‘The Dimensions of Nostalgia’, in *The Imagined Past: History and Nostalgia*, ed. by Chase and Shaw (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 1–17 (pp. 1–2).

bygone eras—for times in which we have not lived, but that somehow seem more appealing than the realities of our present.

A collective yearning for the past has been identified in numerous aspects of modern life. Dennis Kennedy lists vintage fashion, the mass creation of historical and heritage theme parks, and Hollywood movies of classic novels and remakes of classic films as symptoms of a cultural obsession with history and heritage.⁴⁶ David Lowenthal's list includes advertising, the antiques industry, and re-enactment events.⁴⁷ This 'perpetual staple of nostalgic yearning' is widely seen as a 'search for a simple and stable past as a refuge from the turbulent and chaotic present'.⁴⁸ A sense that the present is in some way deficient is a key requirement for nostalgic tendencies to arise.⁴⁹ These manifestations of nostalgia are an 'attempt to cling to the alleged certainties of the past, ignoring the fact that, like it or not, the only constant in our lives is change'.⁵⁰ Importantly, the representations of the past considered 'nostalgic' are generally defined as such due to their adaptation of history to suit the desires of the modern gaze. Chase and Shaw describe nostalgically-minded commercial products as providing 'comfortable and conveniently reassuring images of the past'.⁵¹ The historical qualities and attributes represented are ultimately imagined and mythical, and are appealing due their perceived ability to effect some sort of 'corrective to the present'.⁵² For many, this approach to representing the past is wholly problematic. Chase and Shaw go on to suggest that 'comfortable and convenient' images of history suppress both the variety and the negative aspects of the past, and that 'the fact that these images were so popular was a symptom of contemporary malaise'.⁵³ Others have

⁴⁶ Dennis Kennedy, 'Shakespeare and Cultural Tourism', *Theatre Journal*, 50.2 (1998), 175–88 (p. 179).

⁴⁷ David Lowenthal, 'Nostalgia Tells It like It Wasn't', in *The Imagined Past*, ed. by Chase and Shaw, pp. 18–32 (pp. 18–20).

⁴⁸ Lowenthal, p. 21.

⁴⁹ Chase and Shaw, p. 3.

⁵⁰ Chase and Shaw, p. 8.

⁵¹ Chase and Shaw, p. 1.

⁵² Susan Bennett, *Performing Nostalgia: Shifting Shakespeare and the Contemporary Past* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 1.

⁵³ Chase and Shaw, p. 1.

argued that such representations of history have significant political links in their promotion of a conservative, elitist view of the past.⁵⁴

These concerns have been raised directly in relation to heritage cinema and period drama. Amy Sargent writes that '[i]n the 1970s and 1980s much criticism of the heritage film complained of its complicity with a false notion of historical reality'.⁵⁵ Screen fictions characterised by their idealised, adapted, or simplified representations of the past were seen 'as an attractively packaged consumer item' designed to fulfil nostalgic desires.⁵⁶ Stella Bruzzi offers a similar view, describing much critical writing around costume drama as being pervaded by 'a sceptical distrust of the films' motives, their prioritisation of bourgeois ideals and their conservative, nostalgic view of the past'.⁵⁷ Nostalgia has also been considered in relation to the continued prominence of Shakespeare in modern culture. In a monograph titled *Performing Nostalgia: Shifting Shakespeare and the Contemporary Past*, Susan Bennett explores how modern stagings of Shakespeare's plays participate in remembering and ceremoniously enacting the past; even when radically reimagined in new contexts, Bennett argues, Shakespeare nevertheless exists as 'perhaps the very best symptom' of the present-day 'epidemic' of the past.⁵⁸ The far-reaching and longstanding 'tradition' of performing, reimagining, or otherwise responding to the playwright's works inevitably results in the regular reiteration of ideas and dynamics of a lost and seemingly better past.

These ideas around nostalgia help to identify some of the desires that appear to have been fuelled by Katrina Lindsay's historically-inspired costume designs for *Love's Labour's Lost*. The designer's pristine adaptations of Elizabethan dress likely fulfilled a deeply rooted,

⁵⁴ Paul Dave, 'The Bourgeois Paradigm and Heritage Cinema', *New Left Review*, 224 (1997), 111-26 (p. 111).

⁵⁵ Amy Sargent, 'The Darcy Effect: Regional Tourism and Costume Drama', *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 4.3-4 (1998), 177-86 (p. 178).

⁵⁶ Qtd in Sargent, p. 178.

⁵⁷ Stella Bruzzi, *Undressing Cinema: Clothing and Identity in the Movies* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 35.

⁵⁸ Bennett, p. 1.

collective desire for ‘lost’ qualities of Elizabethan culture. The extravagance, courtliness, and elegance associated with this period was captured in the cut of the garments designed for the production; the aesthetically pleasing nature of the costumes’ sleek cream-gold and soft silver fabrics resulted in the garments providing a mythical, imagined image of the past, which appealed to the sensibilities of a modern audience as well as giving an impression of quality, excellence, and expense. Together with the action of the play—the characters’ courtly exchanging of love letters, favours, and poetry, the hunting excursion of Act Four, and the masque of Act Five—the design for the production provided an ideal opportunity for audience members to escape to an imagined version of history. Moreover, the wider cultural context surrounding this *Love’s Labour’s Lost* probably emphasised the production’s appeal as an opportunity for nostalgia-driven escapism. With 2008 seeing the unfolding of the global financial crisis that had begun a year previously, the beginning of a deep recession in the UK’s economy, and a period of political instability in the wake of Tony Blair’s resignation as Prime Minister, this was certainly a ‘turbulent and chaotic present’ from which many might yearn for refuge. While Doran’s intentions for the production’s setting centred on the idea that the play would be served best by a non-literal representation of the period in which it was written and first performed, the resulting sleek aesthetic was perfectly placed to fulfil deeply rooted nostalgic desires in those who saw it. The production thus paired the nostalgia-driven act of staging Shakespeare in a modern performance context (as outlined by Bennett) with a comfortable, pleasing, and reassuring image of the past. Although this *Love’s Labour’s Lost* does not appear to have been intended as ‘an attractively packaged consumer item’ designed to benefit commercially from the widespread popularity of heritage cinema/period drama, it nevertheless entered into the complexities of celebrating a conservative, elitist view of history.

The sense of nostalgic historical escapism indicated in the production reviews is accompanied by hints of a second form of nostalgia—one unique to the RSC and its audiences. Michael

Billington (*Guardian*) compared this *Love's Labour's Lost* with a previous RSC production of the play, and in doing so demonstrated the existence of the complex web of memories and expectations that has developed over the course of the company's decades in operation:

[W]hile it's a perfectly decent show, it has the rather ostentatious charm of a sweetly dimpled child determined to show us how pretty it is [...] I don't think it's mere nostalgia that makes me think back to the elegiac beauty of John Barton's production, which put the language at the centre of the play, whereas here it often seems to be a problem to be camouflaged, disguised or visually decorated.⁵⁹

Michael Dobson has described the RSC's core audience as 'a very long-term one, and very serious about its own individual and collective memory: they will keep coming stoically back to Stratford no matter what'.⁶⁰ The composition of this core audience has been detailed by the company's Marketing department as part of a wider audience segmentation strategy. Labelled 'Lifetime Loyalists', the RSC's core audience segment forms 26 per cent of bookers and is collectively responsible for buying 52 per cent of all tickets.⁶¹ A large proportion of these audience members are over 60 years old. The Lifetime Loyalists segment is said to include those who ask regularly at the point of sale if a production is to be staged 'properly' or 'traditionally' (meaning in historical dress).⁶² The very nature of this core audience segment—members' lifelong interest in RSC productions, average age, and regularity of attendance—means that many Lifetime Loyalists will have witnessed much of the company's performance history first hand, and are likely to collect and compare memories of particular productions in the manner described by Dobson and demonstrated by Billington.

⁵⁹ Michael Billington, 'Love's Labour's Lost', *Guardian*, 9 October 2008 <<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2008/oct/09/theatre>> [accessed 2 September 2018]

⁶⁰ Michael Dobson, 'Watching the Complete Works Festival: The RSC and Its Fans in 2006', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 25.4 (2007), 23–34 (p. 31).

⁶¹ Becky Loftus, 'RSC Segmentation' (unpublished Royal Shakespeare Company Audience Insight presentation)

⁶² Personal conversation with a member of the RSC's Marketing department.

While Doran's *Love's Labour's Lost* was the only production to be set in a historical period during the 2008 season, previous RSC stagings of the play were surrounded by a far higher ratio of historical-dress productions. The period of Shakespeare's lifetime was the most popular setting for RSC productions throughout the 1960s and 1970s, with 37 per cent of all Shakespeare productions being staged in Jacobethan dress (entirely or with Jacobethan aesthetics as a leading design element among multiple period aesthetics).⁶³ Medieval, Roman/Classical, and mixed-period settings featured in the majority of the remaining 60 per cent of productions during these decades. No modern-dress productions were staged at the RSC during the 1960s; this approach to setting began to appear from 1970, and featured in only five per cent of stagings (three productions) between 1970 and 1979. An abstract/eclectic setting became the RSC's favoured approach during the 1980s (28 per cent), while 25 per cent of productions had a Jacobethan-inspired setting and 10 per cent were staged in modern dress. This gradual move away from the company's earlier preference for Jacobethan-inspired settings continued through the following decades, and is illustrated below in Figure 25. It is thus easy to see why some Lifetime Loyalists have an expectation that Shakespeare 'should' be staged in historical dress, and that this is the 'proper' or 'traditional' way of representing the playwright's works in performance. Twenty-first-century performance practices may have moved to a general preference for modern, eclectic, fantastical, or alternative historical settings for Shakespeare (particularly those reminiscent of earlier twentieth-century styles), but the

⁶³ I have calculated these figures by identifying the time period represented most prominently in the design for each Shakespeare production staged by the RSC between 1960 and 2019. I include a full list of these productions and settings as an Appendix (see pp. 308-32). As I explain at the beginning of this Appendix (and in my Introduction, on p. 7), it is extremely difficult to organise these productions into neat categories; most blended styles from multiple periods to some extent and/or reimagined dateable garments as part of a stylised approach to design. My purpose in looking at the RSC's production history in this way is to identify broader trends in the company's preferred approach to setting. As the full list of data indicates, the RSC's repertoire has not changed to any significant degree over the past 60 years. Figure 25 illustrates how the company's preferred approach to setting has changed over this period.

RSC’s largest and most loyal audience segment continues to remember the Jacobethan-, medieval-, and Roman-inspired approaches that characterised the company’s earlier work.

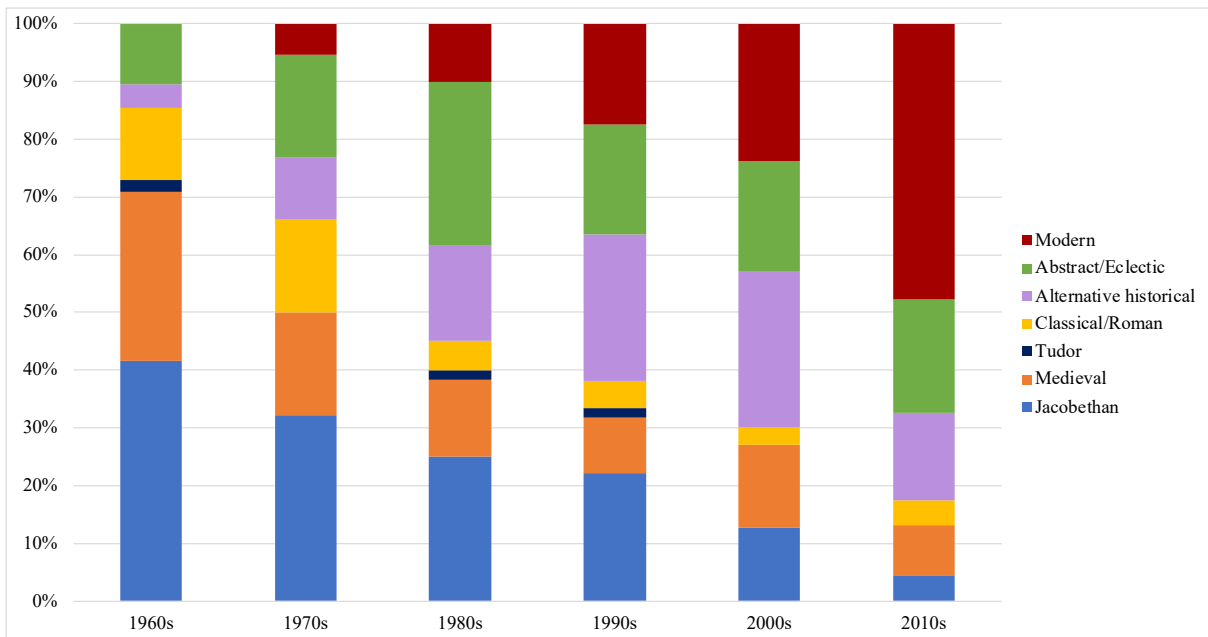


Figure 25. A graph depicting changing trends in the RSC’s approach to setting for Shakespeare’s plays between 1960 and 2019. See Appendix (pp. 310-32) for a full list of the data used to create this graph.

The reasons for the RSC’s favouring of Jacobethan-inspired settings during the 1960s and ‘70s are a complex combination of factors which cannot be encapsulated easily. Colin Chambers, whose 2004 monograph *Inside the Royal Shakespeare Company* gives an invaluable insight into the company’s earlier activities from an insider’s perspective, considers the societal developments determining the RSC’s conception to have been linked inextricably with the organisation’s initial outlook. Chambers describes the company as ‘a child of that fabled decade the 1960s [...] a moment of rare British expansion within a period of general imperial decline following the Second World War [and] also the time of a reawakening of politics’.⁶⁴ It was becoming increasingly clear during these years that post-war social democracy had failed,

⁶⁴ Colin Chambers, *Inside the Royal Shakespeare Company: Creativity and the Institution* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. xi.

and ‘grand national narratives, which had held sway despite their narrow reading of history, fell apart and were not replaced by convincing alternatives’.⁶⁵ This led to a troubled sense of national identity across the country—a widespread feeling that likely had an impact on the early activities of the newly formed RSC. Chambers writes:

As a national institution the RSC reflected the wider historical confusions clustered around the loss of a secure national identity and the evident insecurity in finding new consensual definitions. Having achieved nationhood early, the unravelling was all the more complex and involved many interconnecting layers: end of empire, the Irish war, devolution, the tug between the US and Europe, the rise of identity politics, multiculturalism, the atrophy of democracy, and globalisation. The problematic role of Englishness was a central theme, and the RSC echoed this.⁶⁶

While there is scope for an argument that positions the company’s Jacobethan-inspired costuming practices as part of a wider search for a new sense of national identity, with the legacy of the Elizabethan ‘golden age’ being used to give a ‘consensual’ definition of Englishness that successfully negotiated the complications of empire and contemporary politics (not unlike John Philip Kemble’s Shakespeare productions at the turn of the nineteenth century), a stronger case can be made for precedent and common practice being the leading causes of this performance trend.⁶⁷

Using historically-inspired costumes for stagings of Shakespeare’s plays had been the norm for around 150 years by 1960. As discussed in the introduction to this thesis (specifically the ‘Brief History of Jacobethanism’ section on pp. 23-35), this practice had emerged during the second half of the eighteenth century with David Garrick and others representing key historical figures (such as King Richard III) in historical dress, and had gradually developed into the historically-specific, archaeologically exact approach to setting that characterised Victorian

⁶⁵ Chambers, p xi.

⁶⁶ Chambers, p. xiii.

⁶⁷ See pp. 28-32 for more on John Philip Kemble.

Shakespearean performance. Stratford-upon-Avon's Shakespeare Memorial Theatre (SMT) opened during the Victorian era (in 1879) and staged the playwright's works in the historically-minded style of the period. It was not until 1947 that Stratford-upon-Avon saw its very first modern-dress Shakespeare production—Barry Jackson's *Timon of Athens*, which strayed from its Birmingham Rep home for a single Sunday-night performance in the SMT's Conference Hall as part of a Shakespeare conference.⁶⁸ This production was described by a conference attendee as a 'rarity' as a result of its 'experimental modern setting'.⁶⁹ Peter Hall, writing in 1964 about how his directorial ideas took form during his first years as Managing Director of the RSC, further evidences the ongoing prevalence of historical dress in stagings of Shakespeare at that time: 'without going to the conscious excesses of performing in modern dress, or turning verse into prose, or re-ordering the plays in terms of psycho-analysis, I must admit that I am a modern'.⁷⁰ Hall explained more recently: '[u]nless what's on the stage looks like the language, I simply don't believe it'.⁷¹ Turning against a historically-inspired setting in favour of a contemporary one would seemingly be considered by Hall at best an unnecessary and somewhat bizarre directorial decision, and at worst an extravagant violation of Shakespeare's intentions for how his works should be realised in performance.

In 1968, shortly before Trevor Nunn took over as the RSC's Artistic Director, modern-dress stagings of Shakespeare continued to be considered contentious on the rare occasions they took place. Ahead of a production of *Twelfth Night* 'in trouser suit', the Royal Court Theatre was reportedly 'prepared for a few outraged patrons';⁷² Michael Billington wrote that it 'seem[ed]

⁶⁸ Rebecca Brown, 'Timon of Athens on the Stage' (programme note), *Timon of Athens* by William Shakespeare (Stratford-upon-Avon: Royal Shakespeare Theatre, 1999), pp. 12-13 (p. 13).

⁶⁹ Frederick S. Boas, 'The Shakespeare Conference at Stratford-on-Avon', *Queen's Quarterly*, 54 (1947), 421-8 (p. 424).

⁷⁰ Peter Hall, 'Shakespeare and the Modern Director', in *Royal Shakespeare Theatre Company: 1960-63*, ed. by John Goodwin (New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1964), pp. 41-8 (p. 41).

⁷¹ Qtd in Ralph Berry, *On Directing Shakespeare*, 2nd edn (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1989), p. 209.

⁷² Gerard Garrett, 'Shakespeare... in a trouser suit', *Evening Standard*, 31 January 1968, p. 22.

less like a production than a camp costume party, conceived after a daring nocturnal raid on granny's wardrobe and a lightning trip up Carnaby Street'.⁷³ Historical settings (medieval for the histories, Roman for the Romans, and Jacobethan for the majority of the remaining plays) thus continued to be the accepted approach to staging Shakespeare's works through the RSC's second artistic directorship. The act of 'modernising' the plays instead involved Hall, John Barton, Nunn, and other directors of the period cutting and adapting the texts to make them speak more directly to twentieth-century audiences, and emphasising parallels between the characters and narratives of the plays and contemporary figures and events.⁷⁴

Although it would appear that the 'tradition' of staging Shakespeare with an overarching historical setting has not been continued into the twenty-first century by the RSC (with the 2008 *Love's Labour's Lost* being a rarity among the more regular modern-dress and eclectic productions), the organisation nevertheless continues to promote its association with historical dress as a key element of its past. The recent 'Stitch in Time' funding campaign for the redevelopment of the RSC's costume workshops championed the company's skills in crafting historically-inspired costumes; the marketing for the campaign centred on a yellow-gold Jacobethan-inspired gown (inspired by 1948 painting *The Yellow Dress*; see Figure 26). The gown was displayed in the foyer of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre alongside a doublet and hose (deliberately left incomplete to show the garments' various layers of construction). Further, the RSC shop sells a range of postcards and other memorabilia (espresso cups, umbrellas, fridge magnets, mugs) featuring images of legendary actors (Laurence Olivier, Vivienne Leigh, John Gielgud) in significant historical-dress Shakespeare productions from the 1950s and '60s. Black and white photographs of past historical-dress RSC productions are routinely shown in introductory materials preceding the company's live cinema screenings,

⁷³ Michael Billington, 'Costume Party', *The Times*, 1 February 1968, n.p.

⁷⁴ 'Let's Talk About Theatre', *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald*, 21 October 1966, p. 3.

building a picture of company tradition and inheritance for present-day cinema audiences around the world.



Figure 26. Left: Dame Laura Knight's 1948 painting *The Yellow Dress*, depicting the interior of the costume wardrobe in Stratford-upon-Avon. Right: A gown inspired by *The Yellow Dress*, worn in a 'Stitch in Time' promotional video and displayed in the RSC foyer.



Figure 27. David Tennant gives a televised speech outside the RSC's Courtyard Theatre during the interval of *Hamlet* in 2008, accompanied by two historically-dressed guards (screengrab).

In a specific but significant example of how the company chose to represent itself around the time of Doran's *Love's Labour's Lost*, a speech given by David Tennant as part of the 2008 National Television Awards (streamed live from outside the Courtyard Theatre on 29 October during the interval of *Hamlet*) saw the actor accompanied by two guards wearing historical armour (see Figure 27). Tennant's appearance in a modern suit and untied bow tie was seemingly insufficient for communicating to television audiences the cultural weight of playing Hamlet at the RSC. By including historically-dressed guards in the frame (as well as the RSC logo), the tradition that formed an important part of the early years of the company's existence could be communicated without verbal explanation. These various elements of the current RSC brand demonstrate that the legacy of the company's earlier activities lives on in a form more tangible than the memories of loyal audience members. The organisation consciously upholds the prominence of historical dress in its past Shakespeare productions, and in doing so asserts a sense of tradition-driven cultural weight. Despite not forming a significant part of the RSC's more recent production practices, historical-dress performance continues to be presented and celebrated as tradition for those who visit the RSC gift shop or experience a production remotely.

The RSC's 2008 *Love's Labour's Lost* can therefore be seen as a thread emerging from the tapestry of the RSC's performance history, linking Lindsay's Jacobethan-inspired costume design back to a performance tradition that lives on in the memories of loyal, longstanding audience members and via promotional materials produced by the company as a means of celebrating its past and asserting its cultural significance in the present. This production did not use Jacobethan-inspired costumes to continue this performance tradition intentionally, to tap into the profitable industries of heritage cinema and period drama, or to offer a nostalgic reading of Shakespeare's text. Nevertheless, the various forms of nostalgia engendered by Lindsay's lavish Jacobethan-inspired costumes added layers of meaning beyond those intended

by the creative team, complicating the production's significance within and beyond the institutional context in which it was made.

Four years after Katrina Lindsay's costume design transformed *Love's Labour's Lost* into an enticing opportunity for historical escapism, a new production of *The Taming of the Shrew* opened at Shakespeare's Globe ('the Globe') in London. Directed by Toby Frow and designed by Mike Britton, this production similarly opted to frame the play's action in a Jacobethan-inspired setting through costume design. The 2012 *Shrew* began with a troupe of musicians playing a jaunty tune on historical instruments, wearing a uniform of tomato-red wool doublets and trunk hose, stockings, espadrilles, and caps (see Figure 28). The atmosphere was soon disrupted by a drunken audience member: a man wearing a modern England football shirt and a flat cap painted with the red and white flag of England pushed his way loudly through the crowd, pursued by two Globe stewards. He climbed onto the stage, 'urinated' onto a pillar (followed by the head of a groundling in the front row), and collapsed onto the stage floor. After a short intervention by (what appeared to be) Globe stewards and security, the production's cast members emerged onto the stage in various stages of undress. Doublets were left unhooked, historical legwear was paired with a modern bicycle-print t-shirt, and some actors wore baseball caps, trainers, or theatre lanyards. A clothing rail laden with Jacobethan-inspired clothing was wheeled out onto the stage (see Figure 29).

Following this interpretation of the play's induction, intended to serve as a 'launchpad' to help the audience 'slide into' the world of the play,⁷⁵ the remainder of the production was set in 'an Elizabethan version of Padua'.⁷⁶ Britton's set and costume design was intended to realise the text's Italian Renaissance setting as it might have been imagined by Elizabethans who had

⁷⁵ London, Shakespeare's Globe Archive (SGA), End of Season Interviews, 2012: Toby Frow.

⁷⁶ Mike Britton, interview with Ella Hawkins (London, 11 December 2018).

never actually visited Italy. The designer used the work of fifteenth-century Venetian artist Vittore Carpaccio as inspiration for his representation of an early modern Italian city of learning and trade. Scenery was used to transform the Globe's performance space from its permanent state into something approximating a colonnade or portico (as painted by Carpaccio; see Figure 28), and robes and hats worn by noblemen in the paintings were replicated and worn alongside Jacobethan-inspired doublets, hose, and gowns.⁷⁷



Figure 28. The troupe of identically dressed musicians who entertained the audience before the Globe's 2012 *Taming of the Shrew* began, and the scenery designed by Britton to make the stage appear like the colonnades or porticos painted by Carpaccio in the fifteenth century (screengrab from production recording).

⁷⁷ Britton, interview.



Figure 29. Christopher Sly lay ‘unconscious’ while partially dressed cast members wheeled onto the stage a modern clothing rail laden with Jacobethan-inspired items of clothing (screengrab from production recording).

Frow and Britton give different reasons for why this production was given an early modern setting. While the director explains that he wanted to explore how radical the play was in its original performance context (in terms of its depicted rejection of ‘superficial money-driven ceremonial forms of marriage and love’ and reliance on ‘something that is much rougher, much more playful, much more real’),⁷⁸ Britton remembers the decision being made largely ‘because of the obvious dubious subject matter of the play, and the sexual politics of it in our modern day psyche’.⁷⁹ The designer explains that ‘it felt quite liberating to actually do it in its period because that’s where it fits, and that’s how the story could play out as it was’.⁸⁰ A Jacobethan-inspired setting thus provided a means by which the production team could concentrate on exploring the play’s narrative and humour as it might have been understood in its original

⁷⁸ SGA, Toby Frow.

⁷⁹ SGA, End of Season Interviews, 2012: Mike Britton.

⁸⁰ Britton, interview.

cultural context, and in doing so avoid confronting the difficulties that inevitably arise when staging a comedy about gender inequality and domestic violence today.

The costumes designed for this production sat on a blurred line between historical accuracy and design-led adaptation. The garments worn on stage were clearly based on historical fashions, and the visibility of relatively accurate clothing fastenings (particularly the use of the points [fabric ties] to tie pieces together at the wrist, elbow, shoulder, neck, and waist) and multiple layers of clothing (jerkens over doublets over linen undershirts, for example) lent the garments a sense of authenticity. While the elaborate fabrics used to construct the costumes (brocades, silks, jacquard fabrics,⁸¹ stamped leathers, and embroidered linens and cottons) also gave a clear impression of Jacobethan fashions and aesthetics, these textiles were a combination of synthetic and natural fabrics, and the colours used were not limited to what was achievable during the early modern period.⁸²

This was a subtle but significant way in which the costume design for this production differed from the ‘original practices’ (OP) approach that had been developed during the Globe’s previous artistic directorship: as discussed in Chapter One, OP costume design involved using only the materials and techniques available to early modern tailors wherever possible, and extended to elements that would not be visible to audience members. Historical accuracy had been prioritised over the legibility of garments for modern audiences. While the Globe’s OP costumes had famously included ‘authentic’ undergarments, the 2012 *Shrew* opted to use items such as ‘cream silk drawers’ and short silk smocks beneath Britton’s Italianate Jacobethan-

⁸¹ ‘Jacquard’ refers to a weaving process wherein the design of the fabric is incorporated into the weave (as opposed to being printed or dyed onto plain woven fabric); a Jacquard machine is fitted onto a loom to simplify the process of weaving complex patterns. The Jacquard machine was invented in 1804, making jacquard fabrics historically inaccurate for recreating Elizabethan/Jacobean fashions; ‘Programming Patterns: The Story of the Jacquard Loom’, *Science and Industry Museum* <<https://www.scienceandindustrymuseum.org.uk/objects-and-stories/jacquard-loom>> [accessed 26 March 2020]

⁸² SGA, *Costume Notes and Jottings: The Taming of the Shrew*, 2012.

inspired garments.⁸³ Along with Katherine's 'wine satin strapped shoes', the style of these items dated to a far later period than the production's intended Jacobethan-Renaissance setting. Design choices such as these demonstrate how Britton's priorities differed from those of former Director of Theatre Design Jenny Tiramani, and the extent to which the *Shrew* costumes deviated subtly (though decisively) from historical accuracy.

Perhaps the most notable element of this production's approach to costume design was the way in which historical aesthetics were manipulated to communicate information about characters to modern audiences. For example, costume was used to indicate that Katherine and Bianca were part of a rich merchant family, and that they were very different from one another in personality. Katherine's rich, deep-purple and gold brocade gown was intended to compliment her 'stubbornness and strength' (pictured in Figure 30); Bianca wore a pale gold gown to emphasise the character's relative youth (see Figure 31).⁸⁴ Strong-coloured brocade fabrics were a key means by which certain characters in the play were communicated as being particularly wealthy. Led by the idea that women in *The Taming of the Shrew* are seen as possessions, and the repeated talk of dowries in relation to Katherine and Bianca's potential marriages, the production team 'wanted to place the stakes reasonably high' and 'to make a little bit more sense of Kate and Bianca' by making the action 'come from a rich merchant household where they've been sort of sheltered and spoilt slightly by their father'.⁸⁵

⁸³ SGA, Costume Notes and Jottings.

⁸⁴ SGA, Mike Britton.

⁸⁵ SGA, Mike Britton.



Figure 30. The costume design for Katherine and Petruchio exemplifies the stylised versions of Italianate Renaissance fashion devised by Britton for the 2012 *Taming of the Shrew* (photograph by Manuel Harlan).



Figure 31. The pale gold gown designed by Britton to emphasise Bianca's youth (photograph by Manuel Harlan).



Figure 32. Katherine's bridal gown, designed to be recognisable as the early modern equivalent of a modern 'puff-ball' wedding dress (screengrab from production recording).

Petruchio, meanwhile, was intended to appear as though he was from a distinctly different background. The creative team wanted to make sure they 'struck a difference' between Katherine and Bianca's wealthy Paduan merchant family and Petruchio by having the latter character appear first 'looking slightly like a sort of rag-tag Don Quixote, who has money, but nevertheless [...] doesn't really know what to do with it' ('as opposed to Kate and Bianca, who sort of *love* to dress up, and Baptista likewise'; see Figure 30).⁸⁶ Petruchio's rust jacquard doublet, stamped brown leather jerkin, brown leather paned hose, thigh-high heeled boots, unconventional pumpkin-coloured ruff, and tall, feathered sugar loaf hat emphasised the character's loud eccentricity and deliberately exaggerated the actor's height to give Petruchio's tendency towards strutting and womanising greater impact.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ SGA, Mike Britton.

⁸⁷ Britton, interview; SGA, Costume Notes and Jottings.

Later in the production (3.2), Katherine wore a gown that was intended to be recognisable to a modern audience as ‘over-the-top’ wedding apparel (see Figure 32). The ivory/silver silk gown, cream silk organza ruff, and pearl tiara with veil was designed as the ‘ultimate puff-ball wedding dress’—the early modern equivalent of ‘a hideous, off-the-rack [...] meringue’—to reflect that Katherine is ‘being forced into this rich wedding’.⁸⁸ The Victorian convention of a white wedding gown was superimposed onto an Elizabethan silhouette to give a modern audience additional, recognisable insight into the nature of Petruchio and Katherine’s wedding.

Making the production readable to a modern audience was a primary motivating factor behind Britton’s costume design (as well as Frow’s vision for the production as a whole); the designer explains that he ‘tried to use costume to make the story easier to understand’.⁸⁹ Britton also felt that a balance was needed between communicating a period setting and maintaining a sense of modernity to avoid the production becoming alienating or inaccessible in a twenty-first-century context. The design was intended to serve as a sort of translation process to ensure that character qualities and narrative elements would be easily understandable to modern eyes while maintaining the production’s sixteenth-meets-fifteenth-century setting.⁹⁰ The director and designer were aware of—and comfortable with—the fact that this process would result in costumes that were not historically accurate. Frow explains that ‘nothing [was] particularly historically accurate with a capital “A”’: the costumes were highly researched to ensure that appropriate period signifiers were included in the design, but ‘really everything [was] designed from the point of view of what’s that character doing, rather than what did they really do in 1593’.⁹¹ This approach was led by the director’s feeling that OP performance was firmly in the Globe’s past. In Frow’s view, Mark Rylance ‘covered all of the “original practice” stuff in a

⁸⁸ Britton, interview.

⁸⁹ Britton, interview.

⁹⁰ SGA, Mike Britton.

⁹¹ SGA, Toby Frow.

way that meant no-one has to do it again'; the director thus felt no obligation to history in his staging of *The Taming of the Shrew*, and no need to contextualise choices that were made simply because he thought they 'were the right choices for [his] production of the play'.⁹²

The feelings expressed by Frow and Britton regarding historical accuracy and OP performance were closely interwoven with the wider approach to staging Shakespeare that characterised the artistic directorship in which *The Taming of the Shrew* was staged. Dominic Dromgoole's eleven-year tenure as Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe (2005–2016) saw the reconstructed theatre develop a freer interpretation of its relationship with the past. Dromgoole's first End of Season Interview (in 2006) emphasised the director's awareness of the modern sensibilities of Globe audiences,⁹³ his interest in layering elements from multiple periods anachronistically within single productions (inspired by the Peacham drawing and Shakespeare's adaptive approach to representing history),⁹⁴ and his rejection of OP approaches to staging the playwright's works.⁹⁵ Interestingly, the theatre developed a discernible preference for historical-dress productions over this period. Speaking from his experience of designing seven Shakespeare productions during Dromgoole's tenure, Britton describes there being 'an unsaid rule that generally the house preferred productions in period costume'.⁹⁶ Although 'you didn't have to—you could very easily do whatever you liked', an overwhelming

⁹² SGA, Toby Frow.

⁹³ When discussing the productions of *Coriolanus* and *Titus Andronicus* staged during his first season as Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe, Dromgoole explained that '[y]ou always have the modern in the Globe because you've got people who are standing there thinking of Darfur, or of Mark's and Spencer's, or whatever's passing through their heads—they've got an iPod or a mobile on them—so you've got a modern sensibility there'; SGA, End of Season Interviews: Dominic Dromgoole, 2006.

⁹⁴ See pp. 26-7 for more on the Peacham drawing. In his Roman season, Dromgoole wanted to explore 'how the Jacobean co-opted Rome into their own understanding of what it was to be English', and how this idea is complicated further when the plays are performed in a twenty-first-century context (particularly in the reconstructed Globe). The director explained that, in his view, 'if you tie [Shakespeare] too closely to one specific period, you lose [his] wilful anachronism and that enormous sense of aesthetic and historical freedom'. It is worth noting that this is another interpretation of an 'authentic' approach to staging Shakespeare today; SGA, Dominic Dromgoole, 2006.

⁹⁵ Dromgoole saw 'original practices' performance as limiting—partly due to the lack of definitive information about early modern performance practices, and partly as the director felt a freer expression of the plays would be more effective in achieving the 'spirit' of original Shakespearean performance; *ibid.*

⁹⁶ Britton, interview.

proportion of plays staged between 2006 and 2016 were given an overarching historically-inspired setting. 64 per cent of 45 in-house Shakespeare productions had a Jacobethan-inspired setting—a higher percentage than any period of the RSC’s performance history, and also higher than during any of the Globe’s other artistic directorships (see Figure 33 for a comparative illustration).⁹⁷ 12 per cent of productions were performed in Roman-, medieval-, or Tudor-inspired costumes, while the remaining 24 per cent either combined multiple period styles or invented timeless aesthetics. No straightforwardly modern-dress productions were staged during Dromgoole’s tenure.

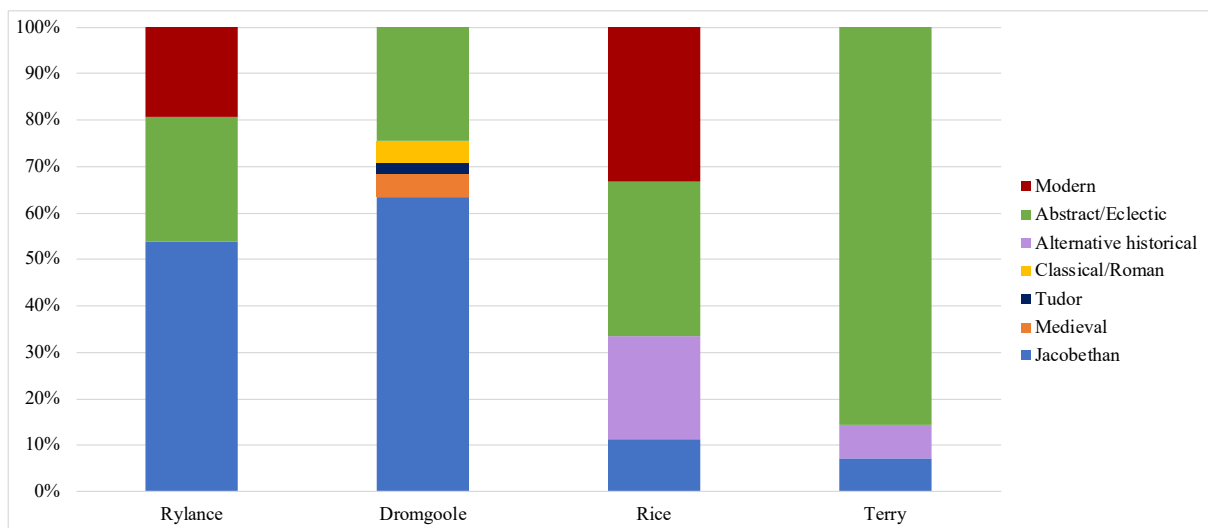


Figure 33. A graph depicting changing trends in the Globe’s approach to setting for Shakespeare over the theatre’s four artistic directorships. See Appendix (pp. 333-8) for a full list of the data used to create this graph.

On a related note, Dromgoole’s Globe ideology also led to the appearance and/or dimensions of the theatre’s performance space being adapted on a regular basis throughout the director’s tenure. As noted by Tom Cornford, only 11 per cent of productions (three of 27) staged at the Globe between 2006 (Dromgoole’s first season) and 2010 used the space without building onto

⁹⁷ See Footnote 63 (p. 110) and the introductory note to the Appendix (p. 308-9) for details of how these figures have been calculated and why I have undertaken the task of ascertaining them.

the permanent stage.⁹⁸ These ‘permanently temporary’ alterations to the theatre included the addition of ramps and extensions into the yard, the use of the area above and behind the stage as a ‘design space’ that changed from production to production, and the balcony and *frons scenae* being moved downstage.⁹⁹ (The 2012 *Taming of the Shrew* featured all these forms of alteration.) These physical changes to the performance space were intended to solve a series of ‘problems’ concerning the original design of the stage, and to offer directors and actors ‘a much more dynamic collection of possibilities’.¹⁰⁰ The director found there to be ‘no place on the stage, as it is presently configured, where you can be seen by one hundred per cent of the people’ (largely as a result of the stage pillars being ‘too large’ and ‘in the wrong place’).¹⁰¹ By building onto the theatre’s permanent performance space to enhance sightlines, creative teams could (in theory) ‘improve’ the experience of seeing a Globe production for modern audiences.

Further to Cornford’s exploration of the impact of these alterations in terms of proxemics and alternative staging solutions, I would add that these alterations were often made with design-led motives. For example, Dromgoole’s decision to cover up the Globe’s permanent façade for *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra* (2006) was made because the director:

wanted to scuzz the place up a bit for *Coriolanus* [...] I just wanted this sense of rough Rome and loose Rome and early Rome—I wanted something that was a bit cruder than those painted boards and which also looked like it was a bit distressed and not very robust. [...] We could have taken them down for *Anthony and Cleopatra*, but once they

⁹⁸ Cornford documents John Dove’s 2006 production of Howard Brenton’s *In Extremis*, Roxana Silbert’s 2006 production of Simon Bent’s *Under the Black Flag*, and Wilson Milam’s 2007 *Othello* as being the only Globe productions that did not involve the space being adapted during this period. Touring productions are not included in the total of 27 productions counted by Cornford as being staged between 2006 and 2010; Tom Cornford, ‘Reconstructing Theatre: the Globe under Dominic Dromgoole’, *New Theatre Quarterly*, 26.4 (2010), 319-28 (p. 322).

⁹⁹ Cornford, p. 322.

¹⁰⁰ SGA, Dominic Dromgoole, 2006.

¹⁰¹ SGA, End of Season Interviews: Dominic Dromgoole, 2008.

were there, we liked them, and when everybody likes them, you just say ‘I like that, leave them there’.¹⁰²

The adaptation of the space for *The Taming of the Shrew* was led by similar motives. The Globe’s *frons scenae* was built onto to create a sense of a ‘sun-bleached’ wooden colonnade on the stage, and to ‘neutralise slightly’ the ‘incredibly busy’ appearance of the theatre’s Greco-Roman painted façade.¹⁰³ This general policy of alteration—fuelled by a desire to improve sightlines, increase performance possibilities, and create a variety of production-specific aesthetics—followed directly from Dromgoole’s free interpretation of the Globe’s relationship with history. Although productions staged between 2006 and 2016 likely appeared to many audience members as placing Shakespeare’s plays in a historical context (largely as a result of the theatre’s preference for historical settings during this time, as well as the legacy of OP performance), all were subtly adapted to suit twenty-first-century sensibilities.

These elements of Dromgoole’s artistic directorship become particularly significant when positioned alongside the Globe’s much-debated relationship with tourism. In 1996, before the theatre had been fully constructed, the Globe was voted ‘the top tourist attraction in Europe’ by an organisation of travel journalists, and passing tour boats on the Thames had begun to include the site as part of their amplified narratives.¹⁰⁴ As I outline in Chapter One (see pp. 43-4), newspaper critics published concerns that the Globe would offer an ‘undemanding, all-purpose Shakespeare Experience for tourists’,¹⁰⁵ sharing a view that performances staged at the theatre would inevitably be characterised by ‘a jolly blur of doublet and hose, cap and bells and vague Elizabethan shouting’.¹⁰⁶ The resulting experience was predicted to be akin to

¹⁰² SGA, Dominic Dromgoole, 2006.

¹⁰³ SGA, Mike Britton.

¹⁰⁴ Kennedy, p. 187.

¹⁰⁵ Qtd in Robert McCrum, ‘The smell of the crowd’, *The Observer Review*, 1 June 1997, pp. 3-4 (p. 3).

¹⁰⁶ Qtd in William D. Montalbano, ‘One Man’s Will’, *Los Angeles Times*, 14 June 1997 <<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1997-06-14-ca-3129-story.html>> [accessed 25 March 2020]

visiting ‘an Elizabethan Disneyland’, ‘a Jacobean theme park’, or ‘Tussauds-on-Avon’.¹⁰⁷ Sam Wanamaker and Mark Rylance had aimed to undermine the concerns of their critics by grounding the construction and early practices of the theatre firmly in research, and by framing the Globe as a theatrical experiment.¹⁰⁸

Nevertheless, the Globe has held a powerful appeal for tourists visiting London during the past two decades. The theatre was added to the list of attractions included in the London Pass (a multi-use ticket that offers ‘free’ and fast-track entry to popular tourist destinations around London) in 2003, and has spent the majority of the past 15 years in the ten most popular of the 50-80+ attractions included in the scheme. Audience research has suggested that, between 2006 and 2009, overseas attendees formed between 17 and 36 per cent of the Globe audience members who booked their tickets in advance.¹⁰⁹ This percentage would undoubtedly increase if the sample included tickets purchased on the day of performance. The Globe continues to avoid the ‘tourism’ label, but nevertheless claims (somewhat euphemistically) that it has ‘become one of the most popular visitor destinations in the UK’.¹¹⁰

The reasons for the Globe’s intense, ongoing popularity with tourists become clearer after addressing theories of cultural tourism. Cultural tourism—a branch of the wider tourism industry that involves people travelling ‘specifically to gain a deeper understanding of the

¹⁰⁷ These concerns were likely fuelled by Wanamaker’s early plans for the Globe site to feature a ‘period restaurant’, ‘adventure playgrounds’, and ‘authentic reconstructed Tudor and Elizabethan buildings’; qtd in Barry Day, *This Wooden ‘O’: Shakespeare’s Globe Reborn* (London: Oberon Books, 1996), p. 32.

¹⁰⁸ Farah Karim-Cooper wrote in 2012: ‘[o]ne of Wanamaker’s original aims was that the Shakespeare Globe Centre be perceived as a leading authority on Shakespeare, early modern theatre and the culture of Elizabethan and Jacobean England; the “academic Globe” thus was seen as crucial in providing the necessary “weight” and “authority” to the project’; Farah Karim-Cooper, ‘Early Modern Drama at Shakespeare’s Globe’, in *Performing Early Modern Drama Today*, ed. by Pascale Aebischer and Kathryn Prince (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 53–69 (p. 55).

¹⁰⁹ Data from a 2009 in-house survey of 25,589 audience members and a quantitative paper survey carried out in 2006 by Audiences London; qtd in Penelope Woods, ‘Globe Audiences: Spectatorship and Reconstruction at Shakespeare’s Globe’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Queen Mary, University of London and Shakespeare’s Globe, 2012), p. 80.

¹¹⁰ ‘Sam Wanamaker Playhouse: Press Pack’, *Shakespeare’s Globe*, January 2014 <http://www.shakespeareasglobe.com/uploads/files/2014/02/sam_wanamaker_playhouse_press_pack_january_2014_final.pdf> [accessed 12 October 2018]

culture or heritage of a destination’—is considered a mainstream, mass product.¹¹¹ Researchers have indicated variously that ‘between 35 and 80 per cent of all tourists are cultural tourists’ (though this is difficult to quantify).¹¹² Definitions of cultural tourism usually centre on tourists’ attendance at performing arts events, visits to historic sites and monuments, and/or travelling for the purpose of pilgrimage.¹¹³ A visit to Shakespeare’s Globe could fall into all three of these categories: existing as a faithful reconstruction of the Elizabethan playhouse for which the ‘national poet’ wrote, positioned near the sacred ground on which the original structure stood, and staging regular performances of Shakespeare’s plays, the Globe promises to offer the visitor an experiential insight into one of the most celebrated elements of English culture and heritage. The theatre’s historical associations and appearance add further to its appeal. Tourism has been described as a search for the ‘absolute other’—an activity underpinned by a desire to experience ‘that which is not us’.¹¹⁴ Dennis Kennedy homes in on history as providing a particularly effective resource for the fulfilment of these desires. The past provides solid, commercially feasible material for manufacturing ‘the excitement of the alien’ for consumers of culture, and holds great appeal for those seeking an ‘unmediated’, authentic experience of a location’s heritage.¹¹⁵ Importantly, the commodification of heritage—the process of making the past accessible for modern consumers—often involves what has been described as ‘Disneyfication’. Kennedy uses this idea to highlight that heritage sites are ‘exercises in nostalgia, presenting a sanitized view of culture’ which, like Disney theme parks, appeal ‘to huge numbers of tourists having fun with commodity experience’.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Hilary Du Cros and Bob McKercher, *Cultural Tourism*, 2nd edn (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), p. 3.

¹¹² This figure is difficult to quantify as holiday-makers rarely complete surveys regarding the nature of their travels; Du Cros and McKercher, p. 3.

¹¹³ Du Cros and McKercher, pp. 4-5.

¹¹⁴ Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, rev. edn (London: University of California Press, 1999), p. 102; Kennedy, p. 181.

¹¹⁵ Kennedy, p. 181.

¹¹⁶ Kennedy, pp. 179-80.

As I explain in more detail below, this idea of ‘Disneyfied’ history can be applied particularly closely to Dromgoole-era Globe performance.

As well as adopting a preference for productions staged in historically-inspired costumes and a more relaxed relationship with the past, Dromgoole’s tenure as Artistic Director saw the Globe make calculated moves to entice greater numbers of tourists while also manufacturing new opportunities for international audiences to ‘experience’ Globe performances remotely.

The first annual report published during Dromgoole’s tenure states that the theatre:

took the first steps towards a more integrated approach to the Globe’s commercial activities, bringing under one management the exhibition, corporate events, catering, merchandising and marketing. One visible sign of this new integration has been the year-round daytime opening of the Bankside Gates, previously closed outside theatre performances. This innovation has resulted in a significant increase in the number of passing visitors to the site.¹¹⁷

The 2014 launch of the Globe Player—an online platform offering 50 (now 72) recorded Globe productions for on-demand streaming—saw the theatre offering its work (as well as productions staged as part of the *Globe to Globe* international performance festivals) for worldwide consumption.¹¹⁸ In an introductory video to Globe on Screen (the umbrella project including Globe Player as well as cinema broadcasts, DVD releases, etc.), Dromgoole presents the project as offering ‘people all over the world who couldn’t otherwise get to the Globe an impression of what it’s like to be here’.¹¹⁹ While the launch of the Globe Player saw Globe

¹¹⁷ The Shakespeare’s Globe Trust, ‘2005/6 Annual Review’, *Shakespeare’s Globe*, 2006 <<https://cdn.shakespearesglobe.com/uploads/2006/05/Annual-Review-2006.pdf>> [accessed 14 November 2018]

¹¹⁸ The *Globe to Globe* festival took place in 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015, and involved theatre companies from around the world being invited to perform Shakespeare’s plays on the Globe stage (in its first, second, and third iteration).

¹¹⁹ Dromgoole explains: ‘[w]e’re delighted at how [the recordings] are selling and how they’ve been selling for the last few years—they have an income that they can draw from cinema, from DVD, from terrestrial broadcasts, and from online. And we think that if we create them carefully that they will be a huge collection of assets which will have a longevity of income, and that will steadily earn us money going on into the future’; Shakespeare’s Globe, *Globe On Screen: Introduction by Dominic Dromgoole, Artistic Director*, online video recording, YouTube, 6 March 2013 <<https://youtu.be/AQZCh4S1ZWM>> [accessed 24 January 2019]

productions begin to travel digitally to new and geographically distant audiences, *Globe to Globe* attracted large numbers of people to the theatre who had not visited previously. According to Christine Patterson (*Independent*), the first festival (2012) attracted more than 100,000 people—80 per cent of whom had never been to the Globe before.¹²⁰ Together with the 2013 opening of the indoor Sam Wanamaker Playhouse (an element of Wanamaker’s original vision), which extended the theatre’s programming possibilities and involved a high-profile, far-reaching launch, these various developments saw the Globe gain increased visibility on a national and international level.¹²¹

With these contextual and theoretical insights in mind, the Globe’s 2012 *Taming of the Shrew* takes on new significance as a representative example of Dromgoole-era performance and a production which was intended to be a particularly attractive product for cultural tourists. The intentional, subtle deviations from historical accuracy in Britton’s costume design—intended primarily to make the characters and narrative more legible for modern audiences—usefully reveal how the Artistic Director’s relaxed approach to representing history took form within the intricate mechanics of performance. When viewed in relation to the Globe’s increasing array of commercially driven activities, questions might be raised as to whether the Jacobethan-inspired approach to design featuring in this and many other productions formed part of a broader strategy to make Shakespeare’s Globe more attractive to tourists than ever before. As evidenced above, the in-house Shakespeare productions staged in the theatre during Dromgoole’s artistic directorship *were* intentionally undemanding in their representation of

¹²⁰ Christina Patterson, ‘Lost in Translation: The Globe’s Shakespeare Season Offers a Surprising Insight into Different Cultures’, *Independent*, 7 June 2012 <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/features/lost-in-translation-the-globes-shakespeare-season-offers-a-surprising-insight-into-different-7821169.html>> [accessed 24 September 2018]

¹²¹ The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse was opened officially by Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and actress Zoë Wanamaker (daughter of Sam Wanamaker) on 19 November 2013. The Globe staff led a candlelit procession from Southwark Cathedral to the theatre to light the first candle in the playhouse. The opening was met with a high volume of press coverage, and a recording of the opening production (*The Duchess of Malfi*, starring Gemma Arterton) was broadcast to television audiences around the UK (via BBC4) on 24 May 2014.

history. The adaptation of historical aesthetics and alteration of the Globe's physical performance space were driven by the intention of giving audiences (and actors) a better and easier experience than would be possible if the aim of historical accuracy was given priority. This process aligned closely with the concept of 'Disneyfication', as history was seemingly made into an easily consumable cultural commodity; without the justification of experimentation that had typified Rylance's tenure as Artistic Director, Dromgoole-era Jacobethan-inspired productions arguably corresponded with critics' initial concerns that the Globe would offer an 'undemanding, all-purpose Shakespeare Experience for tourists'.¹²²

The resonances between the Globe's 2012 *Shrew* and the practices and products identified as holding especially strong appeal for cultural tourists also build on my earlier discussion of nostalgia, highlighting further ways in which Jacobethan-inspired design functions today. The pastness of Elizabethan and Jacobean clothing—its elaborate appearance and dramatic, restrictive nature, contrasting with modern fashion in all respects—feeds a popular appetite for the alien and for a tangible experience of English heritage. The subtle adaptation of historical styles to make garments communicate more directly to modern audiences makes the past feel accessible without ruining the illusion of authenticity. Paired with the magnitude of Shakespeare as a symbol of English culture, presented by an institution renowned internationally for performing the playwright's works, and staged in close proximity to a site from which the plays originated, Jacobethan-inspired costumes undoubtedly exert a powerful draw for those wishing to experience England's past and present. Having a historical setting in place for the vast majority of productions staged in this kind of context would only perpetuate the idea of a historical-dress performance tradition, cementing the expectations of local and

¹²² Qtd in McCrum.

international audiences and fuelling the notion that there is a ‘proper’ way to stage Shakespeare’s plays.

In the final section of this chapter, I will look closely at the practices of a third major institution known for its regular stagings of Shakespeare’s plays—the National Theatre—and how this theatre’s use of Jacobethan-inspired costumes complicates the idea that a historical setting invariably celebrates the pastness of Shakespeare and his plays. The National Theatre (NT), founded in 1963 after several decades of debate and stalled developments, has always been intended to produce high-quality work for as wide an audience as possible. Although this organisation has some aims and responsibilities similar to those of the RSC,¹²³ and shares London’s South Bank and a potential audience of the capital’s visiting cultural tourists with the Globe, the NT is distinct in its mission to produce a wide range of world-class plays and other work.¹²⁴ Shakespeare is one of many playwrights whose work is staged at the theatre. Rather than forming the core of the organisation’s operations (as with the RSC and the Globe), the playwright’s works are weighted equally with other ‘classics’ and new writing from around the world. This breadth of focus means the NT is not seen as promoting or preserving a particular aspect of (theatre) history. Instead, this organisation has a reputation for making its productions speak to contemporary audiences as directly as possible, and for programming old and new works that hold particular relevance and weight in the present day. Driven by a need to serve a modern audience reflective of the diversity of the UK, and to be a major contributor

¹²³ Chambers writes that, while the RSC and NT were coming into being concurrently in the early 1960s, neither ‘could ever shake off comparison with the other’. Both fought for the same public subsidy and were intended to provide the nation with a permanent, quality arts organisation. From the mid-1970s, the two companies came to share personnel and programming tastes (for example, Peter Hall left the RSC in 1968 and became Artistic Director of the NT in 1973); Chambers, p. 29.

¹²⁴ In his first major NT press conference (on 6 August 1963), Laurence Olivier—the theatre’s first Artistic Director—stated: ‘[w]e aim to give a spectrum of world drama and to develop in time a company which will be the finest in the world’. The opening season saw Shakespeare staged alongside Chekhov, Farquhar, Beckett, and Greek drama. This breadth of repertoire has continued at the NT throughout the institution’s existence; qtd in John Elsom and Nicholas Tomalin, *The History of the National Theatre* (London: The Trinity Press, 1978), p. 133.

to the nation's artistic offerings (particularly through commissioning and subsidising work that would not otherwise be commercially viable), the NT balances social and artistic aims in all its activities.

For the majority of the period covered by this thesis (1997–2019), the NT's activities were led by Artistic Director Nicholas Hytner. Hytner's twelve-year tenure at the organisation (2003–2015) saw the NT build on several of its foundational aims. Drawn to the contemporary resonances of the work he stages, and known for his ability to find ways to 'energise' the classics and make them feel 'new', Hytner's directorial qualities meshed closely with the NT's mission to create quality productions of old and new works for a broad, contemporary audience. The director's long-term aim of making classical drama accessible to modern audiences was a major driving force behind his Shakespeare productions at the NT. As well as regularly making alterations to texts (such as cutting lines or passages that would probably be incomprehensible to a modern audience and replacing obsolete/jarringly historical terms with modern equivalents), Hytner usually opted to give the plays an updated setting to emphasise their contemporary resonances. Four of the seven Shakespeare plays Hytner directed at the NT had an unequivocally modern setting, and two had a visibly eclectic setting that layered medieval and modern elements. The seventh—*Much Ado About Nothing* (2007/8)—appeared to have a purely historical setting; Hytner opted to contextualise the action in Messina (Shakespeare's setting) in 1598—the year in which the play is thought to have been composed.¹²⁵

While the historical nature of this production's setting might appear to set it aside from other stagings of Shakespeare within this institutional context, Dinah Collin's costume design in fact demonstrates the extent to which Jacobethan styles have been adapted to feel familiar to modern audiences. The production's Jacobethan-inspired setting did not obstruct the direct

¹²⁵ Nick Hytner Talks Lots about *Much Ado About Nothing*, online audio recording, TheatreVoice, 5 October 2007 <<http://www.theatrevoice.com/audio/nicholas-hytner-talks-about-much-ado/>> [accessed 30 October 2018]

communication of ideas, emphasise the pastness of the play to avoid elements that would be uncomfortable for a modern audience, or fetishize historical aesthetics in a manner that might hold a particularly nostalgic appeal. Collin's carefully crafted layering of recognisably historical and modern styles instead enabled a staging of *Much Ado* that was described by critics as 'fresh', 'wholly accessible',¹²⁶ and 'a model of clarity'.¹²⁷ This production thus provides an alternative example of how a Jacobethan-inspired approach to costume design has been used by a major institution to negotiate the perceived thematic requirements of a Shakespeare play as well as the organisation's wider artistic and social aims.

Hytner's decision to set *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1598 Messina was determined by his understanding that important elements of the play could be explained only by a historical cultural context. In an interview conducted before rehearsals began, the director described *Much Ado* as 'a very Catholic play' with an 'oppressive Catholic honour code'.¹²⁸ Updating the play with a contemporary setting would lose this narratively significant force within the text, as well as complicating the mood of the characters' return from war during the opening scene. Hytner explains: 'in the Elizabethan imagination you can come back from a quick skirmish and play a comedy'; in the twenty-first century, war has become such a 'wholly terrifying phenomenon' that such a notion would seem problematic to a modern audience.¹²⁹ Setting the production at the time of the play's composition would therefore ensure that key developments in the narrative (the arrival of the soldiers in 1.1 and Claudio's humiliation of Hero in 4.1) were contextualised appropriately. Hytner was clear from the outset, however, that the production's interpretation of 1598 Messina would knowingly incorporate modern

¹²⁶ Philip Fisher, 'Much Ado About Nothing', *British Theatre Guide*, 21 December 2007, n.p.

¹²⁷ Warwick Thompson, 'Wanamaker Brawls in Hytner's "Much Ado"', *Bloomberg.com*, 20 December 2007, n.p.

¹²⁸ Nick Hytner *Talks Lots about Much Ado About Nothing*.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

elements. In the same pre-rehearsal interview regarding his production of *Much Ado*, the director explained:

I never think that a literal representation of period is either desirable or necessarily significant, so when I say it's set in Messina in 1598, of course it's also set—because it is taking place—on the South Bank in 2007. That's unavoidable—any representation of the past is coloured by our experience of the present. No play from the past exists in a bubble defined only by the past. All plays have an afterlife. So [...] we will be, I hope, as flexible and as creative with Sicily 1598 as Shakespeare is.¹³⁰

While several of Hytner's previous productions had met this perceived need for flexibility and creativity by establishing an unmistakably eclectic setting through costume and set design—an approach inspired by the practices of Renaissance theatre and intended to achieve the effect of a production looking historical but feeling 'universal'—the director had 'lost faith' in this idea by 2006.¹³¹ He had come to feel that a production should be in period costume *or* in modern dress, rather than attempting to 'get the best of all worlds' with a visible 'synthesis' of past and present.¹³²

This decision to move away from an eclectic approach to design was likely also driven by the increasing importance of specificity of setting for Hytner. The director felt that *Much Ado* is, with the exception of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, the Shakespeare comedy 'most securely set in the real world'; Leonato's 'is a realer house than, for instance, Olivia's house is or Orsino's house is in *Twelfth Night*[, and] a realer house than the court of Duke Frederick in *As You Like It*'.¹³³ This is because, in the director's view, *Much Ado* stays 'hard' and 'real' until the end of the play, rather than 'open[ing] out into a kind of magical theatrical numinousness

¹³⁰ Nick Hytner Talks Lots about Much Ado About Nothing.

¹³¹ Qtd in Abigail Rokison-Woodall, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Nicholas Hytner* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 129.

¹³² Qtd in Rokison-Woodall, p. 129.

¹³³ Nick Hytner Talks Lots about Much Ado About Nothing.

in Act Five' as Shakespeare's other mature comedies do.¹³⁴ Further, Hytner felt that the play was 'always better served by productions as meticulously detailed as the marriage between Beatrice and Benedick'. Being 'increasingly drawn to the creation of recognisable onstage worlds, in which all involved understand "the rules—social, physical, and psychological" that govern the location', the director seemingly felt a need to locate the action in a specific time and place that would be identifiable to modern audiences.¹³⁵ Hytner's intended setting for *Much Ado* would therefore communicate clearly that the action was taking place in Italy at the turn of the seventeenth century but also incorporate elements of modern culture. This negotiation of past and present would not involve a visibly eclectic approach to design, however. An alternative approach to combining historical/geographical specificity with contemporary resonances was required to achieve Hytner's vision on this occasion.

The Italian element of the production's setting was communicated through a combination of Vicki Mortimer's set design, Mark Henderson's lighting design, and John Leonard's sound design. Laurence Green (*50Connect*) wrote that Mortimer's:

imaginative and atmospheric set with attractive, white-washed Sicilian houses overlooking a revolving centre stage on which are placed vertically slatted screens and a paved walkway, together with the bright Mediterranean sunlight, noisy townsfolk, music and singers, all help to give this production a vivid Italian feel.¹³⁶

Mark Cook (*The Big Issue*) also found the set design particularly evocative of Italy with its 'immaculately whitewashed walls and casement windows overlooking a cosy little Sicilian square', and several reviewers commented on the successful creation of a 'hot Mediterranean climate' on the Olivier's 'sun-drenched' stage,¹³⁷ which had been 'flooded with golden Sicilian

¹³⁴ Nick Hytner *Talks Lots about Much Ado About Nothing*.

¹³⁵ Qtd in Rokison-Woodall, p. 17.

¹³⁶ Laurence Green, 'Much Ado About Nothing', *50Connect*, 31 January 2008, n.p.

¹³⁷ Thompson, 'Wanamaker Brawls in Hytner's "Much Ado"'; Kate Bassett, 'All mirth masks much matter when old flames spar', *Independent on Sunday*, 23 December 2007, p. 44.

light'.¹³⁸ While the wooden slatted structures at the centre of the revolving stage usefully divided the space into several indoor and outdoor locations and provided ample opportunities for characters to eavesdrop on one another in view of the audience, this part of the set design detracted from the intended Italian setting for some. Clive Hirschhorn (*This is London*) felt that the wooden slats '[did] nothing to suggest sunny Sicily [...] the only heat it suggests is the kind you find in a sauna',¹³⁹ and they reminded Tim Walker (*Sunday Telegraph*) 'less of Sicily than a rather posh Thai restaurant'.¹⁴⁰ The overall effect of the set, lighting, and sound design nevertheless communicated Hytner's geographically specific setting of southern Italy by creating a recognisably Mediterranean atmosphere and aesthetic. But the historical nature of the production's setting was not a part of these design elements. The task of communicating the cultural context of 1598 was left to Dinah Collin's costume design.

The versions of Jacobethan dress featuring in this production were crafted to strike a fine balance between suggesting an early modern setting and providing a sense of familiarity for the NT's twenty-first-century audiences. Signifiers of early modern fashions were present in the costumes worn by all cast members, but were usually simplified or relaxed into styles of garments that would be recognisable today. The highly codified nature of Elizabethan and Jacobean fashion was diluted to provide an aesthetic which would not alienate the audience or highlight the gap of time between the date of *Much Ado*'s composition and the context in which the production was staged, but would still locate the narrative and characters in the specific period identified by Hytner as being most appropriate for the play.

¹³⁸ Susannah Clapp, 'Much Ado, brilliantly done', *Observer*, 23 December 2007, p.18.

¹³⁹ Clive Hirschhorn, 'Much Ado About Nothing', *This is London*, January 2008, n.p.

¹⁴⁰ Tim Walker, 'The Odd Couple', *Sunday Telegraph*, 6 January 2008, n.p.



Figure 34. Beatrice's and Benedick's costumes alongside those worn by other characters in the NT's 2007 production of *Much Ado About Nothing* (© Catherine Ashmore).



Figure 35. Simon Russell Beale's Benedick wore a doublet and shirt that reflected Jacobethan and modern styles simultaneously (© Catherine Ashmore).



Figure 36. Dogberry, Verges, and a watchman wore costumes that incorporated various Jacobethan signifiers (© Catherine Ashmore).



Figure 37. Leonato's doublet was screen-printed with a scale pattern; his surcoat was lined with a patterned jacquard fabric (© Catherine Ashmore).

The costume designed for Simon Russell Beale's Benedick provides a particularly clear example of the mechanics behind this approach to design. Benedick wore a faded blue linen shirt, a brown moleskin doublet, a brown leather belt, brown broken-down trousers, and brown broken-down boots (see Figure 34 and Figure 35).¹⁴¹ The doublet had tabs around the lower edge and an upturned collar, dating the style of the garment to the early modern period, but its loose-fitting sleeves, lack of internal structure, and unadorned design meant the garment fitted the actor's body more like a modern jacket than a highly tailored Elizabethan/Jacobean doublet. Beale's wearing of the doublet unhooked further emphasised its association with present-day styles of dress. The character's linen shirt referenced the early modern practice of such garments being worn beneath outer layers of dress, but was dyed blue and had a buttoned closure at the centre-front of the collar (rather than a tie closure) to appear more like a casual shirt that could easily be worn today. Benedick's brown trousers were also relatively modern in shape: the legs had a loose-fitting, straight cut and reached the ankle, much like modern linen trousers; early modern men's legwear would usually take the form of trunk hose or venetians (as worn by the men in the RSC's 2008 *Love's Labour's Lost*), and would rarely extend lower than the upper calf other than in the form of stockings. Collin nevertheless achieved something approximating the appearance of Elizabethan/Jacobean venetians by having Benedick wear knee-high leather boots. Although the audience saw the full length of the character's trousers during the much-noted scene in which he jumped into an onstage swimming pool fully clothed (2.3), Benedick's legwear was otherwise subtly disguised by the boots to appear as though it might end below the knee in the Elizabethan/Jacobean style.

Comparable techniques were used in the design and construction of the costumes for other male characters, though some were weighted more heavily with early modern signifiers than

¹⁴¹ London, National Theatre Archive (NTA), Costume Department Production Files: *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Benedick's costume. For example, Dogberry wore a doublet with shoulder wings and metal buttons, Verges wore multiple layers of outerwear (a doublet on top of a jerkin), and the doublet worn by a watchman working alongside these characters featured leather lacing at the shoulder/arm seams and cuffs (see Figure 36). Leonato's doublet was screen-printed with a scale pattern to give it a sense of the texture associated with historical fashions, and was layered with a sleeveless linen surcoat that had been lined with a decorative jacquard fabric (see Figure 37). These signifiers were all recognisably—and quite specifically—Jacobethan, and would enable the NT's modern audiences to locate the action as taking place at the turn of the seventeenth century.



Figure 38. Margaret (left), Beatrice (centre), and Hero (right) sit together at the party in 2.1 wearing outfits layered with signifiers from various periods.

Critical responses to the production indicate some confusion as to the significance of Collin's costume design. Several newspaper reviewers reference the historical nature of the setting—the production is described as being in 'period dress',¹⁴² an 'in-period revival',¹⁴³ and a 'faithfully Renaissance-set piece'¹⁴⁴—but, interestingly, the specific period signified by the garments was seemingly more difficult to pinpoint.¹⁴⁵ Warwick Thompson (*Bloomberg.com*) describes them as 'simple 17th-century costumes',¹⁴⁶ while David Benedict (*Variety*) found the garments to be evocative of 'late 19th century Italy'.¹⁴⁷ Nicholas de Jongh (*Evening Standard*) thought the costumes 'mix[ed] 16th and 19th century styles';¹⁴⁸ Tim Walker (*Sunday Telegraph*) 'didn't care either for Dinah Collins's [*sic*] fusion costumes, which seem[ed] to set the play in a number of periods simultaneously'.¹⁴⁹

This confusion around the century evoked by Collin's costume design likely came as a result of the mixed signifiers incorporated into the cut of the gown worn by Zoë Wanamaker's Beatrice for the party (2.1) and Hero's wedding (4.1). While the full-skirted style of this garment contributed to the collection of early modern signifiers spread across the costume design for the production, the bodice featured styles from other periods (see Figure 38). The rounded neckline, button detailing, and relatively shapely silhouette (the bodice was rounded over the bust rather than shaping the torso into the conical shape associated with Elizabethan/Jacobean fashion) pointed more towards late-nineteenth-century fashions than those of the sixteenth century. This effect was furthered by the use of a powder-blue silk for

¹⁴² David Gavan, 'A version to make Much Ado about', *Ham & High Broadway*, 10 January 2008, p. E2; Charles Spencer, 'Finding mutual happiness in the last chance saloon', *Daily Telegraph*, 19 December 2007, n.p.

¹⁴³ 'Five best plays', *The Independent*, 17 March 2008, n.p.

¹⁴⁴ Julie Carpenter, 'Review of the 2007 Much Ado About Nothing', *Daily Express*, 21 December 2007, p. 50.

¹⁴⁵ Multiple reviewers described the setting as 'traditional', further evidencing the association of Jacobethan-inspired costuming with a sense of tradition and heritage; 'Comic turn seems set to please', *Colchester Gazette*, 14 December 2007, p. 20; Clapp, 'Much Ado, brilliantly done'.

¹⁴⁶ Thompson, 'Wanamaker Brawls in Hytner's "Much Ado"'.
¹⁴⁷ David Benedict, 'Much Ado About Nothing', *Variety*, 6 January 2008, n.p.

¹⁴⁸ Nicholas de Jongh, 'Middle-aged lovers make much the biggest waves', *Evening Standard*, 19 December 2007, p.11.

¹⁴⁹ Walker, 'The Odd Couple'.

the construction of the garment: the shade of blue created by the lilac, gold, and dark/pale blue threads woven through the fabric did not fit within the range of earthy colours usually associated with the early modern period, and instead reflected later (eighteenth- or nineteenth-century) fashions. The overall result was an outfit that appeared to be inspired by late-nineteenth-century styles in some respects, but that was ultimately impossible to date due to its confusing merging of multiple period aesthetics. The prominence of this gown in the onstage action and across the images used to publicise and document the production likely had an impact on how audiences and critics interpreted the wider setting for this *Much Ado*, and could thus be the primary cause of the confusion evidenced in the reviews quoted above.¹⁵⁰

Other women's costumes were more historically specific in their design—mainly due to the inclusion of structured upper-body garments that gave the actors the silhouette associated with the Jacobethan period. For example, the three gowns worn by Hero for the party (2.1; see Figure 38), her wedding (4.1; see Figure 37), and her betrothal (5.4) all featured full skirts and bodices that created a Jacobethan conical silhouette. The bodies (corsets) worn as outerwear by Meg and other characters (see Figure 34) referenced the style of early modern undergarments, and the underbust (or 'ribbon') corset worn by Margaret (see Figure 38) related to the common modern practice of such garments being worn as part of costumes representing lower-class women from the early modern period. Although the underbust corset actually came into existence during the nineteenth century, becoming popular as a less-restrictive item of underwear that could be worn by women for various physical activities, the frequency with which this particular garment features in the mass-produced, Renaissance-inspired costumes

¹⁵⁰ It is worth noting that this gown appeared in some publicity photographs in a form different from that which went on to feature in the production run. Some photographs in the National Theatre Archive depict a version of the gown with the sleeves tied on to the bodice, rather than sewn (see Figure 37 in comparison to Figure 38). It is possible that the costume was not entirely finished at the time of the first round of publicity photographs, or that the style was changed before the production opened (or during the early stages of its run).

sold to general audiences as ‘fancy dress’ wear has undoubtedly resulted in it becoming an early modern signifier for modern audiences.¹⁵¹

Like Benedick’s costume, the chiffon/Georgette blouses worn by Hero, Margaret, and other women referenced the early modern practice of men and women wearing linen undershirts. These garments would originally have been covered by outerwear, making their visibility in the production historically inaccurate, but the blouses’ inclusion in the costume design served several useful functions. The lightweight fabric helped to communicate the heat of Italy (supporting the work of the production’s lighting design), and the garments’ covering of the arms and shoulders gave a sense of the restrictive nature of early modern dress without reproducing alienating historical styles. As with Benedick’s blue linen shirt, these lightweight blouses would sit comfortably in a twenty-first-century wardrobe, ensuring the characters remained recognisable to a modern audience.

This adaptation of historical styles to suit modern sensibilities was further evident in the design of Hero’s wedding dress. Much like that designed for Katherine in the Globe’s 2012 *Taming of the Shrew*, Hero’s wedding gown had an identifiably Jacobethan silhouette and was made in a subtly patterned damask silk/satin, but followed the modern (originally Victorian) practice of brides being dressed in white (see Figure 33). As discussed on p. 125, this anachronism ensured that twenty-first-century audiences would recognise immediately that a wedding was taking place on stage while continuing to communicate the production’s early modern setting.

It is clear from the production reviews that Collin’s costume design was not entirely successful in communicating that this *Much Ado* was set specifically in 1598. Although the majority of

¹⁵¹ The underbust corset appears regularly in sexualised ‘fancy dress’ costumes inspired by the early modern period. These costumes are usually titled ‘Renaissance Medieval Wench’, ‘Tavern Wench’, or similar. For an example, see ‘Tavern Wench (Maureen) Adult Costume’, *About Costume* <<http://www.aboutcostume.com/tavern-wench-maureen-adult-costume-p-6427.html#.XnyUutP7QY1>> [accessed 26 March 2020]

period signifiers incorporated into the design pointed directly to the early modern period (doublet skirts and shoulder wings, structured conical bodices, certain fabric patterns and textures), the inclusion of some recognisably later styles (such as those in Beatrice's party gown) complicated how critics and presumably other audience members interpreted the setting for the production as a whole. Despite this, the NT's 2007 *Much Ado* appears to have achieved a high level of clarity in its representation of Shakespeare's text. Philip Fisher (*The British Theatre Guide*) wrote that Hytner had made 'Shakespeare in period costume fresh and wholly accessible, which render[ed] this an ideal opportunity to introduce youngsters to the bard and hook them for life'.¹⁵² Warwick Thompson (*Bloomberg.com*) described the production as 'a model of clarity', linking this perspective directly to its approach to setting,¹⁵³ and Michael Billington (*Country Life*) praised it as being 'refreshingly clear'.¹⁵⁴

Although some attributed the production's perceived 'freshness' to Hytner's notable decision to cast middle-aged actors as Beatrice and Benedick,¹⁵⁵ with Susannah Clapp (*Observer*) going as far as to suggest that Wanamaker and Russell Beale 're-fashioned' an otherwise 'traditional' staging 'from within',¹⁵⁶ I would position Collin's costume design as playing a major part in *Much Ado*'s achievement of such a noteworthy level of clarity. The designer's balanced layering of dateable historical features with modern textures and styles of dress meant that the costumes could provide a historically-specific context for the play's narrative without registering as alien. This production appears to have deliberately avoided creating an image of the past that might appeal to those seeking an unmediated experience of an 'absolute other'. The elements of historical dress most unfamiliar to modern audiences (particularly its

¹⁵² Fisher, 'Much Ado About Nothing'.

¹⁵³ Thompson, 'Wanamaker Brawls in Hytner's "Much Ado"'.
¹⁵⁴ Michael Billington, 'Love and War', *Country Life*, n.d., p. 84.

¹⁵⁵ Matt Humphreys, 'The Critics', *Camden Gazette*, 23 January 2008, p. 25; Hirschhorn, 'Much Ado About Nothing'.

¹⁵⁶ Clapp, 'Much Ado, brilliantly done'.

restrictive nature and elaborate appearance) were simply not included in Collin's reworkings of early modern fashion. In its representation of a past that was dateable without feeling dated, the National Theatre's 2007/8 *Much Ado* highlights that a historical setting does not necessarily *celebrate* the pastness of Shakespeare and his plays.

This production, read within the wider organisational context of the National Theatre, is representative of the whittled-down form now often taken by the former historical-dress Shakespearean performance tradition. As with the RSC's 2008 *Love's Labour's Lost*, a Jacobethan-inspired setting was chosen for Hytner's *Much Ado About Nothing* because it was thought that the narrative would not translate meaningfully into an ostensibly modern setting. The number of plays seen to require a historically-inspired setting has grown progressively smaller in recent decades; the NT's preference for updating Shakespeare's plays to make them speak as directly and earnestly as possible to its diverse contemporary audiences has resulted in modern-dress productions becoming the norm for this institution. A similar story can be told about other current/recent organisations known for staging Shakespeare's plays, such as Northern Broadsides, Propeller, Cheek by Jowl, and Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre.¹⁵⁷ The 2007 *Much Ado About Nothing* was subtly modernised where possible to bring its historically-inspired elements more in line with the NT's (and particularly Hytner's) preferred approach to staging Shakespeare's plays. Together with the organisation's notable lack of interest in celebrating its earlier Shakespeare productions, many of which were staged in historical dress, Hytner and Collin's approach to creating an onstage world for *Much Ado About Nothing* indicates that a straightforwardly historical setting is not generally seen as being current, fresh, or relevant for modern audiences. Further than illustrating how the NT's recent work exists in relation to a historical-dress performance tradition, these findings are more

¹⁵⁷ All these companies have tended to stage Shakespeare in modern or eclectic costumes, rather than those of a historical period. See photographs of each organisation's production histories on their respective websites for an overview of these practices.

widely indicative of the much-lessened role now played by historically-inspired costume design for Shakespeare.

This chapter has focused on specific Shakespeare productions to examine how and why three major UK theatre institutions have subtly adapted Jacobethan fashions, and to unpack the extent to which these activities have contributed to the continuation of a historical-dress Shakespearean performance tradition into the twenty-first century. By positioning each Jacobethan-inspired production in relation to its wider organisational and cultural contexts, I have tried to paint a faithful picture of how these works came into being, and how they fitted into complex performance histories within and beyond the institutional cultures in which they were made. Considering these productions, institutional pasts, and concepts collectively allows for several conclusions to be drawn about the current significance of Jacobethan-inspired Shakespeare. First, the fact that the period of the playwright's lifetime was seen as being most appropriate for contextualising the themes and narratives of *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Much Ado About Nothing* suggests that these plays are currently understood as being particularly enmeshed in the cultural context in which they were written. With these plays all being categorised as comedies, further questions must be raised about the links between genre and setting in modern performance practices. Second, the extent to which these productions (particularly *Love's Labour's Lost* and *The Taming of the Shrew*) correspond with theories relating to heritage cinema, nostalgia, and cultural tourism encourages careful consideration of the desires that drive modern audiences, as well as highlighting the degrees of discord that can exist between practitioners' intentions and critical and audience responses. If a production unintentionally encourages a nostalgic reading, should this be considered a negative or problematic outcome? And if a theatre knowingly or otherwise caters directly to the tourist industry by staging 'Disneyfied' representations of the past, should this affect perceptions of productions' artistic merits?

As long as the memories of these organisations' performance histories remain alive, a subset of theatre audiences will continue to ask hopefully whether a production will be 'a traditional Shakespearean performance', staged in historical dress. The origins of this performance 'tradition' are traceable and explicable. The extent to which its former pervasiveness has shaped how Shakespeare is conceived today requires further elucidation; Chapter Three reframes Jacobethan-inspired costume design as the source of a more recent development in twenty-first-century Shakespearean performance.

Chapter Three

Displaced/Repurposed Elizabethan Icons

14 June is World Cucumber Day. Introduced in 2011 by English growers of the fruit, and later co-opted as the climax of a marketing campaign for Hendrick's Gin, this annual opportunity 'to extol the virtues of the gallant cucumber' has become a cornerstone in the calendars of airport retail outlets around the world.¹ Travellers passing through Gatwick Airport's duty-free extravaganza in the weeks leading up to the 2018 celebrations will have been confronted by an intriguing display: encased in a large glass cabinet was a cucumber wearing a ruff. 'The Thespian Cucumber (Cucumis To Beus Or No To Beus)' [*sic*], read the label beneath the case.² While the manner in which this beruffed fruit was presented framed it as a rare curiosity—a tactic designed to make the 'specimen' representative of the gin's whimsical branding and unusual combination of flavours—the ruff's instant ability to signify Shakespeare has been exploited relentlessly across a myriad of modern contexts.

It is this popular practice of pairing Shakespeare with other iconic elements of Elizabethan culture that forms the focus of this chapter. More specifically, I am interested in how the ruff and the figure of Queen Elizabeth I have come to be so intimately linked with the playwright in our modern cultural imagination and used as a visual shorthand for certain qualities and ideas. Unlike my previous chapters, which have centred on the practices and performance histories of particular Shakespeare institutions, this portion of my thesis focuses on significant instances of cross-fertilization between theatre and popular culture. How did the ruff come to

¹ 'World Cucumber Day', *Hendrick's Gin* <<http://www.hendricksgin.com/uk/world-cucumber-day>> [accessed 19 February 2019]

² Helen Pawson, "'A Slice of the Unusual': Hendrick's Kicks off Final Countdown to World Cucumber Day', *The Moodie Davitt Report*, 31 May 2018 <<http://www.moodiedavittreport.com/a-slice-of-the-unusual-hendricks-kicks-off-final-countdown-to-world-cucumber-day>> [accessed 19 February 2019]

hold such widespread power and prominence as a signifier for Shakespeare, and why is the playwright continually placed in close proximity to Elizabeth I? These questions merit a dedicated chapter in this study because each Elizabethan icon's 'Shakespearean' associations have been manipulated in costume design for twenty-first-century stagings of the playwright's works. England's Fairy Queen and the highly impractical style of collar worn during her reign have each been incorporated into productions specifically to draw on meanings that have been cultivated in popular culture. Removed from their historical social contexts, these lasting elements of Elizabethan culture have been repurposed to promote, disrupt, or transpose Shakespearean narratives within and beyond the playwright's works.

In what follows, I trace the origins and evolutions of the cultural connections between Elizabeth I, the ruff, and Shakespeare and explore how these icons have been used in modern Shakespearean performance to shape audiences' experiences of particular plays. My goal in doing so is twofold: to understand better the intricacies of meaning-making through design, and to ascertain how Shakespeare and the early modern era live on in our modern cultural imagination. While others have produced detailed studies of Elizabeth I's afterlife in myth, apocrypha, and popular culture—in relation to Shakespeare and independently—the implications of the queen's likeness being incorporated into stagings of the playwright's works are yet to be assessed. In taking this debate in a new direction and breaking new ground by tracing the long history of the ruff as an expression of the very essence of Shakespeare, I unravel the strands of significance that surround this much-used means of evoking an impression of the playwright, his works, and the era in which he lived.

The figure-of-eight folds of the Elizabethan ruff form the starting point for this chapter. Featuring in countless portraits and woodcuts dating from the period of Shakespeare's lifetime, this distinctive style of collar is 'the item that lives in our minds as an inescapable vision of the

second half of the sixteenth century'.³ Significantly, the 'standing ruff'—the stiffened, starched version of the garment (as opposed to the later, softer 'falling ruff')—has become associated quite specifically with Shakespeare. This highly recognisable item often functions as the keystone of the playwright's iconic image; as demonstrated by 'The Thespian Cucumber', the ruff also acts as a vehicle for elevating even the most mundane of subjects to 'Shakespearean' status. As will become clear below, however, the Shakespeare-ruff pairing is a relatively modern construction: the notion that Shakespeare wore a ruff works directly against historical evidence, and is symptomatic of an ongoing preoccupation with the playwright's cultural status. Examining the binds that tie the playwright and the ruff together is therefore a useful first step towards understanding the processes by which Shakespearean cultural connections have been produced and developed.

A visit to Stratford-upon-Avon will swiftly reveal the centrality of the ruff to our modern understanding of who Shakespeare was and how he might be recognised today. The shelves of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT) and Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) gift shops are lined with merchandise depicting the playwright; the majority of these edible or collectible items feature the distinctive Elizabethan collar as a key element of their design. Combined with the receding hairline and style of facial hair featuring in portraits associated with the playwright, the figure-of-eight folds of the ruff are responsible for proclaiming that a broad range of products depict *Shakespeare*. The playwright's beruffed likeness can be found on mugs, tote bags, stationery, and in the more ephemeral form of a gingerbread biscuit. Lacy-necked plush and wind-up Shakespeare toys abound (see Figure 39).

³ Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), p. 19.



Figure 39. A selection of Shakespeare merchandise available for purchase in the SBT or RSC gift shops (photographs my own).



Figure 40. Photographs taken in response to the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's 2016 #SelfieWithShakespeare social media marketing campaign (screengrab from review video).



Figure 41. The Shakespeare 'celebrity' mask commissioned to celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's death, designed by Geoffrey Tristram (photograph my own).

The garment also appears on a regular basis as part of the town's annual Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations. Marketing materials for the event usually feature a depiction of Shakespeare wearing a ruff, and during the 2016 celebrations the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust ran a social media campaign (#SelfieWithShakespeare) inviting people around the world to post photographs of themselves with a ruff (either as a physical 'selfie prop' produced by the Trust or a social media image filter; depicted in Figure 40). The aim of the campaign was to give the organisation a heightened social media presence at a time when sites (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) would be saturated with posts about Shakespeare. A case study video claims that the campaign was successful in '[e]stablishing the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust as the place for all things Shakespeare'.⁴ The ruff was intended to be seen—and was clearly recognised—as a symbol for the playwright that could operate independently of any other Shakespeare signifier.

In the same year, to mark the four-hundredth anniversary of the playwright's death, the Stratford-upon-Avon District and Town Councils jointly commissioned the design and production of 10,000 commemorative Shakespeare 'celebrity' masks. These masks would be distributed on the day of the Birthday Parade and worn by those in attendance. To ensure that the face on the mask was 'publicly recognizable as that of the famous Bard of Avon', the brief specified that the iconic First Folio engraving of the playwright (by Martin Droeshout) should form the basis of its design.⁵ Local artist Geoffrey Tristram responded to this brief by creating a new head-on portrait of the playwright, his adaptation of the prescribed source aided by measurements, colours, and textures from various depictions of Shakespeare. One final detail

⁴ *Video Case Study: #SelfieWithShakespeare*, online video recording, Mark-Making*, 2017 <<https://www.mark-making.com/video-case-study-selfiewithshakespeare/>> [accessed 29 April 2019]

⁵ '10,000 life-like Shakespeare masks to be given away to Bard fans at Stratford-upon-Avon birthday celebrations!', *Shakespeare Magazine*, n.d. <<http://www.shakespearemagazine.com/2016/04/10000-life-like-shakespeare-masks-to-be-given-away-to-bard-fans-at-stratford-upon-avon-birthday-celebrations>> [accessed 29 April 2019]

brought the new portrait to life. In the words of Tristram: ‘[a] typical Elizabethan ruff completed the picture and my portrait became a very convincing bard!’ (see Figure 41).⁶

The logic underpinning Tristram’s portrait exemplifies the incongruity at the heart of this ubiquitous practice. The Droeshout engraving does not feature a ruff. In fact, no ruff features in any early modern portrait or sculpture associated with Shakespeare. Droeshout’s First Folio engraving depicts the playwright wearing a rebato collar—a large, flat form of neckwear popular around the time of Shakespeare’s death. The funerary monument located in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon, shows Shakespeare wearing a simpler style of turned-down collar (a feature referred to in the period as ‘bands’; usually part of a linen shirt worn beneath the outer layers of clothing). The same story extends to the likenesses of less certain provenance. The Chandos portrait (held by the National Portrait Gallery) features bands, and the Cobbe portrait (championed by Stanley Wells and the SBT) a lace rebato-style collar. That a ‘typical Elizabethan ruff’ was seen to ‘complete’ Tristram’s new portrait is puzzling. How could the addition of a ruff ‘complete’ an image that simply does not exist?

Despite the distinct lack of any pictorial evidence suggesting that Shakespeare adopted the Elizabethan fashion for ruffs, the practice of using the garment as a key element of the playwright’s identity is followed on a global scale. The LEGO Shakespeare Minifigure wears a ruff, as do multiple caricature versions of the playwright in popular YouTube videos (including ‘Dr Seuss VS Shakespeare. Epic Rap Battles of History’ [94,828,642 views] and the music video for ‘Hard to Be the Bard’ from the musical *Something Rotten!* [545,198 views]; see Figure 42).⁷ The garment has been included in the design of collectible ‘Shakespeare’ teddy

⁶ ‘10,000 life-like Shakespeare masks’.

⁷ Nice Peter, *Dr Seuss VS Shakespeare. Epic Rap Battles of History*, online video recording, YouTube, 17 August 2011 <<https://youtu.be/l3w2MTXBebg>> [accessed 7 April 2020]; Broadwaycom, *Music Video: “Hard to Be the Bard” Starring Christian Borle from “Something Rotten!”*, online video recording, YouTube, 21 July 2015 <<https://youtu.be/8hnl7yhIWGY>> [accessed 7 April 2020]

bears, wind-up toys, and even an articulated paper doll. Several story and sticker books for children feature a ruff-wearing cartoon figure on the cover to communicate quickly and clearly that the content is based on the playwright and his works. In April 2019, the famous bull statue positioned outside Birmingham’s Bullring shopping centre was dressed for the occasion of Shakespeare’s birthday with perhaps the largest ruff ever created.⁸ These wide-ranging examples collectively concretise the notion that the garment has become a fundamental element of Shakespeare’s image as a cultural icon. The garment’s figure-of-eight folds have become a key means by which the playwright’s identity is expressed and recognised. As I discuss in further detail below, the fact that this manufactured image centres on an item that is specifically and recognisably *Elizabethan* is acutely revealing when examining how Shakespeare lives on in our modern cultural imagination.



Figure 42. Christian Borle as Shakespeare in the music video for ‘Hard to Be the Bard’—a track from the comedy musical *Something Rotten!* (screengrab from video).

⁸ ‘Looking a little ruff for the Bard’, *Express & Star*, 24 April 2019 <<http://www.expressandstar.com/entertainment/attractions/2019/04/24/looking-a-little-ruff-for-the-bard>> [accessed 7 April 2020]

Further, the garment has gained significant traction as an indicator of something more than the playwright's own identity. Separated from the distinctive facial features depicted in the Droeshout engraving, the ruff is used widely in popular culture to imbue figures with 'Shakespearean' qualities. In some cases, the intended outcome is seemingly to weight certain characters with a sense of tradition and propriety. In *The Simpsons*, an anonymous actor wearing a ruff informs Krusty the Clown that his comedic interpretation of King Lear is incorrect. Only the 'proper' Shakespearean actor wears a ruff; Krusty, without this garment, is framed as an imposter in a 'classical' theatrical space (see Figure 43).⁹ In a similar vein, the opening moments of *Gnomeo & Juliet* (an animated adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*) see a beruffed gnome positioning this film retelling of Shakespeare's narrative in relation to the original text (depicted in Figure 44). Standing in a spotlight before a red curtain, the gnome explains: '[t]he story you are about to see has been told before—a lot. And now we are going to tell it again—but different. [...] Unfortunately, before we begin, there is rather long, boring prologue, which I will read to you now'.¹⁰ The gnome rolls out an enormous scroll and begins to perform Shakespeare's monologue in a flat voice, but is removed from the stage via a trapdoor midway through the fifth line. Here the ruff encourages the perspective that Shakespeare's plays are tedious, stodgy, and old-fashioned; introducing the original text of *Romeo and Juliet* in this manner indicates by comparison that this adaptation of the story is to be fresh, accessible, and entertaining.

⁹ 'Guess Who's Coming to Criticize Dinner?', *The Simpsons*, 24 October 1999.

¹⁰ *Gnomeo & Juliet*, dir. by Kelly Asbury (Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2011).



Figure 43. Krusty the Clown's performance as King Lear is criticised in *The Simpsons* by an actor wearing a ruff (screengrab from televised episode).



Figure 44. A beruffed gnome 'unfortunately' has to perform the 'long, boring' prologue to *Romeo and Juliet* at the beginning of *Gnomeo & Juliet* (screengrab from film).

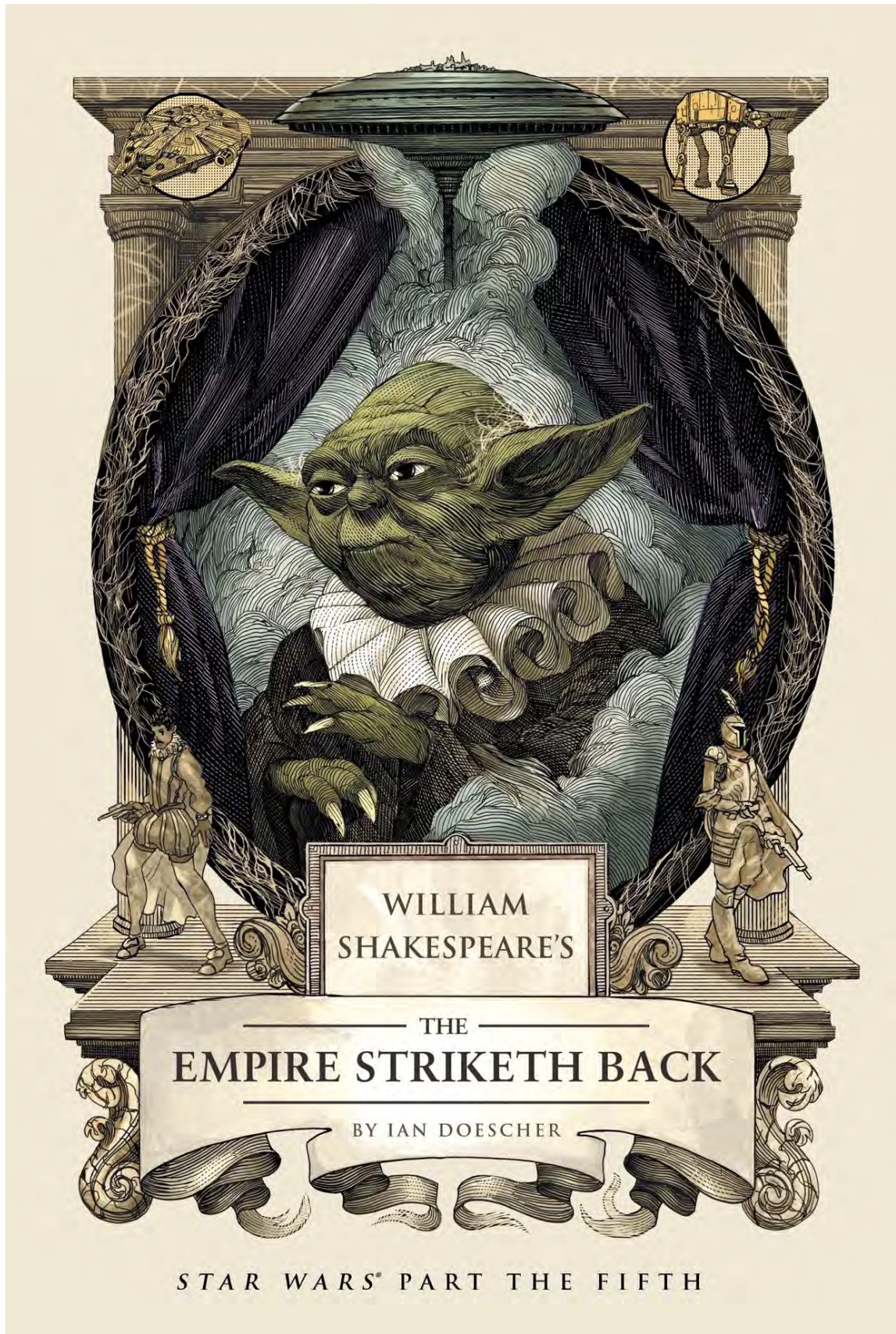


Figure 45. The cover of Ian Doescher's *William Shakespeare's The Empire Striketh Back*, featuring Yoda wearing a ruff.



Figure 46. Marie Cecile Thijs' surreal reimaginings of seventeenth-century Dutch portraiture.

In other instances, the presence of the iconic ruff initiates the unlikeliest of characters into a 'Shakespearean' literary or performance tradition—often for comedic effect. The covers of volumes in Ian Doescher's *William Shakespeare's Star Wars* series feature characters from the Sci-Fi franchise (Yoda and Princess Leia) wearing ruffs (see Figure 45). An equivalent approach has subsequently been used for the author's Shakespearean adaptations of *Back to the Future* and *Mean Girls*. *Shakespeare in Fluff*—one of several book publications to capitalize on the popularity of costumed pets—allows the reader 'finally [to] experience [Shakespeare's] genius the way he (may have) always intended—through the medium of small furry animals'.¹¹ Chinchillas, ferrets, rabbits, and guinea pigs are dressed in ruffs and other items of Jacobethan-inspired clothing to represent particular characters and moments in

¹¹ *Shakespeare in Fluff* (London: Pan Macmillan, 2016).

Shakespeare's plays. The Shakespearean significance of the ruff has even been recognised in images that are not intended to relate to the playwright in any way. A series of photographs of cats 'wearing' an extant seventeenth-century pleated ruff proved popular on Twitter when shared alongside a Shakespeare quote.¹² The images had actually been created (by photographer Marie Cecile Thijs) as surreal reimaginings of seventeenth-century Dutch portraiture (pictured in Figure 46).¹³ Pairing the photographs with an extract from the 'Good king of cats' passage from *Romeo and Juliet* was, however, seemingly irresistible.¹⁴

These characters are all made 'Shakespearean' simply through their wearing of a ruff. Their Elizabethan collars serve as an embodiment of the widely understood set of qualities the term 'Shakespearean' describes: a sense of prestige and guaranteed quality, high culture, tradition, and cultural significance. The existence of cultural associations between 'Shakespeare' and qualities such as these has been considered at length by scholars concerned with Shakespeare's 'remarkable cultural and commercial purchase' in twenty-first-century culture.¹⁵ Pressure has been applied to this phenomenon—conceptualised by Douglas Lanier as the Shakespeare 'brand'—to shed light on how an impression of the playwright has been crafted and manipulated to promote innumerable organisations, individuals, and products. In many ways the examples I give here align precisely with those discussed by Douglas Lanier, Nicola J. Watson, Kate Rumbold, and others engaged in the study of Shakespeare and popular culture. Lanier deconstructs the Shakespeare 'kitsch' of Stratford-upon-Avon's gift shops in 'Shakespeare™: myth and biographical fiction', for example, and the significance of souvenirs

¹² Incidentally, a different portrait of a cat wearing a ruff (titled *Cat in a Ruff*) has become associated with Mark Twain. The painting featured in the author's library during his lifetime; literary tourists can purchase prints of the portrait from The Mark Twain House & Museum shop.

¹³ 'About', *Studio Marie Cecile Thijs* <<https://www.mariececilethijs.com/biography>> [accessed 2 April 2019]

¹⁴ 'Tybalt: "What wouldst thou have with me?" Mercutio: "Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives..." Shakespeare – Romeo and Juliet [Photography by @eMCT]' (@UKShakespeare (Shakespeare Magazine), 2 March 2019).

¹⁵ Kate Rumbold, 'Brand Shakespeare?', *Shakespeare Survey* 64 (2011), 25–37 (p. 25).

within and beyond the town's Birthday Celebrations form the focus of Watson's 'Shakespeare on the tourist trail'.¹⁶

Most pertinent to the present discussion, however, is the notion that Shakespeare's image functions in popular culture as a kind of trademark, co-produced by the vast array of organisations and individuals who use it in the marketplace.¹⁷ Lanier argues specifically that 'the face of Shakespeare, familiar from the Droeshout portrait that graces the First Folio' has come to act as this trademark: 'that single image telegraphs what have been widely taken as certain key qualities of the franchise'.¹⁸ Essentially, to feature the playwright's face on any product is to draw on the powerful ideas that 'Shakespeare' has come to represent. The playwright is for most observers 'the icon of high or "proper" culture';¹⁹ it follows that his highly distinctive features would function as the core signifiers for related associations (such as 'traditionalism, learnedness, hand-crafted quality, and high art').²⁰

Crucially, what I have demonstrated so far in this chapter is that the ruff has come to be an essential—perhaps even *the* essential—tool through which an impression of Shakespeare is currently created in the marketplace. The enormously profitable idea of 'Shakespeare' is exploited not only through the playwright's name, words, and likeness, but specifically via the decorative collar that has long been seen to epitomize England's Elizabethan era. No face was necessary to promote a cucumber to 'Shakespearean' status, nor to transform Birmingham's Bullring bull into a temporary Shakespeare monument. This previously overlooked element of the Shakespeare 'brand' should not be underestimated in its significance. If one of the most

¹⁶ Nicola J. Watson, 'Shakespeare on the Tourist Trail', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Popular Culture*, ed. by Robert Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 199–226.

¹⁷ Rumbold, pp. 25–9.

¹⁸ Douglas Lanier, 'Shakespeare™: Myth and Biographical Fiction', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Popular Culture*, ed. by Shaughnessy, pp. 93–113 (p. 94).

¹⁹ Douglas Lanier, *Shakespeare and Modern Popular Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 3.

²⁰ Lanier, 'Shakespeare™', p. 95.

prevalent vehicles for recalling an essence of ‘Shakespeare’ is entirely absent from any early modern depiction of the playwright, where *did* it come from? On what fiction do modern conceptions of Shakespeare depend?

The story of how the ruff came to be the ultimate symbol for Shakespeare and the ‘Shakespearean’ is not as obvious as it might seem. In addition to the distinct lack of early modern depictions of Shakespeare wearing a ruff, the garment is notably absent from the surviving images of almost all other early modern players and playwrights: the majority of portraits of such figures instead depict the sitter wearing bands—the simple turned-down collar featured in the Chandos portrait.²¹ This seems not to be a coincidence. In *Citizen Portrait*, Tarnya Cooper (previously Curatorial Director at the National Portrait Gallery) makes a compelling case for there being a distinct set of attributes setting portraits of poets and writers apart from those depicting individuals of alternative status and occupation. There are enough identified portraits of authors dating from the early modern period to indicate the existence of discernible tropes in sitters’ self-styling. Cooper writes that surviving evidence ‘makes it clear that in the period up to around 1620 most authors wore relatively sober but smart clothes: often a black or dark coloured doublet with a falling band or collar’.²² While a playwright such as Shakespeare would have needed to invest in a suit of clothes befitting a gentleman to be presentable at court and to appear worthy of noble patronage, intricately styled neckwear does not appear to have formed part of the recognised ‘author’ image.²³

²¹ Edward Alleyn and John Fletcher are exceptions to this rule, but for good reason. Alleyn’s portrait is exceptional in multiple ways: the full-length format is unusual for a man of his social status, for example. It is possible that the portrait was commissioned to show Alleyn as imposing founder of Dulwich College. The ruff may have formed part of this status-reshaping process. Fletcher came from a notably wealthy background, and his portrait was painted when Fletcher’s career as a playwright at court and in the public theatres was at its height. See Tarnya Cooper, *Citizen Portrait* (London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2012), pp. 181-7.

²² Cooper, p. 175.

²³ A comparable code of practice seemingly applied for players during this period, though the uncertain provenance of such portraits makes for more tentative conclusions. The portraits associated with Richard Burbage and William Sly both depict the sitter wearing sober clothing and bands.

Significantly, an attribute shared by multiple early modern author portraits is a symbolic sign of dishevelment, performed via the sitter's neckwear. John Donne and Ben Jonson (as well as [the man believed to be] Shakespeare in the Chandos portrait) are pictured with their bands untied. This design feature was probably included purposefully to signal the sitter's status 'as a man of creativity and playful ingenuity'. Indicating a sense of 'artful neglect', this subtle signifier draws on a wider Elizabethan association between dishevelment of attire and 'a distracted mind absorbed in non-worldly concerns or residing upon a higher plane'.²⁴ In a culture deeply interested in symbolism and codification—particularly in dress and portraiture—such patterns in self-styling were responsible for communicating individuals' social status, occupation, age, beliefs, achievements, and more. While the ruff appears in swathes of portraits dating from the early modern period—usually those depicting nobility or the socially ascendant 'middling sort'—it is remarkable that the garment appears so rarely in those relating to playwrights and players. Indeed, it would appear our modern Shakespeare-ruff pairing entirely reverses such figures' overt rejection of the ornamental garment as a statement of status.

While we might look instead to the stage for an indication of the ruff's original role in early modern performance, evidence of early modern players having worn ruffs while performing is also notably scant. No ruffs are listed in Philip Henslowe's accounts or in the costume inventory written in Edward Alleyn's hand. While there are references to Henslowe occasionally purchasing lengths of 'finer' linen, 'Holland', and cambric (some of the fabrics used to create ruffs during the Elizabethan period), there is nothing to suggest that these fabrics were then made into ruffs. Henslowe does mention rebato collars on four occasions and bands

²⁴ Cooper, pp. 177-93.

more regularly.²⁵ Considering the level of detail with which Henslowe documented clothing in his possession, it would be surprising if he owned ruffs but never named them in his accounts.

An argument could be made that ruffs formed part of players' personal collections of apparel. After all, shoes and undergarments are also absent from Alleyn's inventory. It would be illogical to take this absence of evidence as evidence of absence; players probably provided such items themselves.²⁶ But no ruffs are mentioned in players' wills. While there is documentary evidence of 'middling sort' citizens bequeathing their best neckwear to their beneficiaries,²⁷ the same cannot be said for individuals listed as actors.²⁸ Similarly, none of the figures depicted in contemporary images of early modern performance appear to be wearing this distinctive item of clothing. The c.1595 Peacham drawing is entirely void of ruffs, as is (Aernout van Buchell's copy of) the Johannes De Witt drawing thought to depict the Swan playhouse. Both images are of course questionable in what they are claimed to represent—it is unclear whether either image actually represents a play in performance, as opposed to an imagined scene or a rehearsal—but they add to an accumulation of evidence inviting us to question seriously whether the Elizabethan era's most distinctive item of clothing was a standard feature of early modern playing apparel.²⁹

²⁵ *Henslowe's Diary*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

²⁶ Jean MacIntyre, *Costumes and Scripts in the Elizabethan Theatres* (Canada: The University of Alberta Press, 1992), p. 84.

²⁷ A Stratford-upon-Avon innkeeper is documented as owning thirteen 'ruff bandes' and a Yeoman seven shirts 'with bandes and ruffes', for example; qtd in Susan North, 'What the Elizabethans Wore: Evidence from Wills and Inventories of the "Middling Sort"', in *Elizabeth I & Her People*, ed. by Tarnya Cooper and Jane Eade (London: National Portrait Gallery Publications, 2013), pp. 34-41 (pp. 35-6).

²⁸ It is of course possible that ruffs were included in blanket bequests of players' playing apparel (such as those specified by Simon Jewell [1592], Thomas Pope [1603], and William Hovell [1615]) and are therefore not listed individually. However, William Browne named his 'best halfe shirt and my best band' in his 1634 will, and undergarments such as stockings, smocks, and petticoats appear as specific bequests in multiple wills transcribed in E. A. J. Honingmann and Susan Brock's *Playhouse wills: 1558-1632* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993). It therefore seems likely that garments such as standing ruffs would be mentioned in at least some of these wills if the garment was worn widely by those of players' social status.

²⁹ For a detailed discussion of the Peacham drawing, see June Schlueter, 'Rereading the Peacham Drawing', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 50.2 (1999), 171-84; R. A. Foakes articulates the problems with the De Witt drawing in 'Henslowe's Rose/Shakespeare's Globe', in *From Script to Stage in Early Modern England*, ed. by Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 11-31.

How, then, might we explain direct references to ruffs included in early modern plays? While it is true that several references to ruffs are scattered across Shakespeare's works, almost all of these instances refer to characters or events that are not actually seen on stage. In *Pericles* 4.2, having gone out to advertise Marina's availability in the brothel owned by his master, servant Boulton reports that 'a Spaniard's mouth watered as he went to bed to her very description'; the Bawd replies: 'We shall have him here tomorrow with his best ruff on' (4.2.81-3). The Spaniard is never seen at the brothel or mentioned again. Chiding the starving and freezing Katherine in 4.3 of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Petruchio asks:

Will we return unto thy father's house,
And revel it as bravely as the best,
With silken coats, and caps, and golden rings,
With ruffs and cuffs, and farthingales, and things,
With scarves, and fans, and double change of bravery,
With amber bracelets, beads, and all this knavery. (4.3.53-8)

Petruchio is here emphasising the foolishness of such clothing and in doing so indicating his disapproval of it. The notion of being so elaborately dressed is presented as ridiculous; it would therefore be incongruous for the described image to be realised in performance. In *All's Well that Ends Well*, the Clown describes his 'young lord' (Bertram) as 'a very melancholy man' because 'he will look upon his boot and sing, mend the ruff and sing, ask questions and sing, pick his teeth and sing' (3.2.3-7). In *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, editor Gary Taylor suggests that this 'ruff' could refer to 'the turned-over flap of a top-boot' rather than the style of collar.³⁰ Even if the Clown is describing a neck ruff, however, Bertram would not need to be seen with one on stage for this point to be made.

³⁰ *The New Oxford Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Gary Taylor and others (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 2310.

2 *Henry IV* features the only ruff reference that seems to require the garment to be worn by a character during a scene. Pistol threatens Doll Tearsheet: ‘God let me not live, but I will murder your ruff for this’ (2.4.108); soon after, Doll exclaims: ‘You a captain? You slave! For what? For tearing a poor whore’s ruff in a bawdy-house!’ (2.4.115-6). This interaction draws simultaneously on two contemporary associations: first, that prostitutes were at the time of the play’s composition recognisable by their excessively extravagant clothing (including ‘ruffs of the largest size’); and second, that the act of tearing a prostitute’s clothing functioned in early modern drama as a signifier of sexual violence.³¹ Comparable references to ruff-tearing can be found in Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair* and Field’s *A Woman is a Weathercock*. In the former, Knockhum asserts to ‘ramping Alice’—a brothel-keeper—‘do you know who I am! shall I tear ruff, slit waistcoat, make rags of petticoat, ha!’ (4.5.78-9);³² the latter features assistant Pendant exclaiming that she ‘should follow [Count Frederick] like a young rank whore [...] Put on my fighting waistcoat and the ruff, / That fears no tearing’.³³ Significantly, then, the only ruff essential to the action of a Shakespeare play originally signalled a situation that would hardly be considered representative of ‘high’ culture.

Casting a wider net across surviving early modern plays gives further insight into how ruffs were treated by playwrights during this period. While there is limited requirement for the garment to be worn by players performing plays by Shakespeare, several texts dating from the beginning of the seventeenth century put ruffs to pointed purpose as part of the onstage action. In *The Roaring Girl* (1611), Mistress Openwork quips that Master Goshawk ‘goes in a shag-ruff band, with a face sticking up in’t which shows like an agate set in a cramp-ring’ (4.2.16-

³¹ Qtd in Gustav Ungerer, ‘Prostitution in Late Elizabethan London: The Case of Mary Newborough’, *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, 15 (2003), 138–223 (p. 212).

³² Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, ed. by G. R. Hibbard (London: A&C Black, 1977).

³³ Nathan Field, ‘A Woman is a Weathercock’, in *A select collection of old English plays*, ed. by W. Carew Hazlitt, 14 vols (London: Reeves and Turner, 1874-5), XI (1875), pp. 1-86 (p. 19).

8).³⁴ This is not a compliment. Comparing the effect of a face being framed by a ‘shag-ruff’ (probably a style of ruff notable for a dense, rough texture reminiscent of long-pile ‘shag’ lining fabrics) to a stone encased immovably in a ring is a more cutting iteration of Petruccio’s ridiculing of the absurd fashions of the period. In a similar vein, as a Spanish ambassador processes across the stage in 3.1 of *The White Devil* (1612) Flamineo declares: ‘He carries his face in’s ruff, as I have seen a serving-man carry glasses in a cypress hat-band, monstrous steady for fear of breaking. He looks like the claw of a blackbird, first salted and then broiled in a candle’ (3.1.73-6).³⁵ This imagery corresponds closely with that of the ‘agate set in a cramp-ring’; a ruff is cited not as an expression of any quality that might be considered desirable, but a source of utter derision.

Similar devices appear in *A Woman is a Weathercock* (c.1609; a suitor is so described by Captain Pouts: ‘Is’t he that looks like an Italian tailor out of the lac’d wheel? that wears a bucket on his head?’) and *The Alchemist* (1610; ‘Thou art not of the light! That ruff of pride / About thy neck, betrays thee [...] Depart, proud Spanish fiend!’ [4.7.51-2]; ‘He looks in that deep ruff like a head on a platter’ [4.3.24]).³⁶ Treated with scorn, linked to national stereotypes, and used as a parodic symbol of immorality or excess, ruffs were evidently seen during the early modern period to hold complex (and often negative) associations—none of which relate to those attached to the garment in twenty-first-century popular culture. As is often the case with subjects of satire, these associations were not baseless. The Elizabethan fashion for ruffs was criticized widely due to the demanding and wasteful processes necessary to make the garment wearable.

³⁴ Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*, ed. by Elizabeth Cook, 2nd edn (London: A&C Black, 1997).

³⁵ John Webster, *The White Devil*, ed. by Christina Luckyj (London: A&C Black, 1996).

³⁶ Field, p. 21; Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist*, ed. by Elizabeth Cook (London: A&C Black, 1991).

While the standing ruff has come to be understood as signature apparel of the early modern period—an everyday item worn by Shakespeare and the wider Elizabethan population—this fashionable item of dress required a regularity of maintenance that was ludicrously impractical.³⁷ A lengthy, complicated process was necessary to keep the decorative garment in shape. Susan Vincent notes that ‘rather than having an enduring form, the ruff was remade at every wash’.³⁸ Ruffs were sent to professional launderers to be cleaned, dipped in starch, and shaped into ‘sets’ with heated irons.³⁹ The extensive experiments carried out by Shakespeare’s Globe’s costume team between 1997 and 2005 (discussed in Chapter One) revealed that the setting part of the process alone is ‘a very time-consuming business’: it took more than three hours of focused, skilled labour to set one neck and two wrist ruffs. Concerns that the ruffs would ‘go limp in an outdoor theatre on rainy days’ were realised. These items required re-setting so often that the costume team would ideally have had two sets per actor in rotation; there was ‘never time between performances to keep them looking great’.⁴⁰

This account corresponds closely with a complaint made by early modern pamphleteer Phillip Stubbes in his oft-cited *Anatomy of Abuses*. According to Stubbes, ‘if it happen that a shoure of raine catch [ruff-wearers] before they can get harbour, then their great ruffes strike sayle, and downe they fall, as dish-cloutes fluttering in the winde, like Windmill sayles’.⁴¹ In fact, the standing ruff was so ephemeral in form that the garment was carried separately in a specially made box when its owner was travelling. *The Servingmans Comfort* (published in 1598) states that when a ‘Mistres ryde[s] abrode’, she must have a servant specifically to carry ‘her Boxe

³⁷ Vincent, p. 19.

³⁸ Vincent, p. 32.

³⁹ Janet Arnold, Jenny Tiramani, and Santina Levey, *Patterns of Fashion 4: The cut and construction of linen shirts, smocks, neckwear, headwear and accessories for men and women c.1540-1660* (London: Pan Macmillan, 2008), p. 10.

⁴⁰ Jenny Tiramani, ‘Janet Arnold and the Globe Wardrobe: Handmade Clothes for Shakespeare’s Actors’, *Costume*, 34 (2000), 118-22 (p. 121).

⁴¹ *Phillip Stubbes’s Anatomy of the Abuses in England*, ed. by Frederick James Furnivall, 2 vols (London: N. Trübner & Co., 1877), I (1877), p. 51.

with Ruffes’;⁴² *A Match at Midnight* features a maid ‘with a bandbox’, who has been ‘[f]or my mistress’s ruff at her sempstress’’.⁴³ The ruff evidently required a dedicated arrangement of specialist staff and equipment to function as part of a wardrobe.

While the prevalence of large, perfectly set ruffs in portraits of the period has skewed modern perceptions of the ruff’s permanence and pervasiveness, it is more likely the case that regular ruff-wearing of this kind was limited to the upper echelons of society. Vincent is of this opinion: the ruff must have been ‘a truly privileged form of dress’ because ‘the time and labour involved in its techniques of making and remaking could only be afforded by the wealthy, as could its techniques of wear . . . [it] was a serious statement of luxury, wealth, and style’.⁴⁴ This is not to say, however, that the garment was entirely inaccessible to those of less privileged rank. Indeed, the ruff often appears in portraits, effigies, and wills relating to citizens of the ‘middling sort’. But the delicate, impractical, and high-maintenance nature of the style of ruff now serving as a ‘Shakespeare’ trademark leads us to question the likelihood of it being worn widely on a day-to-day basis. It is understandable why this particular garment would function well in early modern drama as a symbol of excess and pride, and perhaps less well as part of a player’s regular wardrobe. It seems clear that the association between Shakespeare and the ruff has little to no basis in historical circumstance, aside from the fact that the garment existed during the playwright’s lifetime. Rather, the bond between these now-iconic elements of the Elizabethan era was formed during a more recent period of history.

Our modern connection between the ruff and Shakespeare began as part of the nationalistic cultural movement that emerged around two centuries after the playwright’s death. As outlined

⁴² Qtd in ‘The Seruingmans Comfort’, in *Inedited Tracts: Illustrating the manners, opinions, and occupations of Englishmen during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, ed. by W. C. Hazlitt (New York: Burt Franklin, 1968), pp. 103-67 (p. 151).

⁴³ W.R., ‘A Match at Midnight’, in *A select collection of old English plays*, ed. by W. Carew Hazlitt, 14 vols (London: Reeves and Turner, 1874-5), XIII (1875), pp. 1-98 (p. 74).

⁴⁴ Vincent, p. 32.

in the introduction to this thesis (see pp. 27-32), feelings towards Shakespeare and his plays changed considerably over the course of the eighteenth century; it was during this period that the playwright rose to near-divine status, partly due to the activities of David Garrick.⁴⁵ A key element of the playwright's newly formed, eighteenth-century identity as England's national poet was a novel and explicit emphasis on his place in the 'golden age' of the nation's past.

In *England's Elizabeth: An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy* (2002), Michael Dobson and Nicola J. Watson trace the first steps of an apocryphal relationship between Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth I to establish how this process of cultural recalibration unfolded.⁴⁶ Anecdotes asserting a connection between these two iconic figures first appeared in print in 1702, beginning with John Dennis's claim that *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was written at the queen's command and soon developing into fictional accounts of Shakespeare's words having inspired Elizabeth's most patriotic foreign policies. I will return to these imagined Shakespeare-Elizabeth interactions in the second part of this chapter, but the part played by such narratives in rewriting the playwright's reputation is essential to acknowledge here. According to Dobson and Watson, the (entirely unfounded) stories associating Shakespeare with Elizabeth 'helped clear the Bard's name of a good deal of unsavoury later seventeenth-century gossip'—namely the conception of the playwright 'as an untutored and lawless Warwickshire yokel'.⁴⁷ Suggesting Shakespeare held a personal connection with Queen Elizabeth would have the instantaneous effect of promoting him retrospectively from lawless yokel to Poet Laureate.⁴⁸ This was an imagined pairing that would make Shakespeare worthy by association: the playwright's origins and station could remain unchanged; the possibility of

⁴⁵ See Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992).

⁴⁶ Michael Dobson and Nicola J. Watson, *England's Elizabeth: An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 121-38.

⁴⁷ Dobson and Watson, pp. 122-5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

royal patronage was enough to imbue Shakespeare and his plays with a sense of national significance.

It was in the wake of these newly imagined apocryphal narratives that the inaugural Shakespeare-ruff pairing appeared. Printed as a frontispiece in Alexander Pope's 1725 *The Works of Shakespear in Six Volumes* was a new portrait of the playwright, engraved by George Vertue in 1721 (pictured in Figure 47). Where Pope's editorial predecessor Nicholas Rowe had provided his 1709 edition with an engraving that conflated features from the Droeshout and Chandos portraits (the doublet of the former; the collar, face, and hair of the latter), Vertue's 1721 engraving reframes Shakespeare as Elizabethan nobility.⁴⁹ The sober styles of doublet featuring in previous portraits are replaced by a highly decorative garment textured with decorative 'pinking' (small slits cut through the top layer of fabric—a design feature found in many high-status Elizabethan portraits).⁵⁰ Around the playwright's neck is a voluminous, crisp white ruff. Indicating a decisive shift in how Shakespeare was conceived around the time of its composition, this portrait retrospectively elevated the playwright's social status with remarkable effect. The national poet's reputation was no longer reliant purely on the possibility of his proximity to Elizabeth I. Dressed in the clothing of the highest ranks of Elizabethan society, Shakespeare could be imagined as a gentleman of that hallowed era in his own right. A ruff thus 'completed' the vision of Shakespeare the Enlightenment had created. The qualities the period attached to the playwright and his works—respectability, cultural significance, and

⁴⁹ Vertue's 1725 Shakespeare engraving was not drawn from the artist's imagination but from a picture featuring in a private collection. An inscription below the portrait reads: 'Ad Originalem Tabulam penes Edwardum Dominum Harley [From the original picture possessed by Edward, Lord Harley]'. This 'original picture' is believed to be the Harleian miniature, known also as the Welbeck Abbey miniature. It is unclear how this miniature came to be used as the basis for a new Shakespeare portrait. Vertue's engraving inspired several such representations of Shakespeare, including Angelica Kauffman's *Ideal Portrait of Shakespeare* (1775). See Erin C. Blake, 'Shakespeare, Portraiture, Painting and Prints', in *Edinburgh Companion to Shakespeare and the Arts*, ed. by Mark Thornton Burnett (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), pp. 409-34 (p. 415).

⁵⁰ Pinking was a particularly high-status form of decoration because it exposed additional layers of fine fabrics beneath the surface of a garment. See Natasha Korda, "'The Sign of the Last': Gender, Material Culture, and Artisanal Nostalgia in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*", *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 43.3 (2013), 573-97 (p. 581).

nationalistic pride—could finally through this garment be fastened materially to Shakespeare’s increasingly iconic image.



Figure 47. George Vertue’s engraving of Shakespeare, completed in 1721 and included as the frontispiece of Alexander Pope’s 1725 *The Works of Shakespear: In Six Volumes* (image courtesy of Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections, University of Birmingham).

While these developments paint a revealing picture of the circumstances that engendered the now-familiar Shakespeare-ruff pairing, further explanation is needed to establish how the garment became imbued with significations relating primarily to performance. It is clear that our modern image of the playwright is built on foundations prizing his (imagined) place among the Elizabethan cultural and societal elite; it does not follow naturally that the ruff should be understood widely as a satirical symbol of traditionalism.

Many of the ruff's 'Shakespearean' associations are products of performance practices discussed in my previous chapters. A tradition of presenting the playwright's works in historically-inspired costumes originated during the final years of the eighteenth century. The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery (1789–1806) and John Philip Kemble's *Hamlet* (c.1783–1801) saw Shakespeare's characters rooted retrospectively in a nostalgic reimagining of the Elizabethan era for the first time (see pp. 28-32 for a comprehensive account of these events). As I demonstrate in Chapter Two, the practice of staging Shakespeare in historical dress lasted from the eighteenth century through to the 1970s, and is still remembered as a defining feature of the RSC's early work. This sequence of events has resulted in the modern association between Jacobethan clothing and several of the qualities that comprise the Shakespeare 'brand'. As noted by Rumbold, the RSC is a major contributor to the playwright's commercial value in modern culture.⁵¹ In 2010, a UK-wide survey conducted by the organisation indicated that at least 80 per cent of people were aware of the RSC's name, and that the qualities most commonly associated with the RSC brand were 'high quality', 'successful', and 'upmarket'.⁵² If we couple these results with the company's self-presentation as source and custodian of Shakespearean performance tradition (as evidenced in Chapter Two), it is easy to see how a distinctive Elizabethan garment came to function so widely as a signifier for all things

⁵¹ Rumbold, pp. 27-31.

⁵² Qtd in Rumbold, p. 30.

‘Thespian’, ‘traditional’, and ‘Shakespearean’. The distinctive appearance of the ruff and the regularity of its presence in the RSC’s projected image has meant that the organisation’s far-reaching associations have been distilled into, and communicated by, this garment alone.

The history of the Shakespeare-ruff phenomenon forms an essential foundation for understanding how and why the ruff has been used in recent stagings of Shakespeare’s plays. It is only through recognising the garment’s power and prominence as a symbol for Shakespeare that the ruff’s modern theatrical function can become clear. Rather than simply functioning as a constituent part of a Jacobethan-inspired setting, this iconic collar currently holds enormous potential for recalling or disrupting certain ideas around the playwright and his works. Insight into how this potential has been realised can be gleaned from a single day of performance. In April 2017, two Shakespeare productions were staged simultaneously less than a mile apart along London’s South Bank. One was *Othello* in Shakespeare’s Globe’s Sam Wanamaker Playhouse (dir. Ellen McDougall, des. Fly Davis), the other *Twelfth Night* at the National Theatre (dir. Simon Godwin, des. Soutra Gilmour). Although these productions were a world apart in style, scale, and tone, both used ruffs in a way that riffed or relied on the garment’s significance in popular culture. By interpreting what these garments were made to mean within the wider context of each staging, I offer new insight into how the Shakespeare ‘brand’ has materialised in stagings of the playwright’s works. While past costuming practices have been responsible for burdening the ruff with some of its most prevalent Shakespeare associations, these recent productions indicate that Shakespearean performance is currently engaged in a process of questioning all the garment has come to represent.

Twelfth Night was a production defined by a sense of lyrical festivity and emotional poignancy. The casting of celebrity actor Tamsin Grieg as ‘Malvolia’ (a decision that formed the foundation of the entire production) pulled firmly on prominent themes threaded through

Shakespeare's text. The play's reversal and exploration of gender and sexuality was sharpened as a result of the additional 'queer energy' brought to the narrative by a regendered Malvolio who presented as gay.⁵³ Illyria was realised as a 'poetic space' that was not entirely naturalistic: the world created on the National Theatre's Olivier stage was intended to be 'coherent on its own terms', and to feel more like a place in the viewer's imagination than a real location.⁵⁴ Inspired by a line spoken in the play's final moments—'and thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges' (5.1.354-5)—this whimsical world embraced an essence of timelessness. Enormous walls rotated around a central point like hands on a clock, creating what seemed like a limitless array of spaces and places: the bow of a ship, a hospital room, a courtyard with swimming pool, a glittering gay bar named 'The Elephant'. Although most of the outfits worn by characters were recognisable as (versions of) modern dress, some had 'a degree of historicism to them'. Sir Andrew Aguecheek's pale pink suit was 'a reference to the historical notion of the dandy', for example, while the twins 'could carry a much more contemporary feeling—a much simpler, and a more edgy costume'.⁵⁵ Godwin explains that he wanted the production's setting to reflect 'the sense of history that had happened between the play being written and us presenting it today, so that it wasn't something that was ahistorical but was unabashedly playful in its historical references'.⁵⁶

The director saw historical styles of dress as a means of maintaining a social hierarchy in the fantastical world of the production. Shakespeare's plays are, in Godwin's view, 'so much written on a pyramidal structure—people being in charge, and others wishing that they were in charge, or suffering because they're not'; the challenge of rendering Shakespeare into modern

⁵³ Tiffany Stern, 'Quite the Reverse' (programme note), *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare (London: National Theatre, 2017), pp. 26-9 (p. 28).

⁵⁴ Simon Godwin, interview with Ella Hawkins (London, 21 March 2019).

⁵⁵ Godwin, interview.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

dress is keeping this sense of hierarchy alive.⁵⁷ The appearance of Countess Olivia—around whom much of *Twelfth Night*'s status-centred narrative revolves—required particularly careful consideration. To present Olivia as having a lofty position in 'a [social] structure that we could understand', the Countess was reimagined as 'very much a figure of glamour with all of these female handmaidens'. Olivia wore a 'sharp' monochrome ensemble (a fitted black dress with flared knee-length skirt) and stylish square sunglasses, communicating an impression of wealth and status that would be recognisable to a modern audience.⁵⁸ The outfits worn by the Countess' 'handmaidens' were a reflection of the same sleek aesthetic. Unlike Olivia, however, these figures were identifiable by their matching black ruffs (see Figure 48).



Figure 48. Countess Olivia (front) wore a sleek black ensemble and stylish sunglasses; her 'handmaidens' wore co-ordinating outfits accessorised with sizeable black ruffs (photograph by Marc Brenner).

⁵⁷ Godwin, interview.

⁵⁸ Godwin, interview.

The inclusion of ruffs in Gilmour's designs for Olivia's handmaidens drew deliberately on the iconic nature of the garment while remapping its meaning to suit the playful world of the production. Godwin saw this usage of the ruff as an act of appropriation. Understanding the garment as 'a prop or piece of costume that we strongly associate with Shakespearean time', the director thought 'oh yes, wow, we can appropriate—we can playfully [...] make it into a postmodern detail—by placing it as a kind of fashion gesture'.⁵⁹ The garment was intended to convey 'a sense of regality, a sense of service, and a sense of status'.⁶⁰ Despite not wearing a standing ruff herself, the prominence of the garment in Olivia's household would assert her significant social status within the world of the play. Interestingly, Godwin saw the ruff in this context as an item of uniform. It meant that the characters who wore it were 'part of a staff, a part of a household'; the ruff was 'part of a code of dress that [the handmaidens were] sort of obliged to wear, because that's the sort of quirky house uniform'.⁶¹ In this production, then, the iconic ruff was used as an indirect statement of status and an indicator of inclusion. It referenced the historical significance of the garment as a status symbol, but used its restrictive nature to signify a sense of servitude and household co-ordination rather than leisure and social exclusivity.

Importantly, this usage was a *product* of the fact that the ruff has such a prominent place in our modern cultural imagination. Gilmour's costume design played with the expectations of National Theatre audiences by acknowledging but subverting the ruff's signification of traditional Shakespearean performance. This was a production distinctly aware of the layers of history and cultural status that have accumulated around the playwright and his works, but which consciously and playfully positioned itself as post-Elizabethan and post-traditional—a part of Shakespeare's iconic afterlife rather than a continuation of an outmoded performance

⁵⁹ Godwin, interview.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Godwin, interview.

practice. In making a subtle but direct reference to the image of the playwright that performs ubiquitously as a ‘brand’, the National Theatre’s *Twelfth Night* introduced a sense of meta-consciousness to its act of reimagining Shakespeare for a modern, culturally aware audience.

In the Shakespeare’s Globe *Othello*, just a short walk along the Thames path from *Twelfth Night*, ruffs were introduced as a focal point from the moment the performance began. From the stage doors of the candlelit Sam Wanamaker Playhouse emerged a company of actors wearing modern ‘basics’ (cream leggings and loose shirts). Each held a ruff loosely in their hand. As an a cappella choir sang a haunting, historically-restyled rendition of Lana Del Rey’s *Video Games*, the actors sombrely dressed themselves in full view of the audience. Most added only a ruff to their modern cream outfits. Cassio—notably played by and as a woman in this production—donned a dark leather doublet and hose as the company gradually blew out the candles illuminating the space. After a moment of complete darkness, the performance of the play proper began. Shakespeare’s characters were presented wearing colourful ruffs and coordinating exaggerated codpieces, stripped-back Jacobethan-inspired undergarments, and/or masculine ensembles in black leather (see Figure 49 and Figure 50). Ruffs remained an ever-present element of the onstage world created for the play.

These opening moments were carefully crafted to introduce the audience to the production’s central concerns. Driven by an instinct that the play’s racism, misogyny, and sexual violence should be confronted and taken responsibility for in any new staging, the creative team wanted to highlight that ‘400 years later, the problems of Shakespeare’s *Othello* are still very much a part of our world’.⁶² Joel Horwood—the production’s dramaturg—explains that these ideas were coalescing from the early stages of the production’s development process. Initial conversations rounded quickly on how the text’s discussions of masculinity continued to feel

⁶² Ellen McDougall and Joel Horwood (programme note), *Othello* by William Shakespeare (London: Shakespeare’s Globe, 2017), p. 6.

accurate and resonant. Troubling contemporary statistics of domestic abuse evidenced the extent to which the play's issues live on in twenty-first-century society, and observations of 'how much we police identity' gave these discussions additional, uncomfortable weight.⁶³ For Horwood, maintaining a tangible 'tension' in 'the past versus the present' felt essential for exploring these ideas in performance. The 'complex practice' of staging *Othello* today could be communicated by acknowledging the 'schism' that emerges when such a problematic historical text is re-performed today. The complexities of this act could thus 'stay alive for a modern audience'; viewers would be encouraged to experience *Othello* through a critical lens, understanding the play's age-old issues as being far from obsolete.⁶⁴

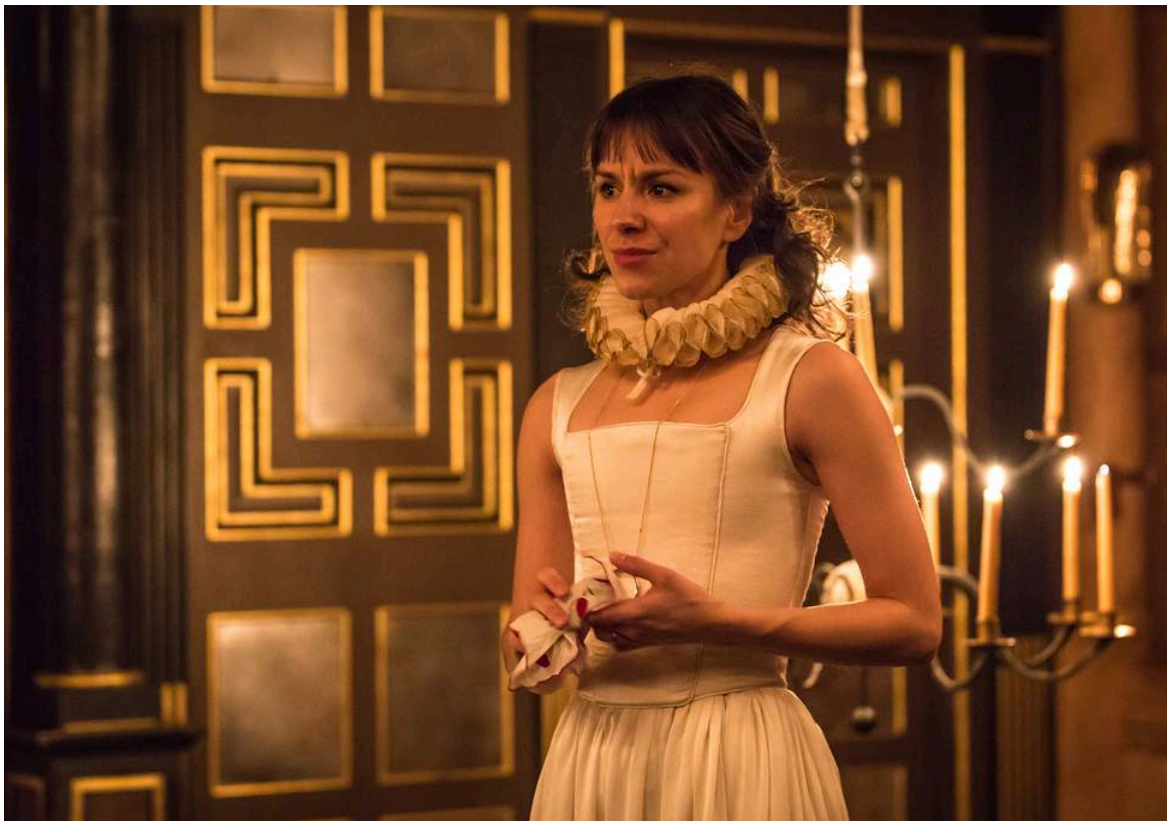


Figure 49. In Shakespeare's Globe's 2017 *Othello*, Desdemona wore a ruff and stripped-back, Jacobethan-inspired undergarments (photograph by Marc Brenner).

⁶³ Joel Horwood, interview with Ella Hawkins (telephone, 1 May 2019).

⁶⁴ Horwood, interview.



Figure 50. Roderigo wore a bright pink ruff and co-ordinating codpiece (photograph by Marc Brenner).

The entire production was laced with this past/present tension. Composer Orlando Gough selected twenty-first-century pop songs themed around gender and sex, adapted them to suggest Elizabethan musical arrangements, and had them performed a cappella by a choir of four.⁶⁵ The karaoke party in which several of these songs were performed (the ‘feasting’ of 2.3) was illuminated by a candle-lit disco ball, and the celebrating ‘gentlemen’ accessorised their Jacobethan-inspired outfits with modern party hats. When Desdemona undressed in 4.3, she was revealed to be wearing a modern crop top and leggings beneath her historically-inspired outer garments. The production began and ended with the Duke taking a photograph of the murder scene on his smartphone. Even the permanent physical space in which the production was staged became an essential part of its past/present logic. Horwood describes

⁶⁵ *Video Games* by Lana Del Rey, *In the Dark Places* by PJ Harvey, *I Kissed a Girl* by Katy Perry, and *I Am a Slave 4U* by Britney Spears; Horwood, interview.

the contradictory nature of the reimagined/reconstructed theatre space—its presentation as ‘a museum experience’ but its very recent construction date—as being a ‘perfect’ fit for the production. It was also impossible to avoid the conflicting pressures in play at Shakespeare’s Globe throughout the 2017 *Othello*’s development period. Emma Rice’s departure as Artistic Director had been announced in October 2016; the dramaturg remembers that a ‘tension over traditionalism versus reinvention was present in every production, every meeting, every discussion’ during his time working at the theatre.⁶⁶ This clash of ideals fed directly into the *Othello* creative team’s approach to staging Shakespeare’s text, adding to the ideas that had formed the initial grounding for the production.⁶⁷

Dedicating the opening moments of this *Othello* to a ruff-centred display of dressing thus made a powerful proclamation of the production’s complex relationship with Shakespeare’s text. Layering neutral modern outfits with ruffs in full view of the audience served as a clear and deliberate acknowledgement of the multiple periods implicated in the play’s themes. The ruff’s ability to signify instantly ‘Shakespeare the Elizabethan’ gave a specific indication of which ‘past’ the production was engaging with. It served as a marker of time that would be immediately readable for modern audiences—a bookend for this *Othello*’s spanning of past and present. As well as emphasising that ‘Shakespeare, then’ could apply directly to ‘us, now’, the performative act of adding the iconic ruff to a recognisably modern outfit could be read as a confrontation of the playwright’s ‘transcendent’ reputation in modern culture. The company of actors became symbolically enrobed in the ‘Shakespearean’ when they tied the garment around their necks. Embodying the accumulative weight of centuries of tradition and esteem, the ruff could make tangible the cultural narratives that—in the view of the creative team—haunt any staging of the playwright’s works. This production’s use of ruffs was not a playful

⁶⁶ I discuss Emma Rice’s tenure as Artistic Director of Shakespeare’s Globe at length in Chapter Four.

⁶⁷ Horwood, interview.

nod towards the play's Elizabethan origins or a mischievous disruption of an established performance tradition. It was a declaration that the production would centre on the fact that the play's social issues remained resolutely alive four centuries after the playwright's death.

These momentary instances of the ruff's Shakespearean associations being recalled in performance are enough to indicate the existence of a complex, ongoing process of cultural negotiation. In recent stagings of the playwright's works, the ruff has been used by directors and designers as a means of engaging directly with the image of 'Shakespeare' that circulates in modern popular culture. While this discussion has illuminated many contradictions underpinning the Shakespeare-ruff phenomenon—perhaps most notably that this pairing presents the playwright in a manner early modern dramatists considered acutely parodic—its most pressing conclusion is a call for closer scrutiny of how costume design has contributed to the construction and continuation of the Shakespeare 'brand'. Many of the meanings attached to this garment today result from the costuming practices of major Shakespeare institutions. It is unsurprising that the newest phase in the ruff's Shakespearean afterlife should involve practitioners reclaiming the garment for their own purposes. Conceptions of 'Shakespeare' are still evolving; this process is unfolding dialogically between (so-called) 'high' and 'popular' culture. Costume design clearly exerts considerable influence on how the playwright is understood nationally and internationally, and has done so for centuries.

Shakespeare is not the only Elizabethan icon whose identity has come to be connected with the ruff. In 2010, Dame Judi Dench swept onto the stage of the Rose Theatre Kingston (RTK), wearing an imposing brocade, velvet, and lace gown. Words were not necessary to identify the historical figure being portrayed. Her hair was a pinned mass of golden-red curls, framed by a large, heart-shaped rebato collar. Her neck was encircled by a petite ruff edged with pearls (see

Figure 51). This collection of signs made Dench immediately recognisable as Elizabeth I; the queen's continued prominence in popular culture—always with curled red hair, and almost always wearing a ruff—meant the figure's appearance was easy to decode. Less clear, perhaps, was the reason for Elizabeth's inclusion in the world of the production. The play being staged was Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. England's Elizabethan monarch does not feature in the dramatis personae for this or any other Shakespeare text. Much like the connection between the playwright and the ruff, the impulse to bring Shakespeare and Elizabeth together is grounded in ideas that are more modern than early modern.



Figure 51. Dame Judi Dench as Elizabeth I in the 2010 RTK *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, identifiable by her curled red hair, Elizabethan-inspired gown, and ruff (photograph by Nobby Clark).

Dench's representation of Elizabeth I was the result of a tapestry of narratives, myths, and legends that has been woven and reworked continuously over a period of several centuries. From the moment of her death in 1603, the monarch's identity has been sculpted to suit a broad

variety of political, personal, and cultural ideas. The queen has performed the role of a Protestant icon of a ‘lost national and theological wholeness’ (seventeenth century), a site for the exploration of changing ideas around womanhood (eighteenth century), and the ‘presiding spirit of Old England’s golden age’ (nineteenth century).⁶⁸ The fragmentary and unstable nature of the surviving evidence for who Elizabeth I really was—much of which takes the form of symbolic portraiture—has incited successive generations to interpret the elusive figure for their own ends.⁶⁹ Dobson and Watson argue compellingly that this ‘posthumous progress through the collective psyche of her country’ has positioned Elizabeth I at the core of the constitutive myth that forms the origin of modern Englishness.⁷⁰ The ongoing prevalence of stories and theories that have long fascinated historians, antiquarians, dramatists, film-makers, and purveyors of historical fiction mean that Elizabeth has come to signify a range of qualities and fantasies recognised widely as being fundamental to British national identity. As articulated by Sidney Carroll in his 1947 chronicle play *The Imperial Votaress*, ‘[t]he very name of Elizabeth arouses recollections of intellectual giants and poetic geniuses, wise statesmen and daring seamen adventurers’.⁷¹ The remarkable stories and figures that were alive during this historical period have become intertwined into a collective legend now encapsulated by the legacy of the nation’s Elizabethan figurehead.

A connection between Elizabeth and Shakespeare has become an accepted fact in our modern cultural imagination. As with the ruff, these Elizabethan icons are regularly brought into close proximity with one another in various areas of popular culture (most recently in television series *Upstart Crow* [2016–present], novel *Fools and Mortals* by Bernard Cornwell [2017], and film *Bill* [2014]). The ‘double myth’ of the monarch has been evidenced (first by Dobson

⁶⁸ Dobson and Watson, pp. 48, 80, 116.

⁶⁹ Dobson and Watson, p. 7.

⁷⁰ Dobson and Watson, p. 265.

⁷¹ Sidney Carroll, *The Imperial Votaress* (London: Constable, 1947), p. v.

and Watson and subsequently by Helen Hackett) as becoming firmly established during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I mentioned above that that this process began in 1702 (see p. 174). Dennis' claim that *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was commissioned by Elizabeth was the first of a stream of such anecdotes. The 1790s saw the appearance of a (forged) 'personal letter' from Elizabeth to Shakespeare, the first suggestion that it was in fact the queen who formed the subject of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, and the fabrication of stories wherein Elizabeth visited London's public playhouses to watch the playwright perform.⁷² Walter Scott's *Kenilworth* (1821) went further, introducing the romantic idea that the monarch was supporter and patroness of the national poet. When petitioned by bear-baiting entrepreneurs to close down the newly established London playhouses, Scott's Elizabeth declares 'there is that in [Shakespeare's] plays that is worth twenty Bear-gardens; and that this new undertaking of his Chronicles, as he calls them, may entertain, with honest mirth, mingled with useful instruction, not only our subjects, but even the generation which may succeed us'.⁷³ The notion that the queen was emotionally invested in Shakespeare's works and career quickly gained traction: later decades in the nineteenth century saw the pair meet in the realms of opera, art, and literature. The double myth of Shakespeare and Elizabeth continued to unfold over the twentieth century in film and television; the mass appeal of *Shakespeare in Love* (1998) and its investment in the same fanciful ideas that stimulated commentators in the 1790s demonstrates that this cultural fantasy continued with vitality at the turn of the twenty-first century.⁷⁴ The fact that there is no documentary evidence at all for Elizabeth and Shakespeare

⁷² Dobson and Watson, pp. 125-7; Several of these myths have resurfaced in recent stagings of Shakespeare's plays. The Royal Shakespeare Company's 2018 *Merry Wives of Windsor* (discussed in Chapter Five) opened with the voice and a projected image of the queen commissioning Shakespeare to write the play, and a marionette performance of *Venus & Adonis* staged by the company in 2004 and 2017 (created in collaboration with Little Angel Theatre) featured a puppet of Elizabeth in its prologue. The official opening of Shakespeare's Globe in 1997 'featured Jane Lapotaire entering the theatre on horseback in costume as Elizabeth I'; Stephen Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Mark Rylance at the Globe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 39.

⁷³ Walter Scott, *Kenilworth* (USA: Seven Treasures Publications, 2009), pp. 131-3.

⁷⁴ Helen Hackett, *Shakespeare and Elizabeth: The Meeting of Two Myths* (Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press, 2009) p. 4.

having had any sort of personal relationship has proven no impediment to the perpetuation of this myth.⁷⁵

The factors that first caused Elizabeth's and Shakespeare's legacies to be woven together were seemingly grounded in nostalgia and nationalism. Dobson and Watson find the anecdotal ideas of the late-seventeenth century to have marked a convergence of political and cultural nostalgia on the figure of Elizabeth I:

The wave of middle-class cultural nationalism on which Shakespeare was rapidly ascending towards near-divine status [was] conveniently subsumed by the older political cult of Queen Elizabeth, or perhaps vice versa: her reign hereby [became] a golden age when royal power and literary excellence were one, when this Britannia ruled not just the waves but the poetic lines.⁷⁶

Two historical figures already established as national icons were thus placed on a collision course to add weight and impact to the ever-increasing appeal of the qualities they were each seen to represent. United, Shakespeare and Elizabeth could be an unparalleled partnership singularly responsible for the birth of a culture worthy of celebration. Hackett proposes that the prominence of this pairing—one of Britain's 'most entrenched and persistent cultural myths'—flourished in direct correlation with the nation's increasing international power. This 'imagined golden moment from the nation's history was replayed again and again as England increased in power and confidence', eventually creating 'a potent and irresistible image of the preeminence of the British nation'.⁷⁷ Instances of Elizabeth and Shakespeare being brought together have therefore fuelled (and been fuelled by) powerful ideas around national heritage and cultural significance. Together with the associated origin story of the Shakespeare-ruff connection, the context surrounding the development of the Shakespeare-Elizabeth double

⁷⁵ Dobson and Watson, p. 10.

⁷⁶ Dobson and Watson, p. 123.

⁷⁷ Hackett, *Shakespeare and Elizabeth*, pp. 3-4.

myth elucidates how deeply the playwright's current cultural value is connected with a nostalgic longing for the period in which he lived.

While the causes and effects of Elizabeth I becoming intimately connected with Shakespeare have been evidenced and discussed at length (most notably by Dobson and Watson, and Hackett), the significance of England's Fairy Queen being referenced visually in stagings of Shakespeare's plays has not yet been explored in any depth. A unique manifestation of the double myth emerges when Elizabeth is woven into the fabric of Shakespeare's narratives rather than being depicted as part of the world that produced them. Importantly for the purposes of this chapter, this practice is an additional example of popular culture influencing the representation of Shakespeare's plays in theatrical performance. Prominent cultural narratives cultivated over the centuries (in anecdotes, apocrypha, drama, biography, historical fiction, film, television, and more) have inspired directors and designers to reference the iconic Elizabethan monarch visually when staging the playwright's works. Interpreting how and why versions of Elizabeth I have featured in twenty-first-century Shakespearean performance allows for a rich exploration of the current significance of this longstanding cultural connection. In what follows, I examine two Elizabeth-inspired productions (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* [Rose Theatre Kingston, 2010; dir. Peter Hall] and *Richard II* [Royal Shakespeare Company, 2007; dir. Michael Boyd and Richard Twyman]) to ascertain how each was developed, justified, and framed for modern theatre audiences.

The opening moments of the 2010 RTK *Dream* positioned the action at the heart of an Elizabethan court environment. Dench's sweeping entrance as Elizabeth I formed part of a wordless prologue; the queen's arrival interrupted an assembly of Elizabethan courtiers

studying their parts for some form of drama or entertainment.⁷⁸ A host figure issued a silent invitation, gesturing towards a playscript. Elizabeth snatched up the papers and left the stage with a radiant smile and a flourish of the hand.⁷⁹ The performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* then began as a play within a play, with the part of Titania, queen of the fairies, being performed by the Fairy Queen of England's past.

This sequence was—ostensibly, at least—inspired by the possibility of there being historical connections between *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Elizabeth I. In an interview published shortly before the production opened, director Peter Hall explained:

Elizabeth was a keen theatre patron who often had Shakespeare's company to the palace, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was in the repertory. There were plays in which the court participated. She was a great dancer and musician, so we thought, 'Why couldn't the queen play Titania?'⁸⁰

This scaffold of supposition around the notion that Elizabeth might have encountered a Shakespeare play in performance is also present in a programme note written by Roger Warren (an academic advisor for the production). Although there is no evidence to prove this theory true, Warren joins Hall in using the tantalisingly vague details surviving in Elizabethan court records to justify the production's central idea. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was a 'likely candidate' to have been among those performed at court by the Lord Chamberlain's Men as it was 'a popular part of their repertoire' during the documented period.⁸¹ Warren also refers to

⁷⁸ Charles Spencer, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream at the Rose Theatre, Review', *Telegraph*, 16 February 2010 <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/theatre/theatre-reviews/7249678/A-Midsummer-Nights-Dream-at-the-Rose-Theatre-review.html>> [accessed 28 January 2019]

⁷⁹ Helen Hackett, 'Review of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Directed by Sir Peter Hall) at the Rose Theatre, Kingston, 13 February 2010', *Shakespeare*, 6.2 (2010), 256–58 (p. 256).

⁸⁰ Qtd in Lesley White, 'Tug of Love', *The Times*, 14 February 2010, pp. 6-7 (p. 6).

⁸¹ Roger Warren, 'An Elizabethan Dream' (programme note), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare (London: Rose Theatre Kingston, 2010), p. 7.

the much-debated theory that the play was written for ‘an aristocratic wedding at which the Queen was present’—an idea driven by the text’s bridal themes and closing nuptial blessing.⁸²

Packed into the same programme note is a stream of additional links between Elizabeth and the text, presented largely as fact. *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is repeatedly emphasised as an ‘Elizabethan’ play, and the queen is shown to be ‘part of [its] fabric’. Oberon’s account of ‘a fair vestal thronèd by the west’, an ‘imperial vot’ress’ (2.1.155-64) is ‘obviously’ a reference to Elizabeth (a theory almost unanimously agreed upon by scholars).⁸³ The ‘memorable occasion’ described in this speech ‘was the most celebrated of Elizabeth’s progresses, her entertainment by her favourite Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, at Kenilworth Castle, near Stratford, in 1575, when Shakespeare was 11’.⁸⁴ Warren also states that the text’s combination of ‘the rural and the courtly [...] reflects Elizabeth I’s own world’ (in that the queen’s time was divided between London and her regular progresses through the country), and that ‘the hierarchy of the fairy court is based on Elizabeth’s own’. The name Titania for the play’s fairy queen ‘was taken from [Shakespeare’s] favourite reading, Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*, where it is a synonym for Diana’. In highlighting that Diana and the ‘Fairy Queen’ were among ‘the many complimentary names applied to [Elizabeth] by poets’, Warren’s case for promoting the play’s proximity to Elizabeth I is seemingly closed.⁸⁵

What Warren’s programme note and Hall’s comments demonstrate most compellingly is the continued currency of several theories and myths that have long been percolating among scholars and in popular culture. Hackett dedicates entire sections of her *Shakespeare and*

⁸² According to Hackett, this theory was first suggested in 1830 by Ludwig Tieck, and various aristocratic weddings have since been proposed by critics as possible occasions for the play’s performance (and potentially its composition); Hackett, *Shakespeare and Elizabeth*, pp. 120-4.

⁸³ Sukanta Chaudhuri, ‘Appendix 2’, in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, ed. by Chaudhuri (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 283-94 (p. 286).

⁸⁴ Warren, ‘An Elizabethan Dream’.

⁸⁵ Warren, ‘An Elizabethan Dream’.

Elizabeth monograph to the question of whether Elizabeth ever saw any of Shakespeare's plays performed, to how critics have evidenced a connection between Oberon's vision and the 1575 Princely Pleasures at Kenilworth, and to the likelihood of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* being written for a court wedding. Successive editors of the play have similarly acknowledged and explored these ideas in introductory materials, footnotes, or appendices. Elizabeth has been shown watching *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in film (*Anonymous* [2001]) and fiction (*King of Shadows* by Susan Cooper); having the queen come into direct contact with Shakespeare's plays in performance is a common trope in modern popular culture. The opening moments of the 2010 *Dream* therefore drew on elements of Elizabeth mythology that are extremely well established, and that would probably have been very familiar to those who saw the staging.

Delving further into the production's development process, however, results in a somewhat different perspective on the factors that led Hall to centre the 2010 *Dream* on the figure of Queen Elizabeth I. This interpretation of Shakespeare's play was driven ultimately by considerations of a far more commercial nature.⁸⁶ Hall knew that he needed to manufacture a major attraction to draw audiences to his newly opened theatre. Having been considered unworthy of funding by the Arts Council, who 'regard[ed] southwest London as having enough theatres' already, Rose Theatre Kingston was in need of greater ticket sales to ensure its survival. Dench starring in a 'blockbuster' RTK production would be a guaranteed means of enticing audiences, so Hall considered which Shakespearean roles the actor was yet to play.⁸⁷ Realising that the actor had already performed all of the major parts traditionally performed by women—'some of them several times'—the director searched for a solution that would result in a new interpretation of a principal Shakespearean role.⁸⁸ The answer, it seems, was to reimagine Titania by combining the role of the fairy queen with a historical figure who has

⁸⁶ Cordelia Monsey, interview with Ella Hawkins (London, 10 April 2019).

⁸⁷ Hall, qtd in White, 'Tug of Love'.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

long been connected with the play and its playwright. When Hall first contacted Dench to offer her the role of Titania in his 2010 *Dream*, he explained immediately that he wanted her to play the role as Elizabeth I and that Shakespeare's text would be presented as a play within a play.⁸⁹ This approach to realising the text had even greater potential for attracting new audiences. As well as drawing on the cultural weight and widespread popularity of Shakespeare and Dench, Hall's production could benefit from the critical acclaim and international commercial success of the actor's portrayal of Elizabeth I in *Shakespeare in Love*. Dench's representation of Elizabeth as Titania was therefore developed as a major attraction that would hold a multi-layered appeal for an extremely broad audience.

This became a production that overtly revelled in the historical and cultural narratives that collided within it. The longstanding association between Hall and Dench—particularly the pair's reprisal of the roles they performed in the Royal Shakespeare Company's 1962 *Dream* and subsequent 1968 film adaptation—formed a key element of the production's marketing. The duo gave a press interview together in the weeks leading up to its opening, and their professional relationship was afforded a special note (titled 'Peter Hall and Judi Dench') in the programme produced to accompany the production. Both pieces reminisce about the director's and actor's shared and individual pasts while emphasising their esteemed positions in British culture. Introduced in the interview as 'arts royalty' and the programme note as 'the Oberon and Titania of the whole of British theatre', Hall and Dench were presented as legends in their own right.⁹⁰ In addition to being emphasised by the production's creative team, these personal and theatrical narratives were foregrounded in critical responses to the staging. Susannah Clapp (*Observer*) described the production's representation of Elizabeth I as Hall's 'way of paying tribute to Dench's royal career. She has, after all, worn these two crowns before: she was the

⁸⁹ Qtd in White, 'Tug of Love'.

⁹⁰ Paul Allen, 'Peter Hall and Judi Dench' (programme note), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare (London: Rose Theatre Kingston, 2010), p. 11-12.

Virgin Queen in *Shakespeare in Love*, and played Titania both in Hall's 1962 production and, six years later, in his film version'.⁹¹ Benedict Nightingale's (*The Times*) review featured comparative photographs of Dench as Titania in 1962 and 2010.⁹² Although indicated only in a programme biography, a further point of contact between the 2010 production and its illustrious RSC-related past existed in the form of designer Elizabeth Bury. Bury had worked at the RSC from 1964—shortly after Hall became Managing Director—and collaborated closely with designer John Bury (her husband) until his death in 2000. Having Elizabeth Bury design the set and costumes for the 2010 *Dream* resulted in a further tangible link between this production and the Hall era at the RSC (as well as a 1981 Glyndebourne staging of Benjamin Britten's opera adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which Hall directed and Elizabeth and John Bury designed).

This production therefore created meaning through a layering of multiple histories, centred on the iconic figure of the Dench-Elizabeth. While the 2010 *Dream*'s representation of Elizabeth drew on multiple myths that have threaded through much of the monarch's afterlife, promoting a particular idea of England's Fairy Queen was not among the production's intended outcomes. The framing of Dench as Elizabeth I—an idea communicated immediately and entirely through costume design—functioned instead as a form of emulsifier in the staging. Elizabeth's inclusion in the world of the play held in suspension the mature actor's casting as Titania, and provided a focal point for the production's Elizabethan court setting. For reviewers, the Elizabeth-as-Titania device proved to be far less significant than the quality of performance given by Dench. Billington (*Guardian*) declared that 'the regal comparison is largely irrelevant.

⁹¹ Susannah Clapp, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', *Observer*, 21 February 2010 <<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2010/feb/21/judi-dench-midsummer-nights-dream>> [accessed 28 January 2019]

⁹² Benedict Nightingale, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream at the Rose Theatre, Kingston', *The Times*, 16 February 2010 <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/a-midsummer-nights-dream-at-the-rose-theatre-kingston-p2k0vhzjg3m>> [accessed 28 January 2019]

What really matters is Dench's supreme ability to give weight to every word she utters'.⁹³ Sarah Hemming's review (*Financial Times*) was very similar: 'Whether or not [the Elizabeth-Titania parallel] quite stands up scarcely seems to matter: what it gives us is a peerless performance from Dench, a touching emphasis on the ageless folly of love and a precise, humane production'.⁹⁴ The 2010 *Dream* thus ultimately used the figure of Elizabeth I as a vehicle for enabling theatrical/popular legends of our own era to create a cultural product that would appeal to modern audiences on multiple levels.

Three years previously, a somewhat different version of Elizabeth I had appeared in a production of *Richard II* staged by the RSC. The opening moments of this staging saw King Richard II (played by Jonathan Slinger) sitting at the top of a rusted staircase as a succession of courtiers in Elizabethan dress processed across the stage, each stepping carefully over the body of Gloucester before bowing to the seated figure.⁹⁵ Richard appeared every inch a monarch: he clutched a brass sceptre, his head was topped with a tall golden crown, and he was clothed in a glistening gold and white coronation ensemble (depicted in Figure 52). Significantly, several elements of the character's appearance recalled an alternative figure from English history. Richard's hair was a mass of auburn curls, and his face painted white with make-up. He wore a sizeable Elizabethan ruff. Slinger's appearance had been shaped by a similar set of signifiers in the poster produced to advertise the production (see Figure 53). Wearing a wig of red ringlets, white make-up, a stiff white ruff, and a large lace rebato collar, the figure filling the frame of the portrait-like poster gazes haughtily towards the viewer with

⁹³ Michael Billington, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', *Guardian*, 16 February 2010 <<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2010/feb/16/a-midsummer-nights-dream-review>> [accessed 28 January 2019]

⁹⁴ Sarah Hemming, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream, Rose Theatre, Kingston', *Financial Times*, 16 February 2010 <<https://www.ft.com/content/f8a8263a-1b20-11df-953f-00144feab49a>> [accessed 28 January 2019]

⁹⁵ Benedict Nightingale, 'Long and rewarding trawl through Bard's trilogy', *The Times*, 18 August 2007, p. 25.

pursed, pouted lips. This representation of Richard II was clearly inspired by the memory of Elizabeth I.



Figure 52. Richard II (Jonathan Slinger) sits at the top of a rusted staircase during the 2007 production's opening moments (photograph by Ellie Kurtz © RSC).



THE HISTORIES
THE COURTYARD THEATRE
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON



RICHARD II

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

PLAYS IN REPERTOIRE
FROM 7 JULY 2007
TO 13 MARCH 2008

<p>HISTORIES ENSEMBLE NICHOLAS ASBURY HANNAH BARRIE KEITH BARTLETT MAUREEN BEATTIE ANTONY BUNSEE ROB CARROLL RICHARD CORDERY MATT COSTAIN JULIUS D'SILVA KEITH DUNPHY WELA FRASIER GEOFFREY FRESHWATER PAUL HAMILTON ALEXIA HEALY KIERAN HILL TOM HODGKINS CHUK IWUJI</p>	<p>JOHN MACKAY FORBES MASSON CHRIS MCGILL PATRICE NAIAMBANA LUKE NEAL SANDY NEILSON ANN OGBOMO MILES RICHARDSON LEX SHRAPPEL ANTHONY SHUSTER JONATHAN SLINGER KATY STEPHENS GEOFFREY STREATFEILD JAMES TUCKER DAVID WARNER ROGER WATKINS CLIVE WOOD</p>	<p>DIRECTOR MICHAEL BOYD ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR RICHARD TWYMAN DESIGNER TOM PIPER LIGHTING HEATHER CARSON MUSIC JAMES JONES & JOHN WOOLF MOVEMENT LIZ RANKEN</p>	<p>SOUND ANDREA J. COX FIGHTS TERRY KING DIRECTOR OF ROPE WORK MATT COSTAIN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DONNACAOH O'BRIAIN</p>	<p>RSC TICKET HOTLINE 0844 800 1110 <small>FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE</small> BOOK AND SHOP ONLINE www.rsc.org.uk <small>© RSC 2007</small></p>
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ACCENTURE

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Figure 53. The poster produced to promote the RSC's 2007 *Richard II* (photograph by Ellie Kurttz © RSC).

The decision to reimagine Richard as a version of England's iconic Elizabethan monarch was primarily a result of the production's positioning within a broader project. The RSC's 2007 *Richard II* was staged as part of a complete cycle of Shakespeare's eight history plays.⁹⁶ Michael Boyd (then Artistic Director of the RSC) had decided to stage these plays collectively to explore the cyclical nature of history, to 'gain an insight into Shakespeare's journey as a writer' and his 'developing view of England and its history', and to return to the company's former (Hall-era) approach of creating work with a close-knit ensemble of actors.⁹⁷ Tom Piper—the lead designer for the project—explains that staging the cycle collectively 'gave an opportunity to think about how you look at period when producing a Shakespeare play'.⁹⁸ He and Boyd were led 'quite naturally' to explore all three of the time periods the designer sees as the core options for setting the playwright's works in performance: the period in which the plays were written ('Shakespeare's period'), the period in which a play's narrative is set, and now.⁹⁹ Each play in the cycle was given the period setting the production team felt would best elucidate its themes, characters, and narrative. *Richard III* was staged in modern dress, for example, while *Henry V* was mostly medieval (with some modern elements).

For Piper, *Richard II* was ideally suited to an Elizabethan setting. Understanding the play as a 'portrait' of an 'ornate, decadent world' with strong courtly hierarchies and behaviours, the designer believed the medieval narrative would translate well into this alternative historical setting.¹⁰⁰ Relocating the story to this later period would also allow for the religious tensions

⁹⁶ The plays forming this complete cycle of history plays were *1 Henry VI*, *2 Henry VI*, *3 Henry VI*, *Richard III*, *Richard II*, *1 Henry IV*, *2 Henry IV*, and *Henry V*. The plays were rehearsed and presented in the order in which they were written by Shakespeare. The productions played in rep over a period of two years, culminating in the *Glorious Moment*—a weekend event featuring all eight productions; 'Michael Boyd 2007 Production', *Royal Shakespeare Company* <<https://www.rsc.org.uk/henry-v/past-productions/michael-boyd-2007-production>> [accessed 8 April 2020]

⁹⁷ Michael Boyd, 'Welcome to the Courtyard Theatre and This Performance of *Richard II*' (programme note), *Richard II* by William Shakespeare (Stratford-upon-Avon: Courtyard Theatre, 2007), p. 1.

⁹⁸ Tom Piper, interview with Ella Hawkins (Stratford-upon-Avon, 28 February 2019).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Piper, interview.

of the Elizabethan era to make sense of the differences between Richard and Bolingbroke for a modern audience. Bolingbroke, clothed in an austere black ensemble, could be ‘a kind of protestant reformer’ when positioned in relation to a court defined by its overt decadence. Piper felt the appeal of Bolingbroke as a replacement monarch was more easily understandable when viewed through this lens.¹⁰¹ The production’s focus on creating an image of the court of Elizabeth I was therefore led by the idea that this alternative historical setting would usefully highlight and explore critical elements of the play’s dynamic. As with the 2010 *Dream*, the immediately recognisable figure of Elizabeth I—positioned as the centre of attention in the opening moments of both productions—served in part to anchor the action to this specific cultural context. The icon’s power in signifying key qualities associated with the early modern era (the period’s hierarchical social strata, visual splendour, and formal courtly behaviours, for example) was used to establish quickly and clearly the nature of the world in which the production was located.

Importantly, the 2007 *Richard II*’s distinct focus on Elizabeth I was rooted in a historical narrative drawn from the web of myths surrounding the monarch and her associations with Shakespeare. The direct connection between Elizabeth and Slinger’s Richard II was inspired by the series of events around a rebellion against the queen led by Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, in 1601. A note published in the production’s programme explicates the set of historical circumstances that have led successive generations to bring Richard, Elizabeth, and Shakespeare into close proximity to one another. Beginning with the oft-quoted declaration apparently made by Elizabeth I—‘I am Richard II, know you not that?’ [*sic*]—scholar Andrew Hadfield describes the political significance of the story of Richard’s deposition during the final years of Elizabeth’s reign.¹⁰² According to a testimony given by Augustine Phillips (a

¹⁰¹ Piper, interview.

¹⁰² Andrew Hadfield, ‘I am Richard II, know you not that?’ (programme note), *Richard II* by William Shakespeare (Stratford-upon-Avon: Courtyard Theatre, 2007), pp. 8-9 (p. 8).

member of the Lord Chamberlain's Men) in the wake of the rebellion, a group of Essex's confederates had paid the company to perform 'the play of the deposing and kyllyng of Kyng Richard the second' on the day before the uprising.¹⁰³ It is thought that this performance was intended to be a catalyst in stirring public opinion against the queen. Elizabeth was an elderly and increasingly unpopular monarch who refused to name an heir; the deposing of Richard II—a story of regime change in which a self-absorbed ruler is successfully removed from the throne—would likely have seemed strikingly relevant in this context. A 1601 document recording a conversation between William Lambarde (custodian of the archives in the Tower of London) and the queen claims that Elizabeth was aware of perceived parallels between her and her medieval predecessor. The manuscript states that, while reflecting on the history of her realm, 'her Majestie fell upon the reign of King Richard II. saying, "I am Richard II. know ye not that?" [...] "this tragedy was played 40^{tie} times in open streets and houses"'.¹⁰⁴ If the account given in Lambarde's 1601 manuscript is true, Elizabeth herself emphasised the politically contentious nature of the Richard II narrative at that point in her reign and acknowledged the potential power of popular performance for exploring and publicising these parallels. As declared by Hadfield, '[r]arely has the link between literature and politics been more clearly made'.¹⁰⁵ The question of whether this play was Shakespeare's *Richard II* has, perhaps understandably, occupied historians and literary critics for decades.¹⁰⁶ If it was, the playwright's work could have played a key role in stoking the Essex Rebellion, and Elizabeth's famous declaration would be the only recorded reference to a Shakespeare play made by the

¹⁰³ Jason Scott-Warren, 'Was Elizabeth I Richard II?: The Authenticity of Lambarde's "Conversation"', *The Review of English Studies*, 64.264 (2013), 208–30 (p. 208).

¹⁰⁴ *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, 7 vols (London: John Nichols, 1780-90), I (1780), p. 525.

¹⁰⁵ Hadfield, 'I am Richard II, know you not that?'

¹⁰⁶ Scott-Warren, p. 208.

queen.¹⁰⁷ It is unsurprising that this short phrase is responsible for generating one of the most prominent strands of the Elizabeth-Shakespeare double myth.

Regardless of whether the text performed as part of the 1601 rebellion *was* Shakespeare's, the RSC's 2007 *Richard II* intentionally drew attention to the idea that this play would probably have been highly contentious at the time of its first performance. Piper explains that the production's creative team were very interested in 'the historical context in which Shakespeare wrote the plays' and the significance of '*Richard II* being requested by Essex when he came back from Ireland'. For these reasons, the creative team's attention was drawn to the fact that *Richard II* is 'a very political kind of play'.¹⁰⁸ Making a clear visual connection between Richard and Elizabeth through costume design thus encouraged a reading of the text that centred on the likely controversy of its composition and first performances. Rather than focusing purely on the play's medieval narrative, this production highlighted the connections that might have been drawn between the reigns of Richard II and Elizabeth I by the playgoers who saw Shakespeare's play in the late 1590s and early 1600s.

As with all representations of Elizabeth, this production presented a particular interpretation of the monarch's identity. Slinger's Elizabeth-inspired Richard was introduced as a peacock-like figure concerned primarily about his own image. Richard '[f]orever gaz[ed] admiringly at his bejewelled fingers',¹⁰⁹ and was 'sealed in artificial mystique'.¹¹⁰ He moved 'with awkward formality in robes that [made] him look like a puppet and unable from the first to exercise kingly authority'.¹¹¹ The 'glamorous, petulant and envious' figure was understood as a

¹⁰⁷ Hackett, *Shakespeare and Elizabeth*, p. 126.

¹⁰⁸ Piper, interview.

¹⁰⁹ Michael Billington, 'Richard's bloody reign is the benchmark for spectacular cycle', *Guardian*, 16 April 2008, p. 36.

¹¹⁰ Paul Taylor, 'Richard II / Henry IV Pts One & Two', *Independent*, 23 August 2007, p. 17.

¹¹¹ Ian Shuttleworth, 'Ghosts, bellows and insults', *Financial Times*, 20 August 2008, p. 13.

‘dandified tyrant [...] a preening narcissist capable of sudden violence’.¹¹² While the 2010 RTK *Dream* featured a notably passionate Elizabeth defined by her love of theatre, *Richard II*’s version of this historical figure recalled entirely different facets of the monarch’s memorialised identity.

The production’s ‘peacock-like’ version of Elizabeth was derived from the visual culture of the monarch’s reign: Piper and Slinger were both influenced by representations of Elizabeth in early modern portraiture.¹¹³ The highly symbolic state images of the early modern era—believed to have been intended ‘not to portray an individual as such, but to invoke through that person’s image the abstract principles of their rule’—have a somewhat alienating impact in a twenty-first-century context.¹¹⁴ Detached from their original meanings, the portraits seem to emphasise a sense of stiffness, sternness, and opulence in the sitter. Piper was drawn to the ‘gold and white, the golden thread embroidery’ in portraits of the monarch and wanted to give Richard ‘a playful, sensual decadence’ as well as a ‘very stylised sort of “I am a painting” image’.¹¹⁵ Slinger understood Richard as a ‘beautiful, shallow, superficial, vain man’,¹¹⁶ and felt his Elizabeth-inspired costume was very fitting for highlighting these elements of the character in performance.¹¹⁷ Piper and Slinger thus worked together closely on developing a version of Richard that was ‘inspired by those images of Elizabeth’ and that put ‘him as the dandy at the centre of the whole thing’.¹¹⁸ The presentation of Slinger’s Elizabeth-Richard as an image-conscious icon—emphasised by the character’s posed posture during the

¹¹² Robert Hewison, ‘The sweet smell of succession’, *The Sunday Times*, 26 August 2007, pp. 20-1 (p. 20); Michael Billington, ‘Richard’s bloody reign is the benchmark for spectacular cycle’.

¹¹³ Piper, interview.

¹¹⁴ Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), p. 36.

¹¹⁵ Piper, interview.

¹¹⁶ ‘Jonathan Slinger: My Life in Five Shows’, *Guardian*, 26 May 2015 <<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2015/may/26/jonathan-slinger-my-life-in-five-shows-willy-wonka-unrinetown-august-osage-country>> [accessed 17 March 2019]

¹¹⁷ Vickster51, ‘Reflecting on Richard II – Q&A with David Tennant & Jonathan Slinger – 16th January 2016’, *Vickster51Corner*, 18 January 2016 <<https://vickster51corner.wordpress.com/2016/01/18/reflecting-on-richard-ii-with-david-tennant-jonathan-slinger-16th-january-2016/>> [accessed 17 March 2019]

¹¹⁸ Piper, interview.

production's opening moments and in its poster, as discussed above—gave an impression of a monarch defined by grandeur, glamour, and haughtiness. Elizabeth I therefore served as a point of reference for a figure who represented superficiality rather than relatability, and whose deliberate display of reinforced regality proved a core character flaw.

The superficial nature of Richard's splendour provided key visual indicators of the figure's fall from power. In 5.1, following his deposition, Richard stood in the centre of the stage wearing a 'very simple kind of penitential gown' and removed his curled red wig to reveal a bald head covered with scabbed encrustations (pictured in Figure 54). Piper and Slinger intended this to signify firstly that 'actually there was a sort of illness underneath' the character's glamorous façade—an idea that was a deliberate 'echo of Elizabeth and her pox'.¹¹⁹ (Although believed by historians to be untrue, the notion that Elizabeth had hidden disfigurements—caused by the monarch's documented suffering of smallpox during the early years of her reign—has inspired multiple representations of the queen in film and historical fiction.)¹²⁰ The removal of Richard's layers of opulence also communicated a state of repentance. This image echoed moments in previous and subsequent instalments of the cycle: multiple monarchs/figures appeared in simple 'penitential' tunics over the eight-play sequence to indicate their downfall, and Richard III (also played by Slinger) had a noticeable birthmark in the same position as Richard II's scabs.¹²¹ As well as indicating that the former king recognised his own errors and had lost a core element of his identity in being deposed, Piper divested Richard of the extravagant Elizabethan-inspired elements of his image to signify that the (former) monarch's transition from extravagance to penitence was complete.

¹¹⁹ Piper, interview.

¹²⁰ The 2018 film *Mary Queen of Scots* depicts Elizabeth with a heavily-scarred face after suffering from smallpox, for example. For more on the historical basis of such depictions, see Donald R. Hopkins, *The Greatest Killer: Smallpox in History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 2.

¹²¹ Piper, interview.

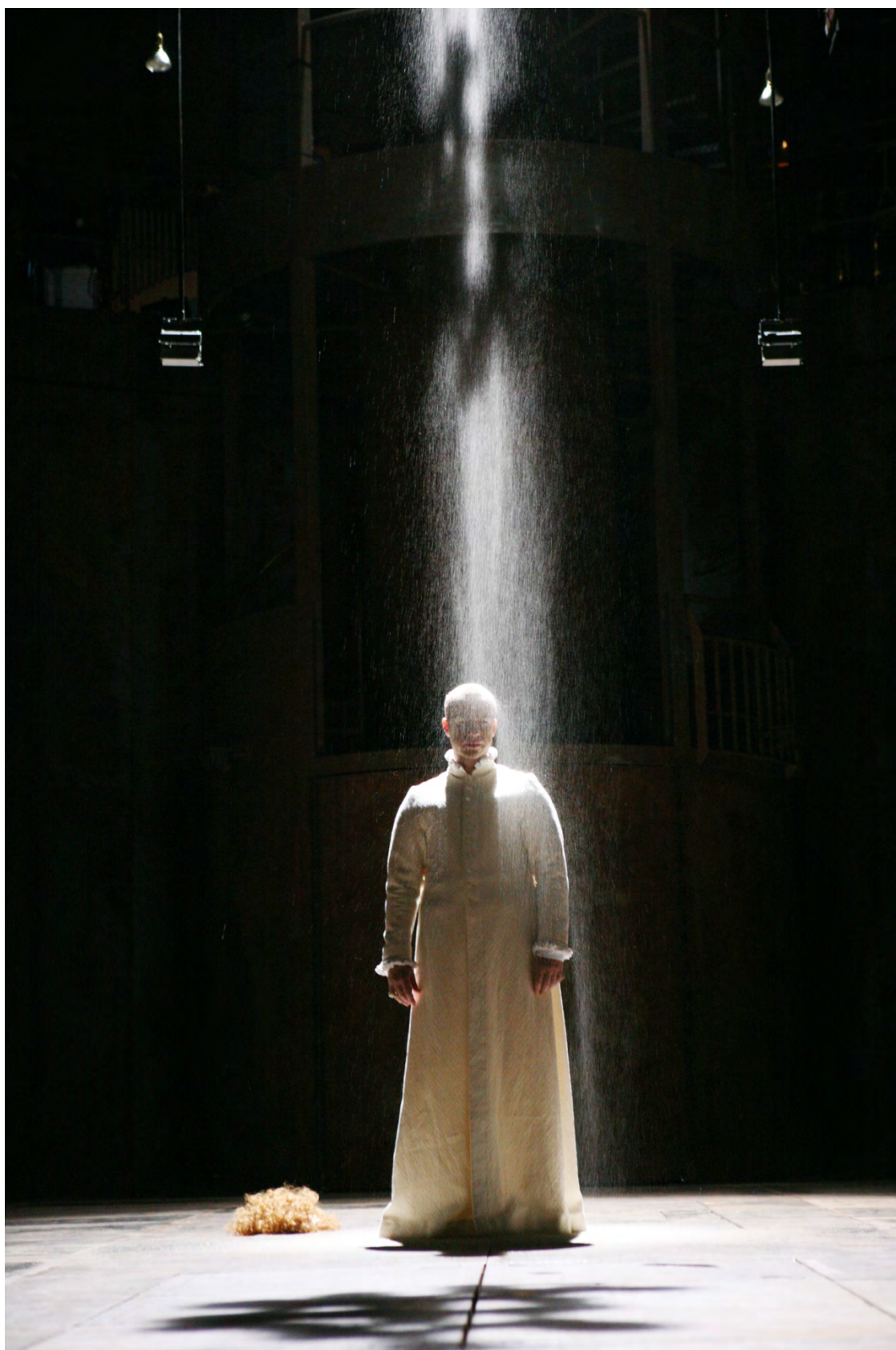


Figure 54. ‘Some will mourn in ashes’ (5.1.49): ash fell from above as Richard wore a simple ‘penitential’ gown and removed his curled red wig to reveal a bare scabbed scalp (photograph by Ellie Kurtz © RSC).

Essentially, this production referenced a succession of well-known Elizabeth myths to reshape actively how audiences understood Shakespeare's play. The figure of Elizabeth I was used to elucidate narrative tensions, to draw attention to the text's original political contentiousness, and, above all, to define Slinger's Richard. Relying on audience members already being well-acquainted with these ideas it recalled, the 2007 *Richard II* was built on foundation stones drawn from the mass of Elizabeth mythology circulating in popular culture. The fact that the 2010 RTK *A Midsummer Night's Dream* similarly saw the monarch as a useful shorthand for recalling established associations allows for certain conclusions to be drawn about the significance of the double myth in twenty-first-century costume design for Shakespeare. Queen Elizabeth I has been incorporated into Shakespearean performance because she has come to be invested with so much meaning, because these meanings often relate closely to the content of Shakespeare's plays, and because they are so widely understood by modern audiences. Rather than adding to or complicating ideas that have been cultivated in popular culture through the centuries, the monarch's appearances in theatrical stagings of the playwright's works instead reflect the remarkable ongoing purchase of legends originating from the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. The path of Elizabeth's posthumous progress through Britain's cultural imagination passes through Shakespearean performance in addition to film, fiction, and biography, and shows no sign of slowing down.

The figure of Elizabeth I and the ruff are thus intensely powerful symbols that each evoke complex cultural histories for twenty-first-century audience members. While the enduring connections between these Elizabethan icons and Shakespeare are indicative of how the playwright's legacy remains enmeshed in a constructed version of the period in which he lived, this chapter has illustrated complications in the relationship between theatre and popular culture. Elizabeth's magnetic appeal for attracting audiences to stagings of Shakespeare's plays is offset by the sense of cliché and traditionalism now associated with the ruff. The Elizabethan

elements of the playwright's iconic reputation are seemingly a double-edged sword for theatre practitioners who attempt to negotiate the layers of mythology that now surround Shakespeare and his plays. Perhaps more than anything, these findings are testament to the exceptional capacity of Jacobethan costume design for shaping the meaning of the playwright's works in performance. Demonstrated more clearly here than in any other area of this thesis, the signifying power of these historically-inspired garments should not be underestimated. However, the symbolic status Jacobethan dress has acquired through its associations with Shakespeare has ramifications beyond those discussed in this chapter. In Chapter Four, I examine instances where the presence of such garments warped critical narratives around two much-discussed productions staged in 2016.

Chapter Four

Fantastical Imaginings

'There is a kind of writing wherein the poet quite loses sight of nature, and entertains his reader's imagination with the characters and actions of such persons as have many of them no existence but what he bestows on them; such are fairies, witches, magicians, demons, and departed spirits. This Mr. Dryden calls the fairy way of writing'.¹

In an essay published in 1712, Joseph Addison reflects on Shakespeare's ability to fashion the fantastical. To engage successfully in 'the fairy way of writing', Addison suggests, a poet must have 'a particular cast of fancy', 'an imagination fruitful and superstitious', and a thorough knowledge of 'legends and fables, antiquated romances, and the traditions of nurses and old women'.² Only with these qualities can the poet invent imaginary beings that exist entirely on their own terms. The critic suggests that Shakespeare has in this respect 'incomparably excelled all others': the ghosts, fairies, witches, and goddesses featuring in the playwright's works are crafted in such a way that 'we cannot forbear thinking them natural, though we have no rule by which to judge of them'.³

Addison's essay is remarkable for several reasons—it is considered the first 'coherent' critical discussion of fantasy literature as a separate form, and its advocacy of Shakespeare's genius represents an early example of eighteenth-century 'Bardolatry'.⁴ Crucially, this piece of criticism explicates a feature of the playwright's works that has long presented a challenge for theatre-makers. Shakespeare's fantastical characters are inventions that do not correspond with

¹ Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, 419, 1 July 1712, p. 1.

² Addison, p. 1.

³ Addison, p. 2.

⁴ David Sandner, *Fantastic Literature: A Critical Reader* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), p. 21; Frederick Burwick, 'Shakespeare and the Romantics', in *A Companion to Romanticism*, ed. by Duncan Wu (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2017), pp. 553–60 <<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165396.ch51>>

reality. As such, these figures are extremely difficult to represent convincingly in performance. The enigmatic otherness that defines ‘the fairy way of writing’ must, somehow, be made material.

In this chapter I consider instances where Jacobethan-inspired costumes have been used to make sense of the supernatural in Shakespeare’s most magical plays. Building on ideas explored in my previous chapters, the story I tell here is one of desire, otherness, and reimagination. Like the intricate reconstructive practices of Chapter One, the subtle nostalgic reworkings of Chapter Two, and the romantic retrospective pairings of Chapter Three, the productions discussed below are products of certain Shakespearean fantasies. This chapter focuses on the notion of ‘fantasy’ more explicitly, however, by examining the instincts that have led fantastical spaces and characters to be defined via adapted elements of early modern sartorial culture. Its primary purpose is to examine why the period of Shakespeare’s lifetime is seen to have significant capacity for making sense of imaginary spheres that are pointedly left undefined, ambiguous, or non-specifically ‘other’ in the texts. It is also intended to establish how this approach to setting might shape the plays’ meanings for twenty-first-century audiences, and to what extent fantastical Jacobethan-inspired garments position productions in relation to wider cultural and organisational narratives.

This chapter has two parts. In the first, I return to the Shakespeare’s Globe of Emma Rice’s curtailed tenure to explore the theatre’s 2016 production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. Led by the fact that this staging separated the play’s fairy realm from the world of the mortals via radically reworked Jacobethan garments, I unravel the ideas that rooted Titania and Oberon’s enchanted kingdom in the era of the play’s composition. I also draw attention to the fact that this production’s archaic interpretation of magic—communicated largely through Moritz Junge’s costume design—has come to be framed as *the* defining feature of Rice’s divisive

approach to staging Shakespeare at the Globe. Introducing and evaluating interview insights from Rice and Junge, I establish the extent to which these costumes were intended (and read) as physical manifestations of the director's artistic 'revolution'.

In the second part of this chapter, I move from London to Stratford-upon-Avon to trace the development of the Royal Shakespeare Company's innovative 2016 *The Tempest*. Complicating the widely proclaimed notion that this production was a 'twenty-first-century masque' looking towards the future of performance, I identify the significance of the staging's extensive use of historically-inspired costumes and its spectacular digital-meets-Jacobethan representation of the play's masque scene (4.1).⁵ By comparing the rhetoric surrounding the staging with the ideas, influences, and instincts that actually determined its design, I offer an alternative reading of what magic came to mean in this overtly twenty-first-century *Tempest*. Ultimately, this chapter illuminates the extent to which modern Shakespearean mythologies are formed, reformed, and explored through performance, and the prominent role played by Jacobethan-inspired costume design in the stories that each production came to tell.

'There's something about this play, and this space, and this production...', mused Emma Rice in an interval interview about her 2016 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.⁶ This inaugural production of Rice's artistic directorship at Shakespeare's Globe marked the dawning of a new era at the reconstructed playhouse. Landing 'almost like a comet falling from the sky',⁷ the staging made a sensational statement of what this third artistic chapter in the theatre's story

⁵ Sarah Ellis, 'O Brave New World' (programme note), *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare (Stratford-upon-Avon: Royal Shakespeare Theatre, 2016/17), pp. 4-7 (p. 4).

⁶ *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, dir. by Emma Rice, dir. for screen by Ian Russell (Globe on Screen, 11 September 2016).

⁷ Emma Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins (telephone, 15 May 2019).

would entail.⁸ The word ‘WONDER’—defined in the *Dream* programme as ‘a feeling of amazement and admiration, caused by something beautiful, remarkable, or unfamiliar’⁹—was emblazoned in lights against the playhouse’s outer wall. A forest of fairy-lit silver treetops spilled out of the theatre onto Bankside, and a wooden sign advised arriving audience members that the performance would contain ‘naughtiness of a sexual nature’. ‘Emma Rice has thrown down a glittering gauntlet’, wrote Susannah Clapp (*Observer*) as she assessed this ‘glory’ of a production.¹⁰ Social media was alight with heady testimonies: this *Dream* was declared ‘utterly spellbinding’,¹¹ ‘[w]itty, heartfelt, anarchic, vital’,¹² ‘gorgeous, giddy’,¹³ ‘completely magical’,¹⁴ and ‘full of fun & [m]agic & heart & wonder’.¹⁵ While queues formed to claim returned tickets to the production’s sold-out run, rumblings of controversy ran through the pages of local and national newspapers.¹⁶ The undercurrent of negativity that had followed the announcement of Rice’s appointment as Artistic Director continued to develop in a subset of the production’s reviews. The very same ‘something’ that seemed to create for many audience members a rare theatrical magic was evidently felt by others as a form of violation.

It was clear from the production’s opening moments that this *Dream* would provide an intimate reflection of the time and place of its staging. *BBC Radio 2* played through speakers as the

⁸ Emma Rice’s artistic directorship at the Globe was preceded by Mark Rylance’s (1996-2005; discussed in Chapter One) and Dominic Dromgoole’s (2005-2016; discussed in Chapter Two).

⁹ Emma Rice, ‘Welcome’ (programme note), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by William Shakespeare (London: Shakespeare’s Globe, 2016), p. 3.

¹⁰ Susannah Clapp, ‘The wildest of dreams’, *Observer*, 5 May 2016, p. 31.

¹¹ ‘Blooming loved @The_Globe Midsummer Night’s Dream... Utterly spellbinding production. #DreamLive Breathtaking...’ (@MadelineHatt, 11 September 2016).

¹² Paul Chahidi, ‘Midsummer Night’s Dream at the Globe tonight was utterly beguiling. Witty, heartfelt, anarchic, vital. Bravo to all involved.’ (@PaulChahidi, 26 August 2016).

¹³ ‘You capping off a gorgeous weekend by reliving the gorgeous, giddy, witty #Dream @The_Globe, live on @BBCiPlayer? You betcha.’ (@MrJDMyatt (John Myatt), 11 September 2016).

¹⁴ ‘Just saw A Midsummer Night’s Dream at @The_Globe. Fast-paced, funny and completely magical.’ (@AndyWilletts, 26 August 2016).

¹⁵ Allegra Galvin, ‘Midsummer Night’s Dream @The_Globe is full of fun & Magic & heart & wonder indeed #WonderSeason’ (@allegrahere (Allegra Galvin), 29 July 2016).

¹⁶ Lauren Mooney, ‘Emma Rice Tried to Shake up the Globe. Sadly It’s Chosen to Cling to the Past’, *Guardian*, 26 October 2016 <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/oct/26/emma-rice-globe-theatres-artistic-director>> [accessed 16 August 2019]

audience filtered into the theatre, and (what appeared to be) a Globe Volunteer Steward perched on the edge of the stage reading that day's *Metro* newspaper.¹⁷ The performance began with a detailed introduction to Globe etiquette by tambourine-bearing Volunteer Steward 'Rita Quince' and Health and Safety Officer 'Nick Bottom'. These 'parish notices' combined the common 'strictly no filming, no photography, please turn your mobile phones off' pre-performance message with directives such as: 'We are all for original practice here at the Globe, ladies and gentlemen, but please refrain from public urination and spreading syphilis'.¹⁸ 'Mark Rylance gave me this tambourine', declared Rita defensively as she was chased from the stage by 'proper' actor Margaret Ann Bain (Philostrate).¹⁹

Athens—instead referred to in this production as 'Bankside' and 'London'—was realised as a highly recognisable representation of 2016 London. 'Renowned duke' Theseus was a wealthy autocrat in a modern black suit and velvet-collared overcoat, thick-rimmed glasses, and with slicked-back hair; Hippolyta oozed glamour via her fitted, bejewelled animal-print ensemble and towering red heels.²⁰ The lovers ('Hoxton hipsters' rather than 'Athenians') were, quite comically, almost indistinguishable from the groundlings. Hermia's cut-off denim shorts and embroidery-effect bomber jacket, Lysander's yellow t-shirt (printed with a quote from novelist Jack Kerouac: 'I had nothing to offer anybody except my own confusion'), and Demetrius' patterned shirt and sleek suit jacket were much like garments worn by the production's millennial audience members. The transformation of Helena into 'Helenus'—a gay man—was a central part of Rice's vision for the staging. The director did not want to ask a woman to behave in the subjugated manner demanded by the text, and Demetrius' cruelty towards Helena

¹⁷ Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins.

¹⁸ *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, dir. by Emma Rice.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ A source image for Theseus' costume design was of Colin Firth in *Kingsman*; London, Shakespeare's Globe Archive (SGA), Costume Notes and Jottings: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2016.

made it ‘hard [for her] to celebrate this relationship’ at the end of the play.²¹ ‘By making it a gay relationship’, Rice explains in a programme note, ‘I understand why [Demetrius] has been pushing Helenus away and why he feels the social pressure to make a “good marriage”’.²² For the director, reimagining Helena as a man meant the production could reflect contemporary issues around love, identity, and conformity.

In a burst of chaotic energy, the fairy world revealed itself to be inherently archaic and anarchic. Puck leapt out from amongst the groundlings and careered around the stage firing a water pistol into the crowd. A banana was stowed in a girdle round about the sprite’s sleeveless lime-green jerkin,²³ an enormous white lace ruff encircled her neck, and her legs were veiled only by fishnet tights and the lower part of a lime-green leotard (see Figure 55).²⁴ Puck’s glittering light-up trainers flashed as the twangling sound of a sitar pulsed through the auditorium. As Rita Quince carried a table out through the theatre’s discovery space, the ‘shrewd and knavish sprite’ raced towards her with a finger extended. Shocked laughter resounded around the auditorium as Puck, with exaggerated movements, poked Rita between her buttocks. The spirit then proceeded to smell and lick her finger.

²¹ Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins; Heather Neill and Emma Rice, ‘Love Letter to the Globe’ (programme note), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by William Shakespeare (London: Shakespeare’s Globe, 2016), pp. 8-9.

²² Neill and Rice, ‘Love Letter to the Globe’.

²³ The production photos suggest that same jerkin was actually a fully sleeved doublet (based on the c.1600-5 doublet detailed in Janet Arnold’s *Patterns of Fashion 3*) earlier in the run. It appears the sleeves were removed at some point—probably to allow the actor to move more freely.

²⁴ Puck was played by a woman (Katy Owen) in this production. Although the ‘he’ pronouns in the text were left unaltered for performances, Rice states explicitly in the programme that the production’s Puck was ‘she’ rather than ‘he’. I will therefore follow Rice’s lead in using ‘she’ pronouns when referring to this character; Neill and Rice, ‘Love Letter to the Globe’.



Figure 55. Puck careered around the stage space, leading the transition from the world of the mortals into the fairy realm of the forest (photograph by Tristram Kenton).



Figure 56. The fairy ensemble wore mutated Elizabethan dress, while Titania's and Oberon's garments incorporated elements of burlesque design and rock-and-roll dishevelment (photograph by Tristram Kenton).

Towering trunk-like columns of gauze dropped down from the heavens; a fairy slid down a pole from the upper balcony. This second spirit was, like Puck, wearing a mutated version of Jacobethan dress. A bedraggled drum-wheel French farthingale fell open over fishnet tights and knee-high stockings. Nipple tassels adorned a flesh-coloured leotard. An unset ruff drooped lifelessly around the fairy's shoulders, and her hairline receded to a distinctively high point on her scalp. The arrival of the full fairy ensemble established that these features functioned as a uniform for the fairy world: all seven of the production's mischievous spirits (aside from Puck) wore near-identical ensembles. Their vigorous performance of a musical adaptation of the 'Over hill, over dale' speech of 2.1 made clear that these fairies were just as coarse and lascivious in nature as Puck.²⁵ Crude gestures, thrusting, and licking formed the basis of the number's choreography.

The arrival of Titania and Oberon completed this production's picture of *A Midsummer Night's Dream's* fairy realm. Puck outlined the circumstances of the couple's quarrel ('The king doth keep his revels here tonight...'; 2.1.18-31) to the rhythm of a drum beat and guitar riff, then Titania descended from the heavens in a cloud of chiffon and confetti. The shape of the fairy queen's corset-like bodice, gauzy pink drum-wheel farthingale, and ruff made her appear distinctively Elizabethan (see Figure 56); glittering fabrics, fishnet tights, towering heeled boots, and a low-cut neckline gave the outfit a modern burlesque feel. Oberon—an imposing figure in a black and gold doublet and voluminous knee-length hose—had a rock-and-roll roughness enhanced by his dishevelled stockings, kohl-shaded eyes, and almost-empty bottle of Strongbow cider.²⁶ It was in this collision of old, new, coarseness, exoticism, and spectacle

²⁵ This song and two others were composed for the production by Stu Baker, who regularly worked with Rice during her time as Artistic Director of Kneehigh; Lyn Gardner, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream Review—Emma Rice Makes a Rowdy Globe Debut', *Guardian*, 5 May 2016 <<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2016/may/06/a-midsummer-nights-dream-review-a-rowdy-night-out-but-less-can-be-more>> [accessed 30 March 2020]

²⁶ In an after-show Actor Q&A event, Zubin Varla (Oberon) explained that Rice 'liked the idea of Oberon being a hooligan, and hooligans drink Strongbow cider'; SGA, Actor Q&A: A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2016 (Zubin Varla and Ankur Bahl).

that the production's magic was created; 'wonder' was generated through this strange, multi-sensory explosion of elements.

Rice describes her decision to associate the fairy world of the forest with the past and Athens with the present as having stemmed largely from the Globe's association with 'original practices' (OP) performance. As this was Rice's first experience of directing for the space, staging *A Midsummer Night's Dream* involved a process of the director 'getting to know the Globe and all the issues at the Globe'—including its complex and changeable relationship with OP performance. Although the director had 'thought the Globe's interest in original practice wasn't something [she'd] wanted to explore', she 'quickly' became attracted to the 'fascinating story' of the theatre's positioning in relation to the past.²⁷ Rice explains:

It became clear to me that 'original practice' came in two forms. One was Elizabethan form—trying to replicate how those plays were performed—and the second one would be to perform things absolutely in modern-day clothes, today, which is what they would have been doing at the time, because actors wore their own clothes and these were not period pieces.²⁸

For the director, the play's division into multiple distinct spheres allowed these two interpretations of OP to coexist within a single production. The immediacy of 'now' could be present in the world of the mortals (reflecting 'the audience at the Globe' [the lovers] and 'the ushers at the Globe' [the mechanicals]) while the forest could embody the pastness of reconstructive performance practices.²⁹ In examining the nuances of OP performance and the Globe's history with the concept, Rice's first response to the Globe space could—
theoretically—engage meaningfully with the theatre's unique past/present duality. It would be the director's way of writing a 'love letter to Shakespeare and the Globe'—a 'celebration' of

²⁷ Neill and Rice, 'Love Letter to the Globe'.

²⁸ Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins.

²⁹ Ibid.

‘the glorious clash of the modern and Elizabethan worlds’.³⁰ The theatre’s past practices and present associations thus became the inspiration for how each world in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* was defined, making this Globe production site-responsive and self-referential on every level.

However, the production’s Elizabethan interpretation of the fairy world was a world apart from the reconstructive performance practices explored in Chapter One. Rather than researching and reviving historical tailoring and dressing practices, the 2016 *Dream*’s creative team imagined the play’s fairies as having been alive since 1599:³¹ ‘Shakespeare gave birth to them, so they’[d] been alive for four hundred years’.³² These characters were thus ‘original’ in the sense they were thought of as being the very spirits Shakespeare himself had produced. Imagining ‘what it would be like if you’d been immortal’ led Rice to characterise the fairies as ‘wrecked’ Elizabethan rock stars.³³ The director ‘wanted them to look like they’d had every party, that they’d smashed every TV, and [...] that there was a boredom in the fairy world’.³⁴ Designer Moritz Junge created collages with ‘famous [rock stars]’ heads at the top, and then various bits of Elizabethan clothing underneath’ (pictured in Figure 57).³⁵ Oberon was Keith Richards,³⁶ and Puck Mick Jagger.³⁷ The casting of performance artist Meow Meow as Titania meant that this ‘[p]ost-post-modern diva’ was very much ‘her own rock star’ in this element of the production’s design process.³⁸ The OP inspiration for the fairy world therefore served as a

³⁰ Neill and Rice, ‘Love Letter to the Globe’.

³¹ Neill and Rice, ‘Love Letter to the Globe’.

³² *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, dir. Emma Rice.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Moritz Junge, interview with Ella Hawkins (telephone, 14 August 2019).

³⁷ Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins.

³⁸ ‘About’, *Meow Meow* <<https://meowmeowrevolution.com/about>> [accessed 18 August 2019]; Junge, interview.

conceptual starting point for a design that would bring the past into conversation with recognisable qualities and characters from the present.



Figure 57. Moritz Junge's 'collage of ideas' for Puck. Although David Bowie is pictured here, the collage was accompanied by a separate image of Mick Jagger.

This interpretation of Shakespeare's fairies came to fruition very much as a 'collage of ideas'.³⁹ Rather than being intended to reflect the realities of Elizabethan dress, or to be read as a straightforward representation of a specific historical period, the fairy world of the 2016 *Dream* was the result of a more instinctive combining of diverse elements. The only features of the fairy ensemble's costumes that could really be considered *Elizabethan* were the farthingales and ruffs, and the high-forehead curled hairstyles (created as masks to enable quick changes), which were a reference to Elizabeth I. Even these historically-specific design features were in themselves an unusual combination of components. The farthingales were actually old Indian saris that had been cut into strips, overdyed, and sewn back together again. The ruffs were made of raffia and other non-standard materials, and the hair of the Elizabethan mask-wigs was matted and riddled with colourful rags.⁴⁰

For Junge, 'mixing' and 'mashing' these elements made the design deliberately 'fun in a sort of non-historical or orthodox way'.⁴¹ This 'tongue-in-cheek' approach to design reflected that the production was 'in a modern world between Athens and London and Hoxton'; it was important to the creative team to work with this sense of historical freedom, and to give the staging a festive, party feel.⁴² Rice explains that, for her, 'making theatre is just like building a patchwork quilt—you don't know which bit you're going to use next, but each clue you add in and you get this strange Bollywood, Shakespearean rock'.⁴³ The costume design for the fairies (and the wider production) was developed through this gradual, instinct-led process of refinement. The staging's collaged versions of Jacobethan dress—described by reviewer Daisy Bowie-Sell (*WhatsOnStage*) as 'a dirty Elizabethan chic'—reflected what the creative team

³⁹ Junge, interview.

⁴⁰ Junge, interview.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Junge, interview.

⁴³ Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins.

felt was ‘right’ for *this play* in *this space*.⁴⁴ This element of the production embodied the approach to Shakespearean performance that defined the staging as a whole. Prioritising artistic freedom and playfulness and rejecting the reverence with which Shakespeare is often treated, but still engaging meaningfully with the Globe’s story and its relationship with ‘authenticity’, Rice’s *Dream* and its anarchic Jacobethan costumes were intended to represent a warm-hearted revolution against all that had come before.

Using a Jacobethan-inspired setting for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* was not in itself particularly revolutionary. The play has a long history of being staged with one or more of its worlds defined via the period of Shakespeare’s lifetime. In the wake of William Poel’s influential work in reviving early modern staging practices at the turn of the twentieth century, several practitioners looked back to the Elizabethan era to react against the Victorian staging conventions in which *Dream* had become entrenched.⁴⁵ In a major break from the then-‘traditional’ approach of staging the play with ‘Athenian-cum-classical mortals’, ‘muslin fairies’, and a ‘Mendelssohnian atmosphere’, Harcourt Williams made his 1929 Old Vic production specifically ‘English and Jacobean’.⁴⁶ The staging featured ‘ruffed nobles’, folk music, and ‘fairyland dresses’ inspired by Inigo Jones’ masque costume designs. Titania and Oberon were, in the words of reviewer Ivor Brown (*Guardian*), ‘Elizabethans who [had] wandered from some gay masque of make-believe’ and the lovers ‘natural wanderers in a world of pastoral magic and madrigal’.⁴⁷ Three years later, William Bridges Adams staged *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in Stratford-upon-Avon’s newly opened Shakespeare Memorial Theatre with ‘an Elizabethan-Jacobean mise-en-scène’. Unlike the ‘Athenian-cum-classical’,

⁴⁴ Daisy Bowie-Sell, ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Shakespeare’s Globe)’, *WhatsOnStage*, 6 May 2016 <https://www.whatsonstage.com/london-theatre/reviews/a-midsummer-nights-dream-shakespeares-globe_40375.html> [accessed 15 August 2019]

⁴⁵ I discuss Poel’s work with the Elizabethan Stage Society in the introduction to this thesis (pp. 32-5).

⁴⁶ Qtd in Trevor R. Griffiths, ‘Introduction’, in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, by William Shakespeare, ed. by Griffiths (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), pp. 1-80 (p. 52).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Mendelssohnian Stratford productions that preceded it, this 1932 production located Athens in an Elizabethan country house; the Athenians wore elaborate Elizabethan-inspired clothing while the fairies were ‘a silver-and-blue troupe of mannikins whose keynote was unearthliness—quaint little people with grey faces, witches’ hats, spangled garments’.⁴⁸ Together with ‘the weight of the Cambridge edition’s authority [being] behind a Renaissance setting’, these ground-breaking productions established a ‘major strand’ in twentieth-century interpretations of the play.⁴⁹ Essentially, Williams and Bridges Adams were pioneers in the development of a *Dream* performance practice that would come to be one of the century’s leading Shakespearean staging traditions.

Peter Hall’s renowned 1959 and 1962 Stratford-upon-Avon productions built further on the ideas that underpinned these early-twentieth-century stagings. Led by the (spurious) theory that the play was first staged ‘for a wedding in an Elizabethan country house’,⁵⁰ Hall gave Athens an Elizabethan manor house setting (like Bridges Adams) and made the forest a reflection of the mortal court by subtly modifying Elizabethan styles of dress with airy fabrics that ‘suggested the cobwebs, dew and gossamer of the fairies’ natural environment’.⁵¹ As discussed in Chapter Three, Hall continued to promote the play’s Elizabethan grounding in his 2010 Rose Theatre Kingston production. In the programme for this later staging, Hall wrote: ‘A *Midsummer Night’s Dream* is set in Athens, but this classical device is to distance and romanticise what is in fact a very Elizabethan and very English play’.⁵² Theseus is ‘no pagan warrior, but a country duke who practices an essentially English brand of pragmatism when

⁴⁸ Qtd in Griffiths, p. 54.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Qtd in Peter Hall and Michael Mullin, ‘Peter Hall’s “Midsummer Night’s Dream” on Film’, *Educational Theatre Journal*, 27.4 (1975), 529–34 <<https://doi.org/10.2307/3206388>> (p. 530)

⁵¹ Roger Warren, ‘Staging *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*: Peter Hall’s Productions, 1959–2010’, in *Shakespeare Survey* 65 (2012), 147–54 <<https://doi.org/10.1017/SSO9781139170000.012>> (p. 148)

⁵² Peter Hall, ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ (programme note), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* by William Shakespeare (London: Rose Theatre Kingston, 2010), p. 5.

things get difficult, especially with the young'. The mechanicals are 'the workmen of Warwickshire'. 'The Renaissance conceits of the four lovers belong to the Elizabethan love-lyrics', and the fairies are 'not classical, but sprites of Hallowe'en and part of English folklore'.⁵³ The academic register of Hall's reasoning casts a revealing light over the nature of the connections he saw between *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the period of Shakespeare's lifetime. For Hall, the play demanded an Elizabethan setting because of theories around its original performance conditions, the significance of its classical and folkloric influences, and the historical specificity of its lyrical style. These ideas share roots with the work of Poel and his successors. Grounded in critical theory and historical circumstance, the instinct here is to make sense of the text today by reflecting and respecting the early modern world in which it came into being. The tradition of linking *Dream* with the period of its composition in performance was therefore associated (in part, at least) with a notably scholarly approach to Shakespeare; magic was not made to appear Elizabethan simply because it felt 'right', but because this approach assertively framed what was (and is) believed to represent the heart of Shakespeare's literary craft and intention.

There is something more than historical style and circumstance that has led *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to be layered with the material culture of the Elizabethan era, however. While there are evidently several ways in which academic theories can form logical pathways to an early modern setting for the play as a whole, Rice and Junge's approach to defining *Dream*'s three spheres points towards the period of Shakespeare's lifetime having a particular aptitude for giving form to the *fantastical* realm of this play. That the play's spirits could be made intrinsically Elizabethan while the lovers and mechanicals reflected modern London invites

⁵³ Hall, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.

closer consideration: what might lead these otherworldly characters to be presented specifically as products of the period of their creation?

In 1914, director Harley Granville Barker declared the fairies of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to be 'the producer's test'.⁵⁴ Theatre-makers must, in Granville Barker's view, provide 'ocular proof' of the elements described in Shakespeare's text to satisfy the spectacle-seeking eyes of his contemporary audiences.⁵⁵ While the words of the play might have provided enough world-building detail for an early modern audience accustomed to bare-platform staging practices, theatregoers of the early twentieth century had come to expect the excitement of visual illusion and scenic delights. It was no longer enough to *hear* that the 'palace wood a mile without the town' of Athens is an enchanted kingdom, home to 'spirits of another sort' (3.2.389) that wander swiftly 'from the farthest step of India' (2.1.69), 'thorough flood, thorough fire' (2.1.5), and through 'forests wild' in 'spangled starlight sheen' (2.1.25-9). A visual language was required to make sense of the play's otherworldly hierarchy, where 'elves' are small enough to '[c]reep into acorn cups' (2.1.31) and use the 'leathern wings' of bats as coats (2.2.4-5), the sprite Robin Goodfellow changes form to meddle mischievously in rural happenings, and the fairy king and queen court mortals and cause the seasons to alter beyond recognition. The fairies' association with magic, dance, and an exotic otherness presented further cause for quandary. To pass the 'test' of the play was, in Granville Barker's view, to successfully negotiate the boundaries between suggestion and actualisation, spectacle and distraction; the producer's goal should ultimately be '[t]o avoid discordancy while satisfying still that hungry eye'.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Harley Granville Barker, 'Preface to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*', in *Granville Barker's Prefaces to Shakespeare* (London: Nick Hern and the Royal National Theatre, 1993), p. 32.

⁵⁵ Granville Barker, p. 40.

⁵⁶ Granville Barker, p. 40.

As my previous chapters have attested, the early modern period has, over time, accumulated layers of mythology that distort and refract the boundaries between historical fact and fiction. Today, ‘Shakespeare’s time’ evokes a romanticised image of an era of queens and kings, explorers and poets, passion and restriction, rustic rurality, and aesthetic splendour.⁵⁷ The legendary qualities associated with this period suggest the presence of something more than nostalgia; Elizabethan England has become a fantasy realm in our modern cultural imagination. The realities of the past have been reworked into our own ‘dream’ of a Shakespearean world. The fictions and contradictions that permeate our modern, mythologised understanding of the early modern era can appropriately contextualise *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*’s fantastical sphere because it supports the notion of a hierarchical social structure, a heightened proximity to nature, a pastoral rurality, and the apparent possibility of something greater and more mysterious than our modern reality. As suggested by Ivor Brown’s review of Williams’ 1929 *Dream* (see above), an Elizabethan world is seen to be one ‘of pastoral magic and madrigal’. Addison’s 1712 essay (cited at the beginning of this chapter) makes a related claim:

Our forefathers looked upon nature with more reverence and horror [...] and loved to astonish themselves with the apprehensions of witchcraft, prodigies, charms, and enchantments. There was not a village in England that had not a ghost in it, the churchyards were all haunted, every large common had a circle of fairies belonging to it, and there was scarce a shepherd to be met with who had not seen a spirit.⁵⁸

This period has long been considered ‘other’ and exotic in relation to the observer’s reality, and thus has considerable capacity for creating wonder and spectacle for today’s audiences. Perhaps more importantly, an early modern setting has the effect of making *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*’s fairy sphere ‘Shakespearean’. It attributes the text’s mysterious spirits to the playwright and his imagination, seeking no alternative explanation or contextualisation for the

⁵⁷ For more on this point, see Chapter Three (particularly p. 188).

⁵⁸ Addison, p. 1.

practicalities around the fairies' existence. With Granville Barker's ideas in mind, this setting 'satisfies the eye' and cannot introduce discordancy because the fairies are products of Shakespeare's time.

While Rice's *Dream* drew heavily on these connections by establishing the play's fairies as having been born of Shakespeare and living on as immortal Shakespearean spirits, it is important to return to the site-responsivity of the production to fully understand the significance of its archaic, anarchic interpretation of magic. Although the prefix 'post' has not yet featured in conversations around this staging, approaching the 2016 *Dream* as a work that was intended—and read—as 'post-traditional' usefully exposes key features of its functionality. In a detailed deliberation of the context-specific meanings engendered by 'post' (particularly the various significances of 'postmodern' and 'postcolonial'), Kwame Anthony Appiah emphasises the notion of *positioning* that this prefix brings to an act or concept.⁵⁹ Some manifestations of postmodernism, for example, centre on the overt rejection of certain aspects of modernism, while others represent a space-clearing gesture intended to establish a sense of freedom from the oppressions of what came before.⁶⁰ Underpinning the nuanced differences between these definitions is the notion of *consequence*. Postmodernism follows *from*, not just *after*, modernism.⁶¹ Using the 'post' prefix therefore establishes a particular relationship between demarcated movements—one which positions an idea, artist, work, school of thought, or oneself in direct relation to a predecessor—and thus forms events into a narrative.

Rice's inaugural production at Shakespeare's Globe was 'post-traditional' in the sense that it (quite intentionally) functioned as a space-clearing act, and a statement piece that positioned this new era of Globe performance in relation to what had come before. Rice 'really wanted

⁵⁹ Kwame Anthony Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 137-57.

⁶⁰ Appiah, p. 141.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

[the 2016 *Dream*] to land in the moment as a new beginning'.⁶² In reflecting oppositional interpretations of 'original practices' performance, framing the mechanicals as Globe Volunteer Stewards, and reflecting London's twenty-first-century 'Hoxton hipsters' in the lovers, the production could perform a playful self-awareness of the theatre's past and present characteristics while distancing itself from certain Globe associations. These elements of the staging, as well as the 'cheeky reference to Mark Rylance' in Rita Quince's opening 'parish notices', were all included to 'warmly referenc[e] the past' at the beginning of this new chapter in the organisation's story.⁶³ While there was, for Rice and the staging's company of actors, a 'huge amount of respect for Shakespeare and the Globe in there',⁶⁴ a driving force behind the production was to 'open up Shakespeare a little bit more' by being 'naughtier with it and less hallowed'.⁶⁵ Rice's 'opening gambit' at the theatre was thus intended to represent a decisive movement away from the layers of tradition that surrounded the Globe, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Shakespeare.⁶⁶ The 'revolution' of the production was to acknowledge these traditions directly (through costume design, spoken references inserted into the text, and the freedom with which the play and the Globe's performance space were reimagined) and to assert Rice's artistic directorship as an era of reinvention. Reaching back in time to reflect and respond to hallowed Shakespearean histories while reaching forward to an inclusive and inventive future of performance, the 2016 *Dream* was positioned as the beginning of a new phase in the evolution of Shakespeare within and beyond the Globe.⁶⁷

In performance, this production proved remarkably divisive. Some critics applauded its exuberance (Clapp's review proclaims that the production 'rocks'); others were less

⁶² Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins.

⁶³ Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ SGA, Actor Q&A.

⁶⁶ While the Globe is a relatively young theatre, having opened in 1997, it has nevertheless become associated with certain ideas around 'traditional' Shakespearean performance. See Chapter Two for further details.

⁶⁷ Rice, interview with Ella Hawkins.

convinced.⁶⁸ The headline of Lyn Gardner’s review (*Guardian*) states that ‘there’s little dreaming in Rice’s rowdy Midsummer mash-up’.⁶⁹ Maxie Szalwinska (*Sunday Times*) felt that the play’s ‘tatterdemalion’ Elizabethan fairies ‘don’t cohere dramatically’.⁷⁰ A subset of journalists reacted against Rice’s vision more violently. Hannah Furness (*Telegraph*), for example, dedicated an article to the contentious matter of the director having utilised rigged lighting and amplified sound in her 2016 *Dream*.⁷¹ For an anonymous ‘long-term theatre-goer’ quoted by Furness, the production was ‘either utterly thoughtless and clumsy or a cynical betrayal of Sam Wanamaker’s work, showing no understanding of the point of the place’.⁷² Five months after *Dream*’s opening performance, newspapers reported that Rice’s contract with the Globe would be terminated early. The Shakespeare Globe Trust Board’s controversial decision to return to “‘shared light” productions without sound and light rigging’ was greeted variously with suspicion (Alice Jones; *i*),⁷³ support (Sohrab Ahmari; *Prospect*),⁷⁴ and condemnation (Gardner; *Guardian*).⁷⁵

The causes and effects of Rice’s premature departure from the Globe fall outside the remit of this thesis.⁷⁶ What is of interest here is the fact that every one of the articles cited in the previous

⁶⁸ Clapp, ‘The wildest of dreams’.

⁶⁹ Lyn Gardner, ‘Clothes drop off, and there’s little dreaming in Rice’s rowdy Midsummer mash-up’, *Guardian*, 9 May 2016, p. 27.

⁷⁰ Maxie Szalwinska, ‘True love gives way to riotous comedy’, *Sunday Times*, 15 May 2016, pp. 20–21 (p. 21).

⁷¹ Hannah Furness, ‘Shakespeare’s Globe risks wrath after installing “sixth form disco”’, *Telegraph*, 5 May 2016 <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/05/shakespeares-globe-risks-wrath-after-installing-sixth-form-disco/>> [accessed 22 August 2019]

⁷² Qtd in Furness.

⁷³ Neil Constable, ‘Statement regarding the Globe’s future Artistic Direction’, *Shakespeare’s Globe Blog*, 25 October 2016 <<http://www.blog.shakespearesglobe.com/post/152286922818/statement-regarding-the-globes-future-artistic>> [accessed 2 September 2019]; Alice Jones, ‘Emma Rice and Shakespeare’s Globe: a sorry tale of a theatre lacking in courage or vision’, *i*, 25 October 2016 <<https://inews.co.uk/essentials/emma-rice-shakespeares-globe-sorry-tale-theatre-lacking-courage-vision-533404>> [accessed 31 March 2020]

⁷⁴ Sohrab Ahmari, ‘Emma Rice reduced Shakespeare’s plays to lectures—she had to go’, *Prospect*, 1 November 2016 <<https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/arts-and-books/emma-rice-reduced-shakespeares-plays-to-lectures-she-had-to-go>> [accessed 31 March 2020]

⁷⁵ Lyn Gardner, ‘As Emma Rice departs, the Globe has egg on its face – and no vision’, *Guardian*, 25 October 2016 <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/theatreblog/2016/oct/25/shakespeares-globe-emma-rice-department-comment?CMP=tw_t_gu> [accessed 31 March 2020]

⁷⁶ For a detailed account of the controversies attached to Rice’s short tenure as Artistic Director of Shakespeare’s Globe (albeit from an outsider’s perspective), see Kevin A. Quarmby, ‘OP PC or PAR RIP?’, *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 36.4 (2018), 567–98 <<https://doi.org/10.1353/shb.2018.0058>>

paragraph featured a photograph of the 2016 *Dream* in performance. To be more specific, these photographs focused purely on the production's unruly, Elizabethan-inspired fairy realm. Gardner's mixed review of the staging was illustrated by an image of Meow Meow's beruffed Titania removing her tights (the same photograph accompanied Jones' article for *i*). Gardner's subsequent response to Rice's removal was formatted around a photograph of the fairy queen reaching out to Varla's 'rockstar' Jacobethan Oberon, flanked by farthingale-wearing fairies (pictured in Figure 56). Ahmari's perspective on the controversy was preceded by a close-up image of First Fairy Nandi Bhebhe; Junge's patchwork of Elizabethan design elements feature prominently in the photograph's composition. Furness' barbed account of negative comments around Rice's production values featured two photographs of similar scenes: the first focused on Oberon's satin-effect doublet and voluminous hose as the figure crouched above Titania's sleeping form, the second emphasised the multi-coloured nature of the fairies' patchwork farthingales.

The 2016 *Dream*'s irreverent vision of Shakespeare's fairy world clearly came to function as a defining feature of Rice's tenure at the Globe. From the time the production opened, and throughout the highly politicised narrative that followed in its wake, Junge's Elizabethan-inspired costumes were framed by critics as a frontispiece for the director's approach to staging Shakespeare. While it is not surprising that *Dream* production photographs were used in this way—this was the only staging Rice directed at the Globe before her departure from the organisation was announced—the implications of its fairy sphere having featured so prominently in journalistic coverage warrant further consideration.

Positioned as the ultimate visual representation of Rice's *Dream*, the production's 'rock star' Elizabethan fairies were weighted with a level of significance that was not necessarily intended by Rice or Junge. Rather than being read in relation to the staging's two modern spheres, and

thereby functioning as one set of components in a multi-layered, site-responsive onstage world, these Elizabethan-inspired figures were used to illustrate all that was ‘naughty’, ‘revolutionary’, or ‘thoughtless’ about Rice-era Globe performance. Junge’s Jacobethan costumes became emblematic of a broader shift in this organisation’s artistic direction. We might consider, then, that the clothing of Shakespeare’s lifetime is prone to a particular kind of politicization in contemporary Shakespearean performance. My previous chapters have indicated the extent to which such garments can evoke nostalgia and signify traditionalism—within individual organisational contexts (including the Globe) and in twenty-first-century culture more generally. The Globe’s 2016 *Dream* included Jacobethan costumes to engage playfully with the past, associating the play’s otherworldly characters with Shakespeare’s own world while telegraphing Rice’s rejection of tradition and reverence. That these same garments featured prominently in the critical debates the production ignited is testament to the ongoing magnitude of Jacobethan dress in matters of institutional identity, and of how Shakespeare ‘should’ be performed today.

Long before Emma Rice had been appointed Artistic Director of Shakespeare’s Globe, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) began work on a ground-breaking production that would push the boundaries of what was possible in live theatrical performance. The RSC had realised, years in advance, that 2016 was going to be ‘a *big* Shakespeare year’.⁷⁷ While the Globe’s artistic focus during this year related primarily to its own internal revolutions, the RSC’s sights were trained on the four-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare’s death. RSC Artistic Director Gregory Doran knew that he ‘wanted to conclude the year with something special that was sort of pointing forward, if you like, to where the potential for performance and for Shakespeare

⁷⁷ IntelCanada, *400 Years in the Making*, online video recording, YouTube, 12 December 2016 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOcD2bO26O4>> [accessed 4 September 2019]

performance might be heading in future'.⁷⁸ It was clear to the company that in this significant cultural moment they needed to 'put on something pretty spectacular';⁷⁹ the RSC's response to the anniversary year would have to be seen to constitute a real 'event'.⁸⁰

Digital technology came to form the foundational impetus in this enterprise. Before any specific production concept had been established,⁸¹ the RSC reached out to major technology company Intel to instigate a collaboration.⁸² The goal of this partnership was to harness cutting-edge technological advancements that Intel were in the process of developing and use these innovations to 'try and match the magic of Shakespeare's imagination'.⁸³ While *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 'would've been great' as a subject for the extensive research and development process that followed (the 'test' of the play would have been met by creating the fairies 'in some kind of digital world'), Doran instead selected *The Tempest*.⁸⁴ As well as being (in the director's view) Shakespeare's last solely-authored play, making it a fitting choice for the anniversary year, *The Tempest* posed particular challenges in the breadth of its vision. Doran felt 'the experience of reading [*The Tempest*] can be more vivid than the experience of performing or seeing it [...] you have to do a production that matches up to the reader's imagination of what that might be and you have to better it'.⁸⁵ Digital technology could therefore usefully serve the purpose of realising elements in the play that had previously been

⁷⁸ Gregory Doran, interview with Ella Hawkins (Stratford-upon-Avon, 19 December 2018).

⁷⁹ IntelCanada, *400 Years in the Making*.

⁸⁰ Stephen Brimson Lewis, interview with Ella Hawkins (Stratford-upon-Avon, 5 August 2019).

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² In a report commissioned to document this collaboration (written by Ceri Gorton), Intel is described as 'an American multinational corporation and technology company that designs and builds technologies that serve as the foundation for the world's computing devices. It aims to "invent at the boundaries of technology to make amazing experiences possible for businesses and society"'; Ceri Gorton, *Space to Play: Making Arts & Technology Collaborations Work* <https://issuu.com/the_rsc/docs/b7061_tempest_impact_report_v10> [accessed 6 September 2019] (p. 9)

⁸³ Doran explains that he saw a video of Intel's *Leviathan* project (in which an animated whale emerges out of a projection screen and seems to swim over the heads of audience members) and knew immediately that he wanted to create a production using technology of this kind; Doran, interview; IntelCanada, *400 Years in the Making*.

⁸⁴ Barbara Bogaev, Gregory Doran, and Ben Lumsden, 'The Royal Shakespeare Company's Digital Tempest', *Folger Shakespeare Library*, 2017 <<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/royal-shakespeare-company-the-tempest>> [accessed 4 September 2019]

⁸⁵ Doran, interview.

difficult or impossible to achieve in live theatre. The director was also drawn to the text's possible connections with Jacobean masque practices; the notion that *The Tempest* sees Shakespeare 'referencing the latest technical innovation of the masque by having a masque in the piece' struck a chord with Doran's vision for his cutting-edge production. The 'extraordinary' experiences that likely stemmed from these 'multi-media extravaganzas' in their original historical context reflected the same sense of spectacle, event, and groundbreaking advancement that was intended to define the collaborative 2016 staging.⁸⁶

The twenty-first century's most advanced tools thus came to be used to bring to life *The Tempest*'s most challenging elements, and to act as the modern equivalent of the innovative performance practices that might have influenced the play's composition. Live motion capture technology (developed in partnership with The Imaginarium Studios) enabled Ariel to be realised as an avatar that could fly, dissolve into a thousand particles, appear in numerous places at once, and transform into a forty-foot harpy.⁸⁷ 27 projectors were used to saturate the performance space with crashing waves and lightning bolts;⁸⁸ diverse digital landscapes created the vivid, fantastical world of Prospero's island, creating 'a sense of [it] being a place where magic is possible'.⁸⁹ Projection-mapping made the 'dogs and hounds' of 4.1 a striking, photo-realistic vision, and the 'masque' ordered by Prospero became an extraordinary explosion of colour, sound, and digital effects.⁹⁰ Essentially, digital technology became the means by which magic could be made a (virtual) reality, live on stage. With these 'spectacular tools', the creative team could attempt in new ways 'to encapsulate Shakespeare's vision, inclusive of all

⁸⁶ Doran, interview.

⁸⁷ Promotion, 'PROMOTION: Andy Serkis Brings Performance Capture To The RSC's *The Tempest*', *Empire*, 3 May 2017 <<https://www.empireonline.com/movies/features/promo-andy-serkis-tempest/>> [accessed 27 June 2019]

⁸⁸ Bogaev, Doran, and Lumsden.

⁸⁹ IntelCanada, *400 Years in the Making*; Bogaev, Doran, and Lumsden.

⁹⁰ Ceri Gorton explains that the production's use of digital technology was intentionally focused on these four key elements of the play ('the character of Ariel, the harpy, the hounds, and the spectacle of the masque'); p. 9.

that magic, that wonder’;⁹¹ by approaching the production as a ‘twenty-first-century masque’, the RSC could have a clear conceptual grounding for *The Tempest*’s creative and technological development process.⁹²

What has not yet featured in discussions of the 2016 *Tempest* is the fact that magic became as intimately connected with historical dress in this production as it did with technology. Despite the staging’s self-proclaimed forward-facing focus, historically-inspired garments played a fundamental role in establishing and defining the enchanted world of the play. Previous studies have assessed this *Tempest* with a focus weighted towards its digital elements. In a detailed discussion of the functionality and significance of the staging’s digital toolkit, Pascale Aebischer unfolds the layers of complexity that technological augmentation brought to characterisation, spectator experience, and the production’s relationship with Shakespearean performance histories.⁹³ Amy Borsuk follows the RSC’s rhetoric around ‘innovation’ to the broader socioeconomic context in which this *Tempest* was developed, considering how the 2016 *Tempest* served to enhance the RSC’s cultural capital and legitimise the company’s status as a competitive and collaborative participant in a wider digital economy.⁹⁴ Victor Huertas Martín pits the production’s virtual technology against its actors’ bodies in a study of the dialectics of this relationship,⁹⁵ and in the Folger Shakespeare Library’s 2019 ‘Shakespeare’s Birthday Lecture’ Gina Bloom focused on the interpretive possibilities and outcomes of performing *The Tempest* via digital gaming technology.⁹⁶ Approaching the production from a

⁹¹ IntelCanada, *400 Years in the Making*.

⁹² Ellis, ‘O Brave New World’.

⁹³ Pascale Aebischer, *Shakespeare, Spectatorship and the Technologies of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 119-48.

⁹⁴ Amy Borsuk, ‘Innovating Shakespeare: The Politics of Technological Partnership in the Royal Shakespeare Company’s *The Tempest* (2016)’, *Humanities*, 8.42 (2019), 1-14 <<https://doi.org/10.3390/h8010042>>

⁹⁵ Victor Huertas Martín, ‘The *Tempest* de William Shakespeare, dirigida por Gregory Doran (Royal Shakespeare Company, 2016-2017). Dialéctica entre tecnología virtual y corporalidad’, *Diáblotexto Digital* 3 (2018), 43-74 <<https://doi.org/10.7203/diablodotexto.3.13015>>

⁹⁶ Gina Bloom, ‘Shakespeare’s Birthday Lecture: Rough Magic’, *Folger Shakespeare Library*, 22 April 2019 <<https://www.folger.edu/events/shakespeare-birthday-lecture-rough-magic>> [accessed 20 September 2019]

costume-focused perspective sheds new light on how this *Tempest* came into being and how the staging made meaning for its twenty-first-century audiences. Providing an interpretive pathway relatively free from the carefully constructed rhetoric around the production's digital components, Stephen Brimson Lewis' costume design gives a clear sense of how the staging's storytelling took form, the practicalities behind its creation of magic, and how the production came to be positioned in relation to past and present performance practices.

The first threads of meaning woven to form the fabric of the 2016 *Tempest*'s fantastical world were garments of distinctly historical, regal origin. Before the Royal Shakespeare Theatre's performance space was filled with the intense digital lightning-strike effect that marked the onset of Ariel's magical sea storm, a retinue of men (Alonso, Ferdinand, Sebastian, Antonio, and Gonzalo) strode to the centre of the stage (see Figure 58). Their clothing—embellished cream and navy-blue court dress uniforms—was intentionally historically and culturally vague in appearance. Described by Doran as being of 'elsewhere, elsewhere', these garments were designed to reflect a time and place that was non-specifically 'other' to the audience's reality.⁹⁷ While the appearance of the courtiers' uniforms did have specific cultural influences—Brimson Lewis was inspired by the military-style uniforms worn by royal families around the globe—it was the prevalence of the same, very particular uniform shape across diverse royal contexts that attracted the designer to this style of dress for Alonso's retinue. The fact that curiously similar court dress uniforms have been worn by 'the royal family of Russia, the royal family of Saudi Arabia, the royal family of Great Britain, the royal family of almost any culture now, across the world' meant that these garments would be recognisable immediately to modern audiences as reflecting royal status. More importantly, however, this form of dress promised a significant degree of ambiguity. Paired with their geographical non-specificity was

⁹⁷ Doran, interview.

the longevity of the uniforms' prominence in their various cultural contexts. With the same styles of dress having been worn by royalty from the nineteenth century through to the present day, the silhouettes and detailing of these costumes could communicate important narrative information around status 'without saying "this is definitely 1932, this is definitely 1965, this is definitely 1847"'.⁹⁸ Brimson Lewis' costume design therefore served as the visual equivalent of fairy tale's most ubiquitous opening sentence. Digital magic was preceded by an establishing image of 'once upon a time, in a land far, far away'.



Figure 58. The costumes designed for Sebastian, Alonso, and Ferdinand established the world of the 2016 *Tempest* as being of 'elsewhere, elsewhere' (screengrab of RSC Live from Stratford-upon-Avon broadcast).

⁹⁸ Brimson Lewis, interview.

This element of the production's design was intended to distance the world of the play from the audience's reality. Brimson Lewis 'always' feels with Shakespeare that 'there is something useful in "long, long ago, far, far away"'.⁹⁹ Led by the fact that the playwright 'very often' chose to 'pick a story and just push it somewhere else', the designer is drawn to the notion that some of Shakespeare's plays function 'almost like a fable' with 'all of that kind of nuance you get from a fairy story, where you sort of know it's not real'.¹⁰⁰ In effect, far-away settings like 'Naples' and 'Sicily' function as imaginative spaces that are, most importantly, removed from the 'here and now' of the audience's reality. For Brimson Lewis, the playwright's location of stories in distant, usually non-specific times and places has the effect of establishing a sense of safety. A setting that is 'long, long ago' and/or 'far, far away' is 'somehow a safe place, a place removed from all the chaos and all the complications of a lot of extraneous detail of today'.¹⁰¹ Creating this same sense of 'elsewhere, elsewhere' for a modern audience would therefore emphasise *The Tempest's* proximity to the genre of fairy stories, facilitating a feeling of comfortable distance and inviting the play's characters and events to be interpreted more figuratively (than, for example, the direct reflection of 2016 London in the Globe's *Dream*).

To draw this connection between *The Tempest* and fairy tale is to highlight and contextualise certain elements of the play's narrative. Rather than layering the text with the realities of an identifiable cultural context, Brimson Lewis' intentionally ambiguous costume design prepared audience members to anticipate a world in which magic could exist without question. In an introduction to the history and defining features of fairy tale, Hilda Ellis Davidson and Anna Chaudhri point towards the power of '[o]nce upon a time' or '[l]ong, long ago in a

⁹⁹ Brimson Lewis was speaking particularly about *The Tempest* when making this point, but notes that this idea does apply to other Shakespeare plays (such as *All's Well That Ends Well*). The designer refers to the work of the Brothers Grimm and Bruno Bettelheim's writings on fairy stories to explain how similar distancing devices have been used elsewhere; Brimson Lewis, interview.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Brimson Lewis, interview.

kingdom far away’ for introducing stories that hinge on elements of fantasy: ‘[a]dults and children alike know that when [these words] open a tale, the realm of wonder and enchantment is about to be revealed’.¹⁰² The notion of an ‘enchanted realm’ is so prevalent across works considered to fall within this genre that it is considered a key feature of the form.¹⁰³ Folklore scholar Maria Tatar describes the traditional European fairy tale as being characterised primarily by its location in ‘a fictional world where preternatural events and supernatural invention are taken wholly for granted’; in these tales ‘there is a willing suspension of disbelief and no attempt, as with legends, to claim that the story is true’.¹⁰⁴ Introducing *The Tempest* as a fairy tale would therefore not only draw attention to the play’s fable-like qualities, but—essentially—establish Prospero’s island as an enchanted realm. Magic, spirits, and other supernatural happenings would be contextualised without requiring any further explanation.

Of course, it was not the *words* associated with fairy tale that established the world of the 2016 *Tempest*. ‘Once upon a time, in a land far, far away’ was instead communicated via a visual representation of the same sentiment. Similarities between Brimson Lewis’ approach to design for *The Tempest* and the costuming of major modern fantasy film and television productions reveals the extent to which the RSC production tapped into established design mechanisms in this element of the production. Designers have long been responsible for introducing and defining enchanted realms through costume design, and twenty-first century audiences are intimately (though likely subconsciously) familiar with the visual codes that have come to be used widely in screen productions of such narratives. For example, in Peter Jackson’s 2001-3 film adaptations of *The Lord of the Rings* (a modern, epically scaled descendent of traditional fairy tale), costume designer Ngila Dickson made sense of J. R. R. Tolkien’s otherworldly

¹⁰² Hilda Ellis Davidson and Anna Chaudhri, ‘Introduction’, in *A Companion to the Fairy Tale*, ed. by Ellis Davidson and Chaudhri (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2006), pp. 1-13 (p. 5).

¹⁰³ Ellis Davidson and Chaudhri, p. 4.

¹⁰⁴ Maria Tatar, *The Hard Facts of the Grimms’ Fairy Tales* (Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 33-4.

characters by associating them with particular periods of the past.¹⁰⁵ The humanoid inhabitants of the Shire wear clothing inspired by eighteenth-century fashions to emphasise their quintessentially ‘English’ country lifestyle, ethereal elves and regal maidens are clothed in embroidered medieval-esque gowns with sweeping floor-length sleeves, and rangers ride in stamped leather tunics and weathered cloaks.¹⁰⁶ The blending of these historically-specific features into garments that are ultimately unlocatable ensures the costumed characters can be entirely legible while forming a constituent part of a world of wizards, dragons, elves, and sentient jewellery.¹⁰⁷ Comparable mechanisms of history-as-fantasy exist in the HBO television adaptation of George R. R. Martin’s *A Game of Thrones* (2011-19),¹⁰⁸ the film adaptations of C. S. Lewis’ *The Chronicles of Narnia* series (2005-10),¹⁰⁹ and in many Disney films.¹¹⁰ In her monograph *Fantasy*, Rosemary Jackson turns to Freud to explain why recognisable elements of the past feature so heavily in the construction of these inherently ‘other’ worlds: ‘[t]he “creative” imagination, indeed, is quite incapable of *inventing* anything; it can only combine components that are strange to one another’.¹¹¹ Fantasy is thus ‘not to do with inventing another non-human world [...] It has to do with inverting elements of this world, re-combining its constitutive features in new relations to produce something strange and unfamiliar’.¹¹² Introducing fantastical ‘otherworlds’ through reimagined, recognisable cultural references has

¹⁰⁵ Tom Shippey, ‘Transformations of Fairy Tale in Contemporary Writing’, in *A Companion to the Fairy Tale*, ed. by Ellis Davidson and Chaudhri, pp. 253–74 (pp. 271-2).

¹⁰⁶ *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King Costume Design*, online video recording, YouTube, 29 August 2018 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQqNfEot8sQ&t=314s>> [accessed 10 August 2019]

¹⁰⁷ Interestingly, the 2016 *Tempest* was also connected to *The Lord of the Rings* via the involvement of Andy Serkis (The Imaginarium Studios)—the actor responsible for the films’ portrayal of the character Gollum.

¹⁰⁸ In the series of novels and subsequent television adaptation, the fictional feudal society of Westeros sees ancient heraldic families and political factions battle for control of overlapping territories in a fantastical reimagining of the Wars of the Roses. Costume designer Michele Clapton reworked medieval, Jacobethan, and modern styles of dress to bring the narrative’s epically scaled narrative to life.

¹⁰⁹ Costumes designed by Isis Mussenden. The world that the children discover through the wardrobe is defined via radically reworked, medieval-inspired garments.

¹¹⁰ *The Little Mermaid* (1989) actually features a costume that is near-identical to that designed by Brimson Lewis for Ferdinand. Prince Eric’s royal status in a non-specific human kingdom is communicated via the very same style of court dress as that worn by the monarchy of the 2016 *Tempest*’s Naples.

¹¹¹ Qtd in Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 8.

¹¹² Jackson, p. 8.

thus become a widely used means of achieving the same sense of distance, safety, and inevitable enchantment as that anticipated in fairy tale by ‘once upon a time, in a land far, far away’.

The costumes at the centre of *The Tempest*’s opening moments therefore provided the foundation from which all subsequent moments of magic were built. The courtiers’ garments were instrumental in creating the contours of a world in which strange powers and spirits can reshape the lives of characters who are deeply human, and where the very air is alive with enchantment. Further, embedded in these costumes was an early indication of what form the ‘future of performance’ came to take for the production’s creative team. Combining age-old, enduringly effective storytelling devices with world-building mechanisms that have captured the imaginations of twenty-first-century audiences on vast scales, the 2016 *Tempest* represented an incremental step in the evolution of design, performance, and technology rather than an artistic or technological revolution. A ‘twenty-first-century masque’ came to mean a fairy tale brought to life in real time with an imaginative and technical scope comparable to the epically scaled productions of film and television.

While these opening moments reveal the centrality of the role played by historically-inspired costume in establishing Prospero’s island as ‘a place where magic is possible’, our attention must turn to subsequent scenes to understand how *Jacobethan*-inspired clothing functioned in this context. The ‘masque’ of 4.1 marked a climax in the production’s spectacular combining of digital effects and historically-inspired costuming to weave magic. As the central tenet in the connection between *The Tempest* and Jacobean masque practices, this moment in the 2016 production was the creative team’s most significant opportunity for exploring and exploiting the ‘spectacular tools’ of the twenty-first century. Brimson Lewis and Doran ‘knew about the

masque section of [the play] in particular being something that the tech could really deliver',¹¹³ and Doran expected this to be 'the moment when we can finally bring Juno on her chariot drawn by peacocks onto the stage'.¹¹⁴ The way in which this sequence actually came to fruition is revealing: the production's masque scene came to form a site of disparity between creative intention and critical interpretation.

The masque began in darkness. As Prospero ushered Miranda and Sebastian to the edge of the space, an iridescent aurora borealis streamed across the upstage cyclorama. A figure appeared in the distance, visible at first only by the glowing fibre optic filaments emerging from her collar and skirt. A spotlight illuminated the 'many-coloured messenger' (4.1.76). Wearing a glittering, rainbow-coloured gown with an exaggerated silhouette and dangling ropes of brilliant fabrics, Iris clearly came from a world entirely different from that of Prospero's island. The goddess' dramatic horn-shaped hairstyle furthered her fantastical appearance, while a striking feathered rebato-style collar gave the outfit a distinctively Jacobethan association. The 'rich leas', 'turfy mountains', and 'flat meads' of Iris' stylised speech were realised digitally (4.1.60-3); 'we seem[ed] to be travelling through a dream of David Hockney landscape paintings' as moving compositions of rolling hills, striped fields, and rocky seascapes enveloped the cyclorama and crackled stage floor.¹¹⁵

A low rumbling began to fill the auditorium. Ceres arose through the stage floor amidst a growing circle of digitally created cracks. A cluster of spirits unfurled an enormous, sweeping overskirt from around the goddess' feet as she rose high above the stage. Within moments the

¹¹³ Brimson Lewis, interview.

¹¹⁴ Doran, interview.

¹¹⁵ Paul Taylor, 'The Tempest, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Review: Simon Russell Beale in the Most Profoundly Moving Performance of His Career', *Independent*, 18 November 2016 <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/the-tempest-royal-shakespeare-theatre-stratford-upon-avon-simon-russell-beale-gregory-doran-a7424881.html>> [accessed 3 July 2019]

skirt and cyclorama became a ‘phantasmal riot’ of blossoming flowers and berries,¹¹⁶ signifying Ceres’ role as goddess of the earth and protectress of the harvest.¹¹⁷ The spirits’ removal of Ceres’ overskirt revealed a gold-encrusted gown with the same fantastical, historically-inspired silhouette as that worn by Iris. The atmosphere of the masque sequence intensified with the arrival of ‘Highest queen of state, Great Juno’ (4.1.101-2). Glow-worms appeared to dart across the darkened stage as a bank of painted, projected clouds parted in the distance, and the eye of a vast peacock feather descended from above on an invisible gauze screen. Juno was revealed, forming the centre of an immense, unfurling display of computer-generated peacock feathers. The goddess’ spectacular gown of soft blue tulle, edged with fibre optic light, featured several elements that were identifiably Jacobethan. As well as having a silhouette and pointed bodice inspired by this period of dress history, the white rebato collar and distinctive heart-shaped hairstyle accompanying the gown bore more than a slight resemblance to styles worn by Elizabeth I. Iris gestured for Miranda and Ferdinand to kneel before Juno. The three goddesses performed the marriage blessing in a Mozartian operatic style as richly painted countryside landscapes saturated the upstage cyclorama (see Figure 59).

¹¹⁶ Taylor, ‘The Tempest’.

¹¹⁷ *The Tempest*, by William Shakespeare, ed. by Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan, rev. ed. (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), p. 164.



Figure 59. Iris, Juno, and Ceres bless the marriage of Ferdinand and Miranda in a spectacular digital-meets-Jacobethan staging sequence (photograph by Zuleika Henry).

Iris, Ceres, Juno, and the manner of their arrival were made magical as a result of this spectacular combination of design elements. Just as the courtiers' culturally vague uniforms created a fairy-tale-esque setting of 'elsewhere, elsewhen', so too would the goddesses' gowns be read as 'other' by a twenty-first-century audience as a result of the garments' exotic unfamiliarity. Positioned in the midst of dramatic projected vistas, the goddesses' costumes recombined constitutive features of our own world (past and present) to produce a spectacle that was strange, awe-inspiring, and worthy of wonder. The inclusion of Jacobethan features in the costume design for these figures went further than simply establishing the world of the play as fantastically 'other', however. Unlike the deliberately non-specific styles of clothing worn by Alonso and company, Juno's gown and Iris' collar functioned quite specifically and

legibly as signifiers of Shakespeare's own period.¹¹⁸ The realm of the goddesses was presented not only as being distinct from that of Prospero's island, but also as a domain rooted ultimately in the culture of its composition. This magical sphere thus introduced into the production's ambiguous, fairy-tale setting a known social and cultural history, establishing these fantastical figures and the masque sequence as being connected in some way with the period in which the play was written and first performed.

Interestingly, the costumes created for these characters resulted from an entirely organic design process. To 'create the enchantment of the benediction', Doran and Brimson Lewis sought to understand 'what masque meant to an Elizabethan/Jacobean audience' and achieve the same *effect* for a twenty-first-century audience.¹¹⁹ Essentially, the goddesses were intended to create the same sense of spectacle and extravagance as Jacobean masque is thought to have achieved, but Brimson Lewis felt no obligation or desire to link the figures' costumes to any surviving masque designs.¹²⁰ 'Instinct' was instead the driving force behind the development of these costumes; there was little in this process that felt 'intellectual'.¹²¹ The goddesses were rooted in the period of Shakespeare's lifetime as a result of associations that were more subconscious than the production's marketing materials came to suggest. As with the Globe's 2016 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the question thus arises as to why instinct might lead to a specifically *Jacobethan*-inspired aesthetic for this particular fantastical sphere.

There were precise qualities and significations relating to early modern sartorial culture that attracted Brimson Lewis to this period of dress history for Iris, Ceres, and Juno. The designer

¹¹⁸ Borsuk describes Iris' and Juno's gowns as 'Elizabethan' in style, and Aebischer names the figures' rebato collars as being key features of their appearance. The fact that these costumes have been identified consistently as reflecting the fashions of Shakespeare's lifetime suggests that the Jacobethan elements of the goddesses' gowns were widely recognisable; Borsuk, p. 10; Aebischer, p. 123.

¹¹⁹ Doran, interview.

¹²⁰ Brimson Lewis, interview.

¹²¹ Ibid.

was drawn to the ‘formality’ of Elizabethan/Jacobean dress and its ‘corseted, structured, slightly restricted’ form. There was something of an ‘operatic quality or an oratorio quality’ about these garments that seemed to give them a certain performative presence, and Brimson Lewis ‘liked the fact that they looked clearly of another world’ (in relation to ‘the day-to-day world that we’d seen of the royal family, and of Prospero and of Miranda’).¹²² The design for Juno intentionally recalled styles associated with Elizabeth I to ensure the figure would be recognisable to modern audiences as a queen. Juno’s distinctive heart-shaped hairstyle, rebato collar, and voluminous, Jacobethan-inspired gown came together to form ‘a fantasy version of what Elizabeth I might look like if she was queen of the sky’, and a suggestion of the monarch being ‘at her own masque, wearing her own costume’.¹²³ Ultimately, Brimson Lewis wanted the masque sequence ‘to look spectacular and amazing’, and to ‘delight the eye, and [...] inspire, and beguile’.¹²⁴ The clothing of the period of Shakespeare’s lifetime was seen as a means of creating a visual feast for modern audiences. Prospero’s declaration that the benediction is a ‘vanity of mine art’ (4.1.41) could be supported by the performativity and extravagance of the garments, and the clear distinction between the goddesses’ Jacobethan silhouettes and the temporally ambiguous clothing worn by the play’s other characters would give a tangible sense of these fantastical figures being spirits summoned from another realm.

Once Jacobethan silhouettes had begun to ‘suggest themselves’ for the goddesses, Brimson Lewis began to ‘other’ the garments by infusing their design with twenty-first-century elements. LEDs and fibre optic lighting were added in to enable the gowns themselves to ‘light up’, and the designer drew on ideas from the modern fashion world to make the design ‘a bit

¹²² Brimson Lewis, interview.

¹²³ Brimson Lewis’ costume design for Juno is an intriguing example of Elizabeth I being referenced visually in modern Shakespearean performance to draw on the monarch’s widely recognised associations. See Chapter Three for a discussion dedicated to such practices.

¹²⁴ Brimson Lewis, interview.

more vivacious and a bit more vibrant'.¹²⁵ For Brimson Lewis, fashion shows are a modern 'equivalent of the court masque'; the highly performative presentation of cutting-edge design for an exclusive, elite audience is one of few elements of modern culture analogous to the spectacle and circumstance of Jacobean court performance. A particularly clear example of how this 'magpie'-like, combinative design process worked in practice can be found in Iris' feathered rainbow rebato collar.¹²⁶ Knowing that he wanted to 'make a costume that's about a rainbow' to communicate something of the goddess' classical symbolic associations, and having been attracted to the 'formality' of early modern neckwear and the way it would 'light your face', Brimson Lewis looked to the rainbow-inspired work of fashion designer Alexander McQueen for inspiration.¹²⁷ The striking wing-like feature of a 'look' in McQueen's Spring 2008 collection (depicted in Figure 60) was adapted into a full Jacobethan-style rebato collar and incorporated into the design for Iris. The interspersed fibre optic fibres around the collar ensured that in her first moment on stage, when the space would be lit only by the projected aurora borealis, Iris would 'glow in the dark like a firefly'.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Brimson Lewis, interview.

¹²⁶ Brimson Lewis explains that 'being a theatre designer, I always think you're a magpie, you know, you have to collect all these bits and pieces and you put them together and make a picture'; Brimson Lewis, interview.

¹²⁷ Ibid; Interestingly, McQueen's designs being inspired by 'birds of paradise' introduced into the 2016 *Tempest* additional exotic 'otherness', linking the production to various literary theories around the possible geographical location of Prospero's island. For a discussion of how topographical clues in the text have been used to argue that the island is located near the African coast, see Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan, 'Introduction', in *The Tempest*, by Shakespeare, ed. by Vaughan and Vaughan, pp. 1-160 (p. 47-51).

¹²⁸ Brimson Lewis, interview.



Figure 60. Look 45 from Alexander McQueen's Spring 2008 ready-to-wear collection (left; photograph by Marcio Madeira), and Stephen Brimson Lewis' design for Iris (right; photograph by Zuleika Henry).

This individual garment and the creative process that guided its development provides a useful way of understanding how design was used to 'match the magic of Shakespeare's imagination' in the production's masque sequence. The specifically and identifiably Jacobethan stylistic feature of Iris' rebato collar was developed to infuse the benediction scene with a tangible sense of spectacle, vibrance, otherworldliness, and enchantment. Wearable technology (LED and fibre optic lights) drew attention to historical shapes, making the collar (and Juno's voluminous skirts) visible in darkness, while the digital images projected around the performance space acted as spectacular extensions of imagery in the text. Essentially, Brimson Lewis' instinctive response to the goddesses was underpinned first and foremost by the same mythologised image of 'Shakespeare's time' as that which connects the fairy realm of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

with the period of the play's composition. To associate Iris, Ceres, and Juno with the visual culture of the Elizabethan era was, in the train of thought that guided the 2016 *Tempest*'s design process, to draw on the period's powerful ability to create a particularly beguiling kind of wonder for modern audiences. Significantly, the process of locating a modern 'equivalent' of Jacobean masque involved transposing these mythological figures from their Greek and Roman origins into this much more modern Shakespearean mythology. While Iris, Ceres, and Juno would have 'resonated richly for an [early modern] audience steeped in classical lore',¹²⁹ the allegorical functions each mythological figure then performed (relating to fertility, fruitfulness, marriage, and childbirth) would likely have been unknown to the majority of modern RSC audience members.¹³⁰ The designer's instinct to instead define the goddesses in relation to the period of Shakespeare's lifetime had the effect of translating the masque from an allegorical set piece into a Jacobethan-inspired spectacle.

The significance of the goddess' fantastical Jacobethan garments soon came to be reshaped, however, by the RSC's clear and careful framing of the 2016 production as part of a 'canon of innovation'.¹³¹ The rhetoric developed to draw attention to the 'forward-facing' focus of the RSC and Intel's considerable investment came to form an interpretive lens affecting how the entire staging was read by audiences and critics. The way in which Brimson Lewis' set and costume designs were presented in the production's programme notes led Borsuk to note that these production elements were used to 'reinforce' the staging's positioning as part of this 'canon', for example. Placing concept designs for the 2016 *Tempest* directly alongside Inigo Jones' Jacobean masque designs (depicted in Figure 61) encouraged the reader to 'see the similarities between Jones and Brimson Lewis' work in design and special effects, and

¹²⁹ Vaughan and Vaughan, p. 71.

¹³⁰ Brimson Lewis explains that part of the process of designing the masque sequence was to 'make some sense' of these 'three goddesses who we're not so familiar with today'; Brimson Lewis, interview.

¹³¹ Ellis, 'O Brave New World'.

therefore their shared innovative craftsmanship over 450 years'.¹³² The production's costume design thus seemed a site of inheritance for the staging's Jacobean heritage; the connection between the 2016 production's design and Jones' original masque drawings appeared to be direct and intentional. For Aebischer, framing the production as a 'twenty-first-century masque' invited viewers to see the masque sequence of 4.1 as 'the culmination of centuries of continuous seriation', with the production being 'haunted' by an 'imaginary lineage' of innovation and repetition spanning more than four centuries.¹³³ Every element of this scene was, in this line of thought, legible as an 'intertheatrical allusion'; in the midst of 'recycled' bodies of actors, costumes re-used from past RSC productions, and Paul Englishby's Mozart-inspired operatic composition, Iris' costume could be read as a direct reference to the Jacobean masque designs of Inigo Jones (a connection made by Aebischer partly because a copy of Jones' 'Drawing of a Lady Masquer' was included in the archived 'Reference Images' for the 2016 production).¹³⁴

¹³² Borsuk, p. 7.

¹³³ Aebischer, p. 123.

¹³⁴ Aebischer, p. 123.



Figure 61. The programme notes for *The Tempest* presented concept designs for the 2016 production directly alongside Inigo Jones' Jacobean masque designs, inviting the viewer to see the former as a direct reference to the latter.

While intended to represent a modern *equivalent* of Jacobean masque design, with radically restyled Jacobethan aesthetics creating the same sense of wonder as the historical form might have generated for its contemporary audiences, Brimson Lewis' costume design came to be read as a self-conscious act of positioning. Featuring as the focal point of the production's most spectacular sequence, the goddesses' garments acquired unintended significance as signposts pointing back to the cultural moment of 'innovation' that inspired Doran's creative vision for the 2016 production. The historically-specific design features that defined Iris, Ceres, and Juno in relation to the wider world of the production were read as anchor points for the highly publicised narrative that justified and promoted the staging's innovative technological elements. This layering of additional meaning facilitated a reading of the production wherein the 'future of performance' was not simply the novel possibility of using motion-capture technology in live theatrical performance, but an image of a future with technology-augmented 'tradition' at its centre. Interpreted as an intentional reference to a performance history hallowed for its apparent proximity to Shakespeare and *The Tempest*, Brimson Lewis' reinvented Jacobethan garments seemed to communicate an organisational vision that centred on a conservative, celebratory, and reverent relationship with the past.

The notable differences between artistic intent and critical interpretation in the RSC's 2016 *Tempest* and the Globe's 2016 *Dream* invite us to consider carefully how cultural and organisational narratives are formed and negotiated through—and after—performance. The costumes discussed in this chapter illustrate how Jacobethan-inspired design is seen by theatre-makers as a powerful, multifaceted force for making sense of Shakespeare's most fantastical spheres in twenty-first-century theatre. Drawing on deeply rooted, widely understood ideas of what 'Shakespeare's time' has come to represent in modern culture, the garments designed by Junge and Brimson Lewis were a crucial part of how these two forward-facing productions sought to create a very real sense of wonder, spectacle, and enchantment for their audiences.

Further, Jacobethan dress was viewed by both creative teams as a site of reinvention—a means by which ground-breaking new eras of performance could be explored and proclaimed. These instincts and ideas have been overwritten, however, by critical interpretations of each production. Costumes and other design elements from the Globe’s *Dream* and the RSC’s *Tempest* have featured in narratives that operate on wholly different planes from those envisioned by the productions’ creative teams. Shaped by various factors external to the material conditions of performance—particularly politically charged critical rhetoric and narratives developed for marketing/publicity purposes—the academic and journalistic coverage of these two landmark productions tells stories very different from those woven intentionally into each staging. After the events discussed in this chapter had passed, the RSC and the Globe both pursued alternative approaches to engaging creatively, through design, with the gap of time between the sixteenth and twenty-first centuries. These practices form the focus of my final chapter.

Chapter Five

The Time is Out of Joint

Sharp black lines create the form of an acutely feminine figure. Tracing the sleek contours of a modern chignon hairstyle, sketched strokes travel down to meet the figure-of-eight folds of a ruff. Below, a square neckline marks the edge of a tailored suit jacket detailed with a soft pink plaid pattern; the waistline is tapered to form a dramatic V-shaped point at the centre front. The lines continue down the illustrated page of the theatre programme, anachronistically merging more sixteenth- and twenty-first-century shapes to give an overall impression of extreme glamour. A knee-length pencil skirt is split down the centre to reveal a contrasting, forepart-like layer of textured fabric.¹ The sleeves of the structured jacket end at the elbow with ruffles reminiscent of Chanel suit styles, and inked in below the figure's manicured hand is the outline of a chic pink handbag.

This costume design—created by Lez Brotherston for the Royal Shakespeare Company's (RSC) 2018 production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*—forms part of a prominent tradition in the history of Shakespearean performance. A mixed-period (or 'eclectic') approach to costuming has long been used to shape the meaning of Shakespeare's plays in performance—possibly since the turn of the seventeenth century.² The category of eclectic production is expansive: any approach to setting that references multiple periods simultaneously might be described by this term. While productions discussed in my previous chapters might feasibly

¹ 'Foreparts' were a distinctive feature of women's dress during the Elizabethan era. Open-fronted gowns revealed a decorative layer of fabric positioned beneath the outer skirt (visible as a stripe or inverted 'V' shape down the centre-front of the gown's skirts).

² As I explain in the introduction to this thesis, historical evidence (particularly the c.1595 Peacham drawing) has led some scholars to believe that early modern playing companies performed wearing mixed-period costumes. However, the groundwork for this theory is questionable. See pp. 26-7 for further details. The term 'eclectic' is used by Ralph Berry and W. B. Worthen to describe any approach to setting (for Shakespeare) that reflects more than one time period. I discuss definitions of this term below, on pp. 258-60.

fall within this category (particularly Rice's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Hytner's *Much Ado About Nothing*), my intention here is to focus specifically on how meanings have been generated through a distinct fracturing or fusion of time. This final chapter positions eclectic costume design for Shakespeare as a site in which negotiations between past and present are at their most visible, and establishes what Jacobethan-inspired garments have contributed to the construction of onstage worlds and the characters who inhabit them. Essentially, my goal is to investigate *how time means*. When chronology is collapsed and period specificity rejected in favour of a temporally eclectic setting, what exactly does early modern dress represent?

This discussion is structured around three productions staged in 2018 with an overtly eclectic approach to costume design: *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* at Shakespeare's Globe (hereafter 'the Globe'), and the RSC's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Representing contrasting applications of eclecticism, these stagings provide the groundwork for an analysis of how period aesthetics have interacted with genre, character, and narrative in specific performance contexts. My analytical approach to understanding this strand of modern Shakespearean performance is intentionally more ambitious than past appraisals of eclectic production have been. Moving beyond established theories of setting (specifically those developed by Ralph Berry and W. B. Worthen, discussed in detail below), which are necessarily limited by their brevity, I examine individual mixed-period designs in detail using theoretical frameworks developed outside Shakespeare Studies. Jacques Derrida's theory of hauntology allows for a fruitful interrogation of Jacobethan-inspired garments as instances of haunting; Judith Butler's conceptualisation of gender as performance prompts an intricate analysis of how historical features function in costume design to construct—or *deconstruct*—gendered identities. In addition to reprising ideas that have emerged as this thesis' key themes (particularly around authenticity, tradition, fantasy, and Elizabethan icons), this chapter exposes the storytelling mechanics of historically-

inspired costume design and provides a final insight into the roles that Jacobethan-inspired garments are seen to play in making sense of Shakespeare for twenty-first-century audiences.

Recalling the earliest stages of the Globe's 2018 *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* production processes, designer E. M. Parry emphasises that there was a 'definite brief' for how both stagings would be developed. On the instruction of Michelle Terry—the theatre's newly appointed Artistic Director—collaboration and democracy formed the core of the processes that collectively created this pair of productions.³ Unlike the usual process of developing a professional theatre production, where the creative team meet prior to the rehearsal period and make key decisions around how the play in question will be presented (particularly regarding the overarching 'concept' that will define the staging), the Globe Ensemble's rehearsals deliberately began with a blank slate to enable the cast of actors to contribute to every stage of the productions' development.⁴ Terry explains that this approach was driven by her keenness 'to look at the model that was given to us 400 years ago'.⁵ Focusing on the notion that Shakespeare's plays were 'created for people that knew each other', and that the existence of 'authentic' relationships between players forms an essential element of how the plays 'work' in performance, Terry's intention in creating a collaborative ensemble was to 'produce the work in the way that it was originally made'.⁶ Though well-intentioned, this philosophy (referred to by Globe Research Fellow Will Tosh as 'Original Process') was filled with inconsistencies and underpinned by an interpretation of theatre history that was somewhat

³ E. M. Parry, interview with Ella Hawkins (London, 15 April 2019).

⁴ 'Bonus: Composing for the Ensemble', *Such Stuff: The Shakespeare's Globe Podcast*, 20 September 2018 <<https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/backstage/such-stuff-podcast/#season-one>> [accessed 7 October 2019]

⁵ Qtd in 'The Ensemble Experiment', *Such Stuff: The Shakespeare's Globe Podcast*, 13 September 2018 <<https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/backstage/such-stuff-podcast/#season-one>> [accessed 7 October 2019]

⁶ *Ibid.*

selective.⁷ The idea that the Ensemble's process involved returning to a 'pre-directorial period' was undermined by the fact that it was articulated by one of the productions' two directors, Federay Holmes, for example, and Terry's emphasis on equality overlooked the existence of early modern boy players, hired men, and variations in the size of company-members' shares.⁸ The Globe's 2018 season was nevertheless presented (by Terry and others) as a 'radical theatrical experiment', defined by its interest in limiting modern hierarchical performance conventions to explore how a democratic ensemble with no single directorial vision would respond to the plays.⁹ Exactly what this experiment was equipped to discover or demonstrate remains unclear; regardless of that lack of clarity, the season established Terry's tenure as one of deliberate eclecticism—and one that offered yet another interpretation of the Globe's relationship with 'authenticity' and the past.

The costume design for both *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* emerged from this collaborative, actor-led model of practice. Parry's design process became one of facilitation and curation, tying together diverse ideas shared by the Ensemble to create something that functioned effectively as a whole. Terry found in a photograph of Sarah Bernhardt an image of how she thought Hamlet should look when he begins to feign (or fall into) madness (depicted in Figure 62).¹⁰ Actor Richard Katz presented to the designer an image of Harry Dean Stanton as Travis in Wim Wenders' 1984 film *Paris, Texas* and said he felt his Silvius should have the same appearance (see Figure 63). Specific references such as these were incorporated into each production's design alongside elements of Jacobethan dress, items of the actors' own clothing,

⁷ 'The Ensemble Experiment'.

⁸ Ibid.; Andrew Gurr notes that Richard and Cuthbert Burbage 'put up fifty per cent' of the construction costs for the 1599 Globe between them, and 'five sharers, Heminges, Kemp, Phillips, Pope and Shakespeare, each put up another ten per cent'; *The Shakespearean Stage 1574–1642*, 4th edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 61-3.

⁹ 'The Ensemble Experiment'.

¹⁰ Parry said during our interview that the photograph Terry found depicted Marlene Dietrich. However, the photograph in question is actually of Sarah Bernhardt. It was taken by Nadar in 1883 and shows Bernhardt as Pierrot in Jean Richepin's *Pierrot the Murderer*; Parry, interview.

and garments indicative of alternative historical periods. The result was a conglomerate of discrete ideas, brought together to create a world that drew on multiple disconnected associations simultaneously. This was neither an absence of concept nor what might be considered an ‘original’ process; the eclectic settings developed for *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* instead represented a mass of concepts and connections, each functioning independently to support actor-led interpretations of specific characters, interactions, and narrative developments.



Figure 62. The image of Sarah Bernhardt contributed by Terry (left; photograph by Nadar), and the costume design developed in response (right; screengrab from production recording).



Figure 63. Harry Dean Stanton in *Paris, Texas* (above; screengrab from film), and the related design for Richard Katz's Silvius in *As You Like It* (below; screengrab from production trailer).



To begin the process of examining this approach to eclecticism, we might look first to existing scholarship on the subject of mixed-period settings for Shakespeare. Led by the notable popularity of eclectic design in past decades, multiple scholars have provided brief but considered perspectives on the significance of this approach to realising the playwright's works.¹¹ In *On Directing Shakespeare* (1989; first published in 1977), Ralph Berry presents an 'eclectic' setting as one of just four options available to directors when staging Shakespeare. (Berry's categorisation of setting with the labels 'Renaissance', 'modern', 'period analogue', and 'eclectic' is discussed in the introduction to this thesis; see pp. 6-7.)¹² Grouping all approaches to setting that appear to reject a cohesive sense of time, Berry considers costumes that are entirely abstract (such as those featuring in Peter Brook's 1970 RSC production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) or that point towards multiple time periods (the 'black-leather Romans' of Trevor Nunn's 1972 *Julius Caesar* at the same theatre are given as an example) the result of a 'desire to keep the options open'.¹³ This desire was, according to Berry, 'characteristic' of the period of Shakespearean performance in which he was writing. The 'combination of freedom and diversity of allusion' offered by an abstract or eclectic setting is proposed as providing 'the widest freedom in which the director is able to generate [their] provocation'. According to this theory, 'consistency of costuming is the enemy; it is a superimposed schema, both stifling and distracting'.¹⁴ Essentially, a setting that overtly rejects cohesion and specificity in its representation of time is framed as a form of liberation for directorial expression.

¹¹ For example, abstract/eclectic settings appeared in 28 per cent of all RSC productions staged during the 1980s. This approach has featured regularly in RSC and Shakespeare's Globe productions throughout each organisation's performance history. See Chapter Two for further details (particularly pp. 110-11 and pp. 126-7).

¹² The labels given by Berry in the 1989 edition of *On Directing Shakespeare* differ slightly from those in the original 1977 edition. In the 1977 version, Berry refers to his categories as 'Renaissance', 'modern', 'historical', and 'abstract-eclectic'.

¹³ Ralph Berry, *On Directing Shakespeare: Interviews with Contemporary Directors* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), pp. 24-5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Writing two decades later, W. B. Worthen builds on the ideas outlined by Berry to make a more pointed argument about the role of this approach to staging Shakespeare:

Eclectic production has the advantage of enabling the director to key various aspects of the production—different scenes, the costuming of different characters, even different physical actions such as combat—to different historical periods, geographical locations, social classes, and so on.¹⁵

The value of variety is the opportunity ‘to construct the text’s contemporary meaning through a much wider range of reference’ than would be possible through a comparatively unambiguous setting. Considering the broader significance of eclecticism, Worthen offers conclusions about how a mixture of period signifiers might be interpreted in this context: rather than being read as ‘a sign of the play’s fragmented or disconnected discourse’, the ‘broken images of eclectic staging signal the universality and coherence of the play’s basic “myth”’.¹⁶ Essentially, mixed-period design is positioned as a force for highlighting Shakespeare’s supposed capacity for revealing ‘the pattern of history itself’ within his plays. Unlike production practices that claim a heightened proximity to a play’s ‘original’ meanings (such as reconstructive performance), or those that ‘show the application of Shakespearean meanings to other moments in history’ by relocating the narrative to a modern or alternative historical context, Worthen suggests that eclectic stagings attempt to harness or translate the energy of the ‘*Ur-text*’ for modern audiences.¹⁷ Rather than simply reflecting the approach to costuming thought to have been employed by early modern players, then, eclectic design is considered by some to be a powerful force for making the play speak directly to the present.

¹⁵ W. B. Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 68.

¹⁶ Worthen, p. 68.

¹⁷ Worthen, p. 68.

While these critical appraisals of eclectic design offer a way in to understanding the possibilities of this approach to setting, further research is required to assess its significance fully. Positioning currently accepted theories of eclecticism alongside even the briefest introduction to a pair of recent, relevant Shakespeare productions reveals something of a disconnect between theory and practice. The eclectic settings developed for *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* were by no means the result of a singular directorial vision, and the consciousness with which historical styles were manipulated points towards a far more nuanced engagement with period than a straightforward signalling of the texts' universality. It is clear that our theorisation of eclectic staging needs to be broadened to include alternative models of performance practice and reassessed in its reflection of production processes, justifications, and outcomes. For although Berry and Worthen each usefully suggest the interpretative 'freedom' of a mixed-period setting, it does not fall within the scope of their arguments to test how these ideas work in practice. It is essential to assess *how* diverse period signifiers facilitate and communicate interpretations of character and narrative before offering a conclusive assessment of the causes and effects of this approach to staging Shakespeare.

My investigation into eclectic design continues with an alternative theory of temporal eclecticism, used by designer Parry in the development of the Globe's 2018 *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*.¹⁸ Jacques Derrida's theory of hauntology provides a particularly useful starting point for interpreting these productions (and by extension the beginning of Terry's tenure as the theatre's Artistic Director)—not only because it factored into the philosophy of their creation, but also because of the theory's usefulness for interrogating the significance of

¹⁸ Parry, interview.

eclectic design.¹⁹ Since Derrida formulated the concept in *Spectres de Marx* (1993), hauntology has been used widely as a critical way of interpreting diverse elements of twenty-first-century culture ‘seemingly more concerned with co-opting the past than embracing the future’ (including architecture, music, art, and psychoanalysis).²⁰ Opening with and returning consistently to a quotation from *Hamlet*—‘The time is out of joint’ (1.5.186)—Derrida responds to a ‘disjointed’ present haunted by ‘specters’ of the past. (Spectres or ‘ghosts’ are defined by the philosopher as ‘certain *others* who are not present, nor presently living, either to us, in us, or outside us’.²¹ Also referred to as phantasm, apparition, and revenant, the spectre is any element of the past that visibly or invisibly reappears, out of time, in the present.) While Derrida’s discussion relates primarily to the collapse of communism, with the notion of ‘haunting’ providing a means of making sense of a ‘disadjusted’ Europe troubled by ‘the specter of communism’, hauntology has gained significant traction as ‘a concept capable of presenting new ways of thinking about the past, present and future’.²² A central feature of hauntology—the primary reason for its applicability here and its usefulness in a broad range of fields—is the concept’s theorisation of time. With ‘a commitment to doubleness’ and the ‘juxtaposition and equal weighting of [...] seeming contraries’, the idea of haunting reflects a unique relationship between discrete moments in time.²³ The present being haunted by spectres of the past leads to a sense that time is broken, deconstructed, or disjointed. The separation

¹⁹ See Marjorie Garber’s *Shakespeare’s Ghost Writers* (London: Methuen, 1987) for more on Shakespeare and ideas of haunting. Published earlier than Derrida’s *Spectres de Marx*, *Shakespeare’s Ghost Writers* sees poststructuralist theories introduced by Freud, Derrida, Marx, and others used as mediums in a series of probing discussions around the ghostly traces left behind by Shakespeare and the playwright’s uncanny ability to reach beyond the grave and ‘write us’.

²⁰ *Spectres de Marx* was translated into English by Peggy Kamuf and published in 1994 as *Specters of Marx*. All subsequent references will refer to Kamuf’s translation; Katy Shaw, *Hauntology: The Presence of the Past in Twenty-First Century English Literature* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 2.

²¹ Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (Oxon: Routledge, 1994), pp. xviii.

²² Derrida, pp. 1-2; Shaw, p. 5.

²³ Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheon, ‘Introduction’, in *A Postmodern Reader*, ed. by Natoli and Hutcheon (New York: State University Press of New York, 1993), pp. vii-xiv (p. xi).

between ‘now’ and ‘then’ is dissolved: time is ‘out of joint’; the present is fraught with compulsions to repeat or revisit elements that are otherwise confined to history.

The idea of haunting formed a foundational impetus in the development of *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*—as it did in the foundation of the Globe reconstruction project itself. Terry’s instinct to ‘look at the model that was given to us 400 years ago’ and ‘recreate’ the processes followed by early modern playing companies centred on a desire to channel spectres of ‘original’ Shakespearean performance into new Globe productions. Described by Will Tosh as having been ‘inspired’ or ‘informed by historic practice’, the 2018 Ensemble’s approach to staging the plays was built on this idea of returning to an (apparently) long-dead model of production, or at least a liberally romanticised interpretation of it. Holmes and Terry remember the question ‘what did the first company do?’ as having informed every stage of the Ensemble’s process; the company was ‘always in conversation with the parents of these plays’ when making decisions around how the texts should be staged in 2018.²⁴

The productions’ eclectic approach to costume design came—to an extent—out of this thought process. In a programme note, Parry explains that they were drawn to mixed-period costuming primarily because this is thought to have formed a key element of early modern performance practices:

Whilst the two plays aren’t strictly set in the Elizabethan period, we’ve definitely drawn on the practices of Early Modern theatre in our design choices. Elizabethan theatre companies embraced a kind of playful and expedient anachronistic eclecticism in their visual worlds. Within a single play, audiences would have seen a cheerful mash-up of objects and clothing[, with] contemporary, historical and fantastical costumes and props meeting and mingling on the same stage.²⁵

²⁴ Qtd in ‘Ensemble Voices’ (programme note), *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare (London: Shakespeare’s Globe, 2018), pp. 15-21 (pp. 20-1).

²⁵ Qtd in ‘Ensemble Voices’, p. 16.

Highlighting the influence of ‘original’ Shakespearean processes on the 2018 productions, Parry positions the Ensemble’s eclectic costumes as a physical manifestation of Terry’s ‘Original Process’ philosophy. More significant, however, is that specific instances of haunting operating within the phantasm of the productions’ approach to setting are referenced explicitly by the designer. In the same programme note, Parry explains that the 2018 *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* each had a visual world ‘haunted by memories of past productions (Jack [Laskey] dressed in the doublet worn by *his* Rosalind when he played Orlando in 2009) and of loved ones (Shubham[Saraf]’s mother’s dress re-made in white)’.²⁶ Together with other ghostly visual references (including the invocation of film/stage icons Stanton and Bernhardt, as mentioned above), these reappearing elements collectively created onstage worlds that were deliberately porous and overtly intertextual. Time was fractured to ‘allow’ revenants from recent and distant performance histories to ‘haunt’ the plays in the present.²⁷

The notion that performance can be haunted is well established in the field of Theatre and Performance Studies. In *The Haunted Stage*, Marvin Carlson argues that haunting is at the heart of ‘everything’ in the theatre.²⁸ In addition to the sense of repetition embedded in the central concerns of performance—‘[t]he retelling of stories already told, the reenactment of events already enacted, the reexperience of emotions already experienced’—every element of theatrical production is, ‘to a striking degree, composed of material “that we have seen before”’.²⁹ Theatrical experiences are ‘always ghosted’ by those that came before due to the constant recycling of familiar texts, narratives, actors, music, costumes, props, and spaces. For

²⁶ Qtd in ‘Ensemble Voices’, p. 16.

²⁷ Parry, interview.

²⁸ Carlson’s influential work in this area has been followed by a raft of scholarship exploring and extending further connections between theatre and spectrality (some of which focuses specifically on Shakespearean performance), but the fundamental ideas described in *The Haunted Stage* are apt for placing a little more pressure on the significance of the ‘haunted’ approach to design curated by Parry for *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*. See, for example: *Theatre and Ghosts: Materiality, Performance and Modernity*, ed. by M. Luckhurst and E. Morin (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014).

²⁹ Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (United States of America: University of Michigan Press, 2003), pp. 2-4.

Carlson, instances of ghosting are essential to the processes of meaning-making that occur in the theatre: '[w]e are able to "read" new works [...] only because we recognize within them elements that have been recycled from other structures of experience that we have experienced earlier'.³⁰

While this conceptualisation of theatrical haunting usefully draws attention to 'ghosting' being inherent in *all* performance, leading us to conclude that the haunted nature of the 2018 Ensemble's work was far from unique, it also invites further consideration around the *consciousness* with which recycled elements were used. Separating '[t]he conscious and calculated recycling of material' in performance from the forms of ghosting fundamental to theatre more generally, Carlson gestures towards the additional complexities engendered by such practices. Relying heavily on 'an audience's previous acquaintance with the recycled material', the deliberate manipulation of 'ghosts' has the potential to reshape or add layers of meaning to a performance: reusing familiar materials might serve as a 'reception shortcut' or orientation aid, introduce irony via incongruity, enhance a production's commercial appeal by foregrounding an element the audience already has an interest in, and/or simply encourage from the audience 'a recognition of [performance's] constructedness'.³¹

The emphasis placed on haunting in the programme notes for *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* indicates that these productions featured a somewhat more nuanced manifestation of deliberate recycling. The ghosts embedded in the productions' eclectic costume design were made *distinctly visible* to audience members, meaning that elements of recycling introduced to develop actors' relationships with their characters and the Globe performance space became an interpretive framework through which the eclectic design could be understood. For example,

³⁰ Carlson, p. 4.

³¹ Carlson, p. 166.

actor Jack Laskey's contribution to the 'Ensemble Voices' programme note highlights that the theatre 'wears its history on its sleeve' and that the productions' recycled costumes allowed the company to 'carry that history with [them]'.³² This invited something more than the audience's recognition of the stagings' 'constructedness': recycled garments and other revenants could instead be read as 'authentic' points of connection (between 2018 and 1599, the company and the plays, the actors and the audience) and a key element of the company's self-conscious negotiation of the theatre's relationship with the past.

Read on a conceptual level, the Globe's 2018 *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* form a picture of eclecticism as a site of memory, negotiation, and the attempted recovery of the dead. Grounded in a Derridean sense of doubleness, the approach to costume design developed for these productions was a physical manifestation of the Ensemble's desire to commune with the long-lost authors of the plays' original performances, and to make visible the influence of the past on the 2018 company's practices. The conscious dissolving of boundaries between 'now' and 'then'—with 'then' being (the ghostly remains of) an authentic, original 'Shakespearean' model of performance—signalled the (re)negotiation of a relationship between distinct moments in time. Drawing further on Derrida's theory of haunting here might result in an interpretation of the productions' eclectic costuming as a symptom of disjuncture: by 'allowing the play[s] to be haunted' by ghosts of Shakespearean pasts, the company evidenced that the Globe was 'disadjusted' as an organisation at the beginning of Terry's tenure.³³ This correlates with the Artistic Director's statements on the 'bruised' state of the organisation in 2018: Emma Rice's controversial departure from the Globe in 2017 had led to a 'renewal phase of figuring

³² Qtd in 'Ensemble Voices', p. 16.

³³ Parry, interview; it is also worth noting that other notable spectres from the Globe's organisational history appeared during Terry's first season as Artistic Director. Mark Rylance played Iago in a production of *Othello* directed by Claire van Kampen. Rylance was the theatre's first Artistic Director (1995-2005); van Kampen was Director of Theatre Music throughout Rylance's tenure.

out who, how and why we are'.³⁴ More pertinent to the present discussion, however, is that the eclectic costume design curated by Parry was designed to make tangible elements of memory and repetition. The processes of recycling inherent in the theatre were foregrounded as a framework for interpreting the plays and a tool for making sense of Shakespeare in the specific context of the Globe. More than signalling the texts' universality, then, the combination of old and new garments in *Hamlet* and *As You Like It* were designed as a medium for channelling spectres of the past into a theatrical experience in the present. Whether the productions were interpreted in this way by critics and audience members is a separate question; the way in which individual instances of ghosting functioned in practice will be addressed later in this chapter.

Despite proving productive for interpreting the mixed-period settings of the Globe's 2018 Summer Season, hauntology does not work as an interpretive framework for all forms of eclectic design. The costumes created for the RSC's 2018 production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* were, like those of *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*, a carefully crafted combination of early modern and modern styles of dress. The design for Mistress Page—described in the opening paragraph of this chapter and pictured below in its final form (Figure 64)—was realised as part of an entire onstage world formulated from a mixture of period signifiers. Pinstripe suits were tailored into the distinctive doublet style of the early modern era, and items evocative of modern designer brands were paired with Jacobethan-inspired corsets and collars. The figures wearing these striking garments spoke with thick Essex accents and carried toy dogs.³⁵ The locale of Windsor took the form of two timber-framed, Tudor-style houses; the beams of each

³⁴ Qtd in Georgia Snow, 'Michelle Terry: "Taking over Shakespeare's Globe from Emma Rice Was Traumatic"', *The Stage*, 29 May 2019 <<https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2019/michelle-terry-taking-over-shakespeares-globe-from-emma-rice-was-traumatic/>> [accessed 10 October 2019]

³⁵ Alexander Thom, 'Review of Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Directed by Fiona Laird for the Royal Shakespeare Company) at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 16 August 2018', *Shakespeare*, 15.2 (2019), 192–4 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/17450918.2018.1543346>> (p. 192)

structure were illuminated with colour-changing LED lights, moving from neutral whites to vivid pinks and blues to indicate different scene-specific settings (see Figure 65). A discreet tourism rosette sign was affixed to the façade of one of the buildings, a ‘Residents’ Parking Only’ notice positioned in front of the other, and a statue of Queen Elizabeth I could be seen in the distance. While this curated combination of ‘then’ and ‘now’ might seem similar to the eclectic approach to design developed for *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*, the concept behind the setting for *Merry Wives* had little to do with haunting.

The conversations that took place between designer Lez Brotherston and director Fiona Laird at the beginning of the production process for *Merry Wives* centred on the play being a comedy. Aware of the fact that the staging was positioned in the ‘comedy slot’ of the RSC’s Summer Season, sandwiched between *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*, the creative team’s efforts were focused on establishing *Merry Wives* as a ‘fun piece’ and making the play’s comedic elements ‘relevant’ and legible for modern audiences.³⁶ Aligning the production with a modern equivalent of Shakespeare’s narrative was seen as the key to achieving this outcome. For Laird, *Merry Wives* ‘feels like *The Only Way is Essex*’—a long-running British reality television series (often referred to by the acronym *TOWIE*) known for its cast of larger-than-life Essex characters and the superficial drama around their ‘lives, loves and scandals’.³⁷ Falstaff’s lustful trickery, Mistress Page and Mistress Ford’s shrewd schemes, and the play’s broader tendencies towards stereotype-oriented social comedy and innuendo reminded the director of *TOWIE*’s central concerns. To draw on these connections in performance, Laird proposed the prospect of creating a hybrid setting combining Shakespeare with *TOWIE*: ‘we could set up Windsor in Essex’.³⁸ The onstage world created for the 2018 *Merry Wives* was thus intended to ‘marry up’

³⁶ Lez Brotherston, interview with Ella Hawkins (telephone, 28 November 2018).

³⁷ Qtd in Brotherston, interview; ‘The Only Way is Essex’, *ITV Hub* <<https://www.itv.com/hub/the-only-way-is-essex/1a9310>> [accessed 13 April 2020]

³⁸ Qtd in Brotherston, interview.

Shakespeare's early modern comedy with what the creative team saw as its twenty-first-century equivalent. This hybrid setting allowed the director not to 'completely turn her back' on the play's original Elizabethan setting and social comedy, but nevertheless 'set it in a world that people recognise'.³⁹ The production's eclectic costume design thus functioned as a kind of translation process, with both the source and target period made visible. In this deliberate 'mash-up' of then and now, time was not broken; past and present were *fused* to create the nucleus of a new, stylised world.⁴⁰

The justification for the production's eclecticism (as opposed to a more complete form of modernisation) was that the play's Elizabethan origins were seen as too important to be sidelined. In an interview screened during a livestreamed performance of the staging, Laird explained:

The beating heart of this play is Elizabethan—it's Elizabethan language, it was written in the Elizabethan era—you can't take that away from it. You can't pretend that it was written last week, because it wasn't. So, we have to keep that beating heart alive but make it recognisable to a *contemporary* Elizabethan audience.⁴¹

This sense that the 'beating heart' of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* resides in the period of Shakespeare's lifetime invites further consideration. Other than its historical linguistic style (a feature which, of course, applies to all early modern drama), what is it about this play that might have led Laird to draw this conclusion? While *Merry Wives'* depiction of a regional, middle-class community has inspired countless modern creative teams to set the play in a modern equivalent of this social scenario, several elements of the text relate specifically to the

³⁹ Qtd in Amy Stutz, 'INTERVIEW | Fiona Laird on Putting Women at the Forefront in the Merry Wives of Windsor', *Amy Stutz*, 31 July 2018 <<http://sincerelyamy.com/2018/07/31/interview-fiona-laird-putting-women-forefront-merry-wives-windsor/>> [Accessed 6 October 2019]

⁴⁰ Brotherston, interview.

⁴¹ *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, dir. by Fiona Laird, dir. for screen by Robin Lough (RSC Live from Stratford-upon-Avon, 12 September 2018).

period of its composition.⁴² Multiple references are made to styles of dress peculiar to the early modern period ('doublet and hose' in 3.1 and 3.3, 'farthingale' in 3.3, for example).⁴³ Further, the values and transactions that form *Merry Wives*' key plot points now have distinctly historical associations. The wooing suitors and negotiations of marriage that drive the Anne Page plot line (with considerations paid to the bride's dowry and virginity) and the communal performance of a folk ritual at the end of the play feel particularly antiquated in modern Western society. These are some of the features that establish *Merry Wives* as the only Shakespeare play set in England seemingly during the playwright's lifetime, and which reasonably date the text's core features (or its 'beating heart') to this period. The *TOWIE* element of the 2018 production's setting could thus (re)contextualise the play's nouveau riche community and its penchant for scandal, sexual suspicion, and scheming while the Elizabethan references in the design anchored *Merry Wives*' dateable historical features to their related period.

Understanding how this dual setting worked in practice requires a closer examination of the production's period fusion. While my attention has thus far been focused on the broader intentions behind each staging's eclectic design, it is important to move now to a more concentrated mode of analysis to establish exactly how period has been manipulated by designers to shape the significance of the plays in question. In addition to reflecting the practicalities of the design process—the world of the 2018 *Merry Wives* came out of a process of establishing 'who we thought the *characters* were'—scrutinising individual costumes

⁴² Peter Kirwan notes that '*Merry Wives* is frequently updated to the trashy middle-class of the period of staging'; 'The Merry Wives of Windsor (RSC/Live from Stratford-upon-Avon) @ Broadway, Nottingham', *The Bardathon*, 13 September 2018 <<http://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/bardathon/2018/09/13/the-merry-wives-of-windsor-rsc-live-from-stratford-upon-avon-broadway-nottingham/>> [accessed 13 April 2020]

⁴³ In 3.3, during his first attempt to seduce Mistress Ford in person, Falstaff declares that 'the firm fixture of thy foot would give an excellent motion to thy gait in a semicircled farthingale' (3.3.48-9). 'Doublet and hose' are mentioned twice: first by Master Page towards Evans in 3.1 ('And youthful still: in your doublet and hose, this raw, rheumatic day!' [3.1.37-8]), and again in 3.3 when Mistress Page hints that she will reward Robin for his contributions to the wives' schemes ('This secrecy of thine shall be a tailor to thee, and shall make thee a new doublet and hose' [3.3.24-5]).

allows for a detailed study of how eclectic design generates meaning.⁴⁴ It is only through a close examination of how period signifiers are layered within discrete garments that production-specific constructions of character can become clear, and conclusions drawn about how far the text's content has been sculpted through the work of the designer.

Mistress Ford's costume melded distinctive styles of dress from the sixteenth and twenty-first centuries to establish the character as an image-conscious and provocatively gaudy member of the Windsor-meets-Essex community. Skin-tight leggings printed with gold chains and baroque scrolls (a design associated with the Versace designer brand) were paired with a velveteen corset-style bodice, and the figure's extravagantly coiffed blonde hair was framed by a black and gold lace rebato collar (pictured in Figure 64).⁴⁵ While the lines of the bodice recalled Jacobethan styles of dress, giving the outfit a legible link to the period of the play's composition, this garment functioned simultaneously as a reference to the work of designer Vivienne Westwood. The way in which the bodice reworked historical styles—replacing early modern construction techniques with modern synthetic stretch fabrics and achieving the decorative effect of embroidery with an appliquéd Renaissance-inspired pattern—is very similar to styles produced by Westwood's fashion label (see Figure 66). This costume was intentionally 'very brash and very loud': Mistress Ford was established in this staging as the 'showier' of the two wives (Brotherston describes Mistress Ford as 'the trophy wife, she's much younger').⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Brotherston, interview. (Emphasis mine.)

⁴⁵ The distinctive Versace baroque scroll print I refer to here is titled 'Barocco', and features on many of the label's products. See, for example: 'Barocco Print Leggings', *Versace* <https://www.versace.com/gb/en-gb/women/clothing/activewear/barocco-print-leggings-a732d/AGD03000-AC00336_A732D.html#q=Barocco&start=1> [accessed 13 April 2020]

⁴⁶ Brotherston, interview.



Figure 64. The costumes designed for Mistress Ford, Mistress Quickly, and Mistress Page in the RSC's 2018 *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (photograph by Manuel Harlan © RSC).



Figure 65. The overarching aesthetic developed for *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (photograph by Manuel Harlan © RSC).

The suit-like garment designed for Mistress Page similarly infused modern designer styles with a clear gesture towards early modern dress. Featuring the rough tweed fabric and tailored silhouette characteristic of the two-piece Chanel suit, but adapting the form of this highly fashionable outfit to incorporate a historically-inspired stomacher and foreparts, Mistress Page's costume fused recognisable signifiers of past fashions with those of the present day (and/or the twentieth century). While the visual references to modern designer brands in Mistress Ford's costume emphasised the character's tendencies towards ostentatiousness, Mistress Page's appearance drew heavily on the Chanel suit's associations with sophistication and refined glamour. The suit's links with prominent figures of the past century—most notably Jackie Kennedy and Princess Diana (see Figure 66)—lent Mistress Page an aura of social aspiration. In addition to communicating that the character had access to wealth, a Chanel-inspired costume suggested that Mistress Page was keen to position herself among a particularly elegant echelon of the elite.

This form of visual storytelling was built on a series of highly specific associations. Drawing on select brand identities from the modern world of fashion, Brotherston's costume design established character traits in a way that audience members would likely understand. Recognition of specific references to Versace, Vivienne Westwood, and Chanel in Mistress Ford's and Mistress Page's costumes could enable a detailed reading of the qualities and aspirations the creative team located within each character. This level of recognition was not necessary for the garments to perform their fundamental function, however: the contrasting styles and colour palettes of the wives' costumes (skin-tight velveteen versus tailored tweed; red, black, and gold versus soft pink) served to establish distinct differences between Mistress Ford's and Mistress Page's personalities and ages—distinctions notably more nuanced than those outlined in Shakespeare's text.



Figure 66. A Vivienne Westwood corset (left; Victoria and Albert Museum) and Jackie Kennedy's iconic Chanel suit (right; photographer unknown).

Significantly, the meanings suggested by these very modern signifiers were *supported* (rather than disrupted) by the historical features incorporated into each design. The angular lines of early modern bodices and the shaping effect created by bodies (the structured undergarment worn by women during the early modern era, later evolving into the corset) were used in a way that conformed to—exaggerated, even—twenty-first-century ideals of femininity. Paired with a low-cut neckline, the corset-like structures worked into Mistress Ford's and Mistress Page's costumes had an effect comparable to that of a push-up brassière. Stomachers and neckwear served to enhance the impression of glitz created by the costumes' modern designer references, and Mistress Page's foreparts (the slip of fabric visible through the centre-front slit in early modern outer skirts) took the form of a skirt that was even more figure-hugging than the tailored tweed overskirt that created the lower part of the character's slimline silhouette (see Figure 64). No historical feature that might conceal the actors' arms, legs, or chest was included

in either design. A comparable approach was followed in the costumes created for Anne Page and the Hostess of the Garter (the production's regendered Host of the Garter): the underbust corset worn by Anne accentuated the actor's waist and hips, and the structural underpinnings of the Hostess' bodycon black dress (accentuated with an hourglass-shaped leopard-print panel at the centre-front; pictured in Figure 67) added notable emphasis to actor Katy Brittain's bust.⁴⁷ The elements of early modern dress included in these costumes were neither restrictive nor codified, but carefully manipulated and used selectively to shape the body in a manner that would likely be deemed desirable by the highly sexualised, image-conscious cast of *TOWIE*. More than serving simply as anchoring points to the period of the play's composition, then, Jacobethan-inspired forms of dress were used to sculpt actors' bodies into shapes that would appear hyper-gendered to twenty-first-century eyes.

Assessing the significance of these design choices requires consideration beyond the garments' contribution to the creation of 'Windsor-meets-Essex'. While the logic behind Brotherston's design lay in bridging the gap between an early modern regional nouveau riche culture and a twenty-first-century equivalent, the way in which individual costumes reflected, refracted, or exaggerated signifiers of gender and class invites closer scrutiny. As such, Judith Butler's theories of gender performance provide a useful starting point for this line of enquiry.⁴⁸ Butler conceptualises gender as a series of socially constructed, performative acts. Arguing that 'the ground of gender identity is the stylized repetition of acts through time'—with these acts including bodily gestures, movements, and other enactments—Butler draws attention to the processes by which bodies are *crafted* into the binary gender norms of 'man' and 'woman'.

⁴⁷ As I point out in Chapter Two (pp. 146-7), the use of underbust (or 'ribbon') corsets as a signifier of Elizabethan/Jacobean styles is a common historical inaccuracy perpetuated by modern 'fancy dress' costumes.

⁴⁸ See Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40.4 (1988), 519-31; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1990); Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2004); Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (London: Routledge, 2011).

The gendering of the body through signifiers of ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ operates as a ‘condition of cultural intelligibility for any person’.⁴⁹ With social norms forming points of reference against which individuals are measured, gendered signifiers play a significant role in determining how bodies are read and identities performed.

Considering Brotherston’s costume design through the lens of Butler’s theorisation of gender brings several key ideas into focus. If we consider that bodies are crafted into genders through gendered signifiers, and that these processes of meaning-making shape how individual bodies and identities are construed socially, it follows that costumes—with their carefully curated expressions of identity—have enormous potential for influencing how characters are interpreted on a gender spectrum by audience members. Further, Butler’s suggestion that the gendered body be understood as ‘the legacy of sedimented acts’ which have been ‘renewed, revised, and consolidated through time’ becomes acutely pertinent when examining costumes that are temporally eclectic.⁵⁰ When signifiers of/from past periods are brought into conversation with those relating to the present, the body (and the wider stage picture) becomes a space in which the repetition of historical expressions of gender becomes a very literal reality.

Brotherston describes his design process for the 2018 *Merry Wives* as ‘trying to find the essence of a character and tell that story visually to an audience’, with the practical facts of each character’s life (their job, age, class) being made visually clear and the end results ‘coming out quite caricatured’.⁵¹ While the costumes designed for the play’s women were notable more for their strikingly sexualised nature than perhaps anything else, signifiers of profession and class were prominent in the garments created for *Merry Wives*’ men. George Page and Shallow were recognisable as modern businessmen through their wearing of modern pinstripe suits, with the

⁴⁹ Butler, *Undoing Gender*, p. 52.

⁵⁰ Butler, ‘Performative Acts and Gender Constitution’, p. 523.

⁵¹ Brotherston, interview.

jackets crafted to form the shape and structure of an early modern peascod doublet (pictured in Figure 67). Sir Hugh Evans was identifiable as nothing other than a pastor due to the white clerical collar, cross, and cape incorporated into the design of his black doublet and narrow knee-length hose (see Figure 68). Fenton—a character whose aristocratic origins are ‘of too high a region’ for Master Page to consider his suit of marriage to Anne Page (3.2.55-6)—was dressed in a dark-green oilskin/wax coat (adapted with shoulder wings and other design features reminiscent of early modern doublet styles), establishing the character as a figure of inherited wealth with a country-estate lifestyle. A reading of Falstaff as ‘an overindulged, upper-class oaf who *thinks* he’s better than everyone else’ was encouraged by a ‘battered’ Etonian tailcoat and a ‘Brexiteer, Union-Jack waistcoat’, worn over voluminous Jacobethan-inspired trunkhose with a sizeable codpiece.⁵²

In all these examples, the division of labour between historical and modern signifiers is sharply revealing. With the exception of Falstaff’s codpiece—an element of Tudor culture that now holds enormous power as a ludicrous symbol of amorousness—Jacobethan design features contributed very little to the communication of character qualities. Rather than being used to indicate narratively significant individualities amongst the residents of Windsor, silhouettes dateable to the period of Shakespeare’s lifetime provided a base onto which thoroughly modern associations were mapped. This feeds into an undercurrent that has threaded through this thesis: there are evidently clear limitations as to how far early modern garments are considered capable of communicating nuanced meanings to modern audiences. The Elizabethan/Jacobean connotations of the ‘original practices’ costumes discussed in Chapter One had to be explained to Shakespeare’s Globe audience members through programme notes, for example.⁵³ As I argue

⁵² Brotherston, interview.

⁵³ See p. 70 for details of a 2002 programme note written to outline the original meanings of garments created for Shakespeare’s Globe’s *Twelfth Night*.

in Chapter Two, overarching Jacobethan-inspired settings often draw heavily on modern associations (around colour, hairstyles, the casual unbuttoning of garments, etc.) to define individual characters and onstage worlds. What the Jacobethan silhouettes of Brotherston's *Merry Wives* designs *did* signal, however, was that the Windsor community was divided into two distinct, gendered groups. Moreover, the seamlessness with which early modern forms of masculine and feminine dress were fused with their modern equivalents testified to the process of sedimentation outlined by Butler. Early modern indicators of class and profession might be entirely unknown to twenty-first-century audiences, but this fusion of past and present styles reflected the existence of a gender binary that would likely be as recognisable to *Merry Wives*' original, late-sixteenth-century audiences as it would to those attending the RSC's 2018 staging.

In a subtle but significant exception to this deeply rooted gender binary, Bardolph became increasingly embedded in the hyper-gendered culture of Windsor-in-Essex as the narrative unfolded. Introduced in the opening sequence with short hair and wearing denim jeans and a leather jacket (pictured in Figure 68), Bardolph's subsequent appearances saw a marked transformation in the character's costume design. First swapping her jacket for a fitted leopard-print top, then her jeans for a short, figure-hugging faux leather skirt, and finally her short hair for a shiny red bob, Bardolph's body became encoded with the gendered signifiers the production presented as the feminine norm. This device was likely intended to symbolise the character's transition between narrative worlds; Laird notes at the beginning of a director's commentary that she was keen to acknowledge the curious nature of Falstaff, Pistol, Nym, and Bardolph having been 'resurrected' from *Henry IV* in Shakespeare's mind and 'propelled' into Windsor.⁵⁴ (This desire also led to the addition of a 'radio play' at the beginning of the

⁵⁴ *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, dir. by Fiona Laird.

production, which reiterated the popular though unfounded myth that Elizabeth I commissioned Shakespeare to write a new play about Falstaff within the space of two weeks.) The production's use of gender as a signifier of this transition had implications for how the wider world of the play might be interpreted, however. As well as adding nuances to Shakespeare's characters beyond the facts of the text, as discussed above in relation to Mistresses Ford and Page, Brotherston's design demonstrated a critical relationship between the construction of *individual* identities and the formulation of a *community* identity. The fact that absorption within the community of Windsor-in-Essex depended on performing amplified iterations of an abridged history of binarized norms was significant; this staging appeared to have a conspicuous interest (subconsciously or otherwise) in *Merry Wives*' gender dynamic.



Figure 67. The costumes designed by Brotherston for Doctor Caius, Shallow, Slender, the Hostess of the Garter, and George Page (photograph by Manuel Harlan © RSC).



Figure 68. Sir Hugh Evans, Pistol, Bardolph, and Nym in the RSC's 2018 *Merry Wives* (photograph by Manuel Harlan © RSC).

The sexual politics of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* have formed a prominent theme in the play's critical history. Given that *Merry Wives* stands out in the Shakespeare canon as being particularly (and unusually) open to pro-feminist readings, a great deal of attention has been paid to the intricacies of how the text represents women, men, and the relationship between them. Mistresses Ford, Page, and Quickly's domination of the plot, their explicit challenging of orthodox sexual politics, the consistency with which female characters exercise power and agency over the course of the narrative, and the fact that it is the women's desires that ultimately succeed (rather than Falstaff's lust, Master Page's match-making scheme, or Master Ford's jealousy-justifying enterprise) are all points that have been used to argue for *Merry*

Wives having been notably progressive in its original social context.⁵⁵ Peter Erickson contests such readings of the play, however, arguing ‘on the contrary that both class and gender are strongly marked by a conservative valence’.⁵⁶ Highlighting the heteronormativity of *Merry Wives*’ ending—where Mistresses Page and Ford return to their former status within the patriarchal society of Windsor, and Anne Page’s marriage reinforces the play’s gender/class status quo for the next generation—Erickson sees the women’s actions as ultimately contributing to the continuation of Windsor’s patriarchal values.⁵⁷ While these concluding events have often proven difficult to parse in feminist readings of the text (Susan Gushee O’Malley concludes her study of the play as feminist citizen revenge comedy with the question: ‘Can there *be* a feminist reading of Mistresses Ford and Page when social order is so comfortably restored at the end of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and the wives happily go home with their husbands?’), such studies have suggested that the disposition of the society of Windsor might meaningfully undermine or reframe the ‘message’ of *Merry Wives*’ ending.⁵⁸ Evidence of a gossip network would indicate a form of female power that could not be controlled by patriarchal forces, for example.⁵⁹ Essentially, the way in which the Windsor community’s internal relationships are represented is of enormous significance for determining the sexual politics of the play in performance.

⁵⁵ Rachel Prusko, “‘Who hath got the right Anne?’ Gossip, resistance, and Anne Page in Shakespeare’s “*Merry Wives*””, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor: New Critical Essays*, ed. by Evelyn Gajowski and Phyllis Rackin (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 51-60; Mistress Page’s ‘Why, I’ll exhibit a bill in the parliament for the putting down of men’ (2.1.21-2) is cited widely as evidence that the text explores/reflects anxieties around women’s agency in early modern England; Cristina León Alfar, “‘Let’s consult together’: Women’s agency and the gossip network in “*The Merry Wives of Windsor*””, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor: New Critical Essays*, ed. by Gajowski and Rackin, pp. 38-50.

⁵⁶ Peter Erickson, ‘The Order of the Garter, the Cult of Elizabeth, and Class-Gender Tension in “*The Merry Wives of Windsor*”’, in *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*, ed. by Jean E. Howard and Marion F. O’Connor (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 116–40 (p. 118).

⁵⁷ Erickson notes that the marriage of Anne Page and Fenton ‘works not only to transfer financial resources from the bourgeoisie to the aristocracy but also to transfer control out of female and into male hands. [...] Class synthesis is purchased at the price of diminution of female power in the next generation’; p. 125.

⁵⁸ Susan Gushee O’Malley, “‘May we, with the Warrant of Womanhood and the witness of good conscience, pursue him with any further revenge?’ Feminist citizen revenge comedy in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*”, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor: New Critical Essays*, ed. by Gajowski and Rackin, pp. 61-70. (Emphasis mine.)

⁵⁹ Alfar, p. 39.

In an essay titled *'The Merry Wives of Windsor: The Performance of Community'*, Peter Holland draws out the significance of the play's sense of community and considers how specific productions have made sense of it in performance. Noting first that 'it is striking how similar most productions are', with stagings being alike in their 'presentation of a genially comic—often straightforwardly farcical—world', Holland makes a distinction between generalisation and specificity in *Merry Wives*' performance history. Making the play into 'a nostalgic evocation of an Elizabethan world, a heritage drama about "Merrie England"' has often resulted in 'the specificity of Shakespeare's town [being] lost in a generalised depiction of what is assumed to be the historical realism appropriate to comedy'.⁶⁰ Conversely, Holland argues, relocating *Merry Wives*' setting to an alternative or equivalent time and place has in certain instances allowed for the play's characters to be given 'new and precise meanings'. Northern Broadsides' 1993 production, set in the present day in an unidentified Northern town, 'avoided the easy simplicities of caricature and stereotype of more conventional productions precisely through the exactness with which its image of a complex community was created onstage'.⁶¹ Anne Barton makes a similar observation:

Most successful productions of the play within recent years have been comparatively realistic in style, stressing the particularity and completeness of the play's picture of contemporary small-town life. This seems right. Windsor itself, a corporate entity, is the true protagonist of the comedy, not Falstaff, the shadowy young lovers, or even the merry wives themselves, who uphold its values so well.⁶²

While these reflections perhaps say more about the critics' own interpretive preferences than anything else—the terms by which productions are deemed 'successful' are unclear—Holland

⁶⁰ Peter Holland, "'The Merry Wives of Windsor': The Performance of Community', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 23.2 (2005), 5–18 (p. 6); as documented in the Appendix to this thesis, *Merry Wives* was staged at the RSC with a Jacobethan-inspired setting in 1968 (dir. by Terry Hands, des. by Timothy O'Brien), 1979 (dir. by Trevor Nunn, des. by John Napier), and 1992 (dir. by David Thacker, des. by William Dudley).

⁶¹ Holland, pp. 8-9.

⁶² Anne Barton, *Essays, Mainly Shakespearean* (Cambridge: University Press, 1994), p. 84.

and Barton both usefully draw attention to the practicalities of how Windsor might be defined in performance. Re-rooting the play within a specific, familiar cultural context can potentially be a production's most powerful means of moulding *Merry Wives*' community dynamic—and by extension the play's class and sexual politics.

The extent to which Brotherston's costume design shaped the dynamics of the 2018 production should not be underestimated. As well as enhancing the visibility of the play's gender binary, Brotherston's hyper-gendered eclectic design created a curious middle ground between a generalised representation of the past (inhabited by a collection of caricature-like figures) and a highly specific evocation of a particular twenty-first-century cultural context. In using *TOWIE* (and the much older 'Essex' brand) as a key point of reference for the construction of its onstage world, the production cited a subsection of modern society known widely for its unique manifestation of social behaviours.

Since the late 1980s, the 'flashy consumption' and 'sexual exhibitionism' associated with the stereotypical 'Essex Man' and 'Essex Girl' have generated widespread social anxieties—seemingly due to their disruption of working-class conventions.⁶³ The rejection of traditional values of 'respectability' embodied by these figures has incited derision; *TOWIE* performers are similarly criticized in the media for 'refusing to conform to common standards of masculine and feminine behaviour' and for exhibiting (what is perceived to be) a distinct lack of class.⁶⁴ Heather Nunn and Anita Biressi suggest, however, that the elaborate grooming practices and image-focused ideologies at the root of these criticisms form a key feature of a 'post-class, postfeminist social, economic, and cultural field'.⁶⁵ By adopting a 'polished exterior' and 'generating economic and social worth through an overt and unembarrassed investment in their

⁶³ Heather Nunn and Anita Biressi, 'Class, Gender and the Docusoap: The Only Way is Essex', in *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 269-78 (p. 273).

⁶⁴ Nunn and Biressi, p. 278.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

dress and personal experience’, members of ‘Essex’ culture pursue (and, in *TOWIE*, often succeed in acquiring) a form of power that resides in individual recognition and social success.⁶⁶ This power—wielded by both men and women—establishes the *TOWIE*/‘Essex’ community as one in which traditional gender roles are being visibly renegotiated; binarization is not necessarily a means by which patriarchal values are enforced, but a structure that can be manipulated on both sides for personal gain.

It might seem, then, that in its 2018 staging the RSC identified a specific cultural context that provided exactly the sort of social infrastructure that might meaningfully recalibrate the power structures at the heart of *Merry Wives*. However, having recognisably *Jacobethan* elements of dress play a critical role in the construction and communication of characters’ hyper-gendered identities very much tempered the complexities that go together with the ‘Essex’ brand. By creating a sense of seamless continuity between the early modern culture represented in the text and that of *TOWIE*, Brotherston’s eclectic design established the production’s sexual politics as being somewhat more normative and conservative than the ‘post-class, postfeminist’ world of *TOWIE*. Though content produced to promote the production had a decidedly feminist edge (in a promotional video actor Rebecca Lacey [Mistress Page] describes the play being ‘about equality and gender togetherness’, and in an interview Laird declares it ‘a Shakespearean feminist triumph’), the reading of the text made available through Brotherston’s costume design was more complex.⁶⁷ This version of Windsor was self-evidently a fictional space, pointing towards two distinctive cultural contexts while committing fully to neither. Windsor-in-Essex gestured towards a recognisable social scenario associated with progressive, post-normative identities but always remained connected to a dated ‘Shakespearean’ past.

⁶⁶ Nunn and Biressi, pp. 273-4.

⁶⁷ Royal Shakespeare Company, *Why should you see The Merry Wives of Windsor?*, online video recording, YouTube, 5 December 2018 < <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbW7pTo7q8g> > [accessed 13 April 2020]; qtd in Stutz, ‘INTERVIEW’.

Essentially, by nature of being identifiably *of* the past, Jacobethan costume elements worked an innately conservative political agenda onto the play's social and sexual networks. Moreover, that the fusion of *this* past with *this* present was seen as an inherently comic act indicates the production's dubious participation in a wider culture of deriding nonconformist behaviours—particularly those relating to class.⁶⁸ Seeming to play primarily into a perceived clash in values between 'high' and 'low' culture, the hybrid setting established so vividly through Brotherston's costume design came to represent far more than a link between *Merry Wives*' original social context and a modern equivalent of the Windsor community.

While Brotherston's eclectic design for *Merry Wives* manipulated period aesthetics to establish caricatured identities in a historically-rooted fictional world, the costumes curated by Parry for *As You Like It* (and *Hamlet*) instead functioned as a meaningful indicator of character transformation. Within the 'haunted' world of the Globe's 2018 production, Jacobethan-inspired garments were calibrated to communicate incremental changes in how Rosalind's identity—performed by male actor Jack Laskey—evolved over the course of the play's narrative. The process of constructing individual character identities via a multiplicity of periods thus took a form that was somewhat different from that discussed above: rather than drawing on two distinctive settings simultaneously, Parry's costume design for *As You Like It* featured dateable, gendered forms of dress sequentially to redirect, subtly, the trajectory of Rosalind's iconic narrative.

⁶⁸ The production's costume design was described by reviewers as 'outrageous' (Peter Kirwan, *The Bardathon*), 'dazzlingly witty' (Paul Taylor, *The Independent*) and, within the wider context of the production's hybrid setting, 'consciously very silly' (Rosemary Waugh, *The Stage*); Kirwan, 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'; Paul Taylor, 'The Merry Wives of Windsor, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Review', *Independent*, 15 August 2018 <<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/the-merry-wives-of-windsor-royal-shakespeare-theatre-stratforduponavon-review-play-feminist-sitcom-a8492676.html>> [accessed 13 April 2020]; Rosemary Waugh, 'The Merry Wives of Windsor Review at the RSC, Stratford-upon-Avon', *The Stage*, 15 August 2018 <<https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2018/merry-wives-windsor-review-royal-shakespeare-theatre-stratford-upon-avon-2/>> [accessed 13 April 2020]



Figure 69. Rosalind (Jack Laskey) in 1.2 of Shakespeare's Globe's 2018 *As You Like It* (photograph by Tristram Kenton).



Figure 70. Rosalind and Celia in the Forest of Arden (photograph by Tristram Kenton).

Within the court of Duke Frederick—a space defined in the 2018 production by its association with historical styles of dress—Rosalind’s initial appearance was shaped by an imposing Elizabethan-inspired gown. With her torso encased in a structured bodice, hips augmented with the wheel farthingale fashionable during the final years of Elizabeth I’s reign, and long curled hair adorned with flowers, the character appeared absolutely historical and feminine (pictured in Figure 69). This apparel saw Rosalind situated firmly within a world of strict social conventions: bound by the ‘condition of [her] estate’ (1.2.11), observing formal structures of interaction (such as pursuing ‘suits’ with those of superior status [1.2.138] and bestowing tokens of favour upon those of the opposite sex [1.2.191-2]), and forced into exile because of her lineage, Rosalind’s clothing seemed to represent the restrictive nature of Duke Frederick’s court. For the audience’s first encounter with ‘Ganymede’, the ‘shepherd boy’ persona Rosalind invents to travel safely through the Forest of Arden, the character was dressed in garments that were still quite clearly Jacobethan in style, but which were recognisable as ‘man’s apparel’ (2.4.3). The extremely feminine gown initially worn by Rosalind was replaced by a brown leather doublet (one of the ‘ghosts’ pointed out by Parry in the production’s programme notes, as discussed above), co-ordinating leather trousers, and—furthering the figure’s gendered transition—short hair.

As Ganymede/Rosalind travelled further from the court, items of the character’s clothing were replaced by garments that were significantly more modern in style. First, the leather sleeves of the Jacobethan doublet were removed to reveal a cuffed, pinstriped shirt beneath, decorated with embroidered flowers in a manner that reflected embroidered detailing on the notably eclectic costumes worn by figures of the play’s forest world. It was in this guise that Rosalind (as Ganymede) really began to exude independence: deciding instinctively to speak to Orlando ‘like a saucy lackey and under that habit play the knave with him’ (3.2.254-5), and proposing during the following charged exchange that Orlando treat ‘Ganymede’ as Rosalind as a means

of curing his love, the play's protagonist took a decisive step away from the enforced behaviours of the court and towards the sense of liberation associated with the bucolic Forest of Arden. Next, the Jacobethan elements of the character's costume were replaced entirely by modern garments with no clear-cut connection to any particular gender. Wearing a bomber jacket embroidered with flowers, brown chinos, and Converse trainers, Ganymede/Rosalind engaged in the series of interactions that show the character at the height of her power. Intervening in Phoebe and Silvius' discord to criticise eloquently their behaviour (3.5), ruminating with Jacques on the subject of sadness (4.1), displaying remarkable wit and worldliness during wordplay with Orlando (4.1), and ultimately coordinating the solution to the play's love triangles (5.2), this thoroughly modern, androgynous iteration of Rosalind was a world apart from that introduced in 1.2.

In her final appearance, during the wedding of 5.4, Rosalind returned to the stage wearing a costume that ghosted the garment worn during the character's first scene: a pair of bodies (an early modern corset) similar to that worn by the character in 1.2 was paired with a slimline, floor-length white skirt that was not dateable in style. The character's hair remained short. Rather than reverting fully to the version of the character introduced at the beginning of the production—encased in a sizeable, highly structured Elizabethan-inspired gown and embodying straightforwardly feminine traits—the Rosalind of 5.4 retained a degree of temporal eclecticism and androgyny in her dress. This layering of seemingly conflicting signifiers continued in the play's Epilogue, enhanced by a final alteration made to the character's costume during the concluding moments of 5.4. Rosalind removed her skirt to dance, revealing a pair of modern floral trousers beneath (pictured in Figure 71). Visibly blurring boundaries between actor and character, past and present, masculinity and femininity, the figure responsible for communicating *As You Like It's* closing sentiments offered a closing image of joyful ambiguity.



Figure 71. Rosalind performing *As You Like It*'s Epilogue (photograph by Tristram Kenton).

The 2018 Globe Ensemble were not the first to use eclectic design to indicate a process of transition in *As You Like It*. The RSC's 2009 production of the play (directed by Michael Boyd, designed by Tom Piper) began in a wintry court of 'fear and violence'. The Courtyard Theatre's stage space was made clinically bare with an 'imposing, white-panelled wall', and all characters wore stiffly structured, Jacobethan-inspired clothing in a severe shade of black.⁶⁹ When disguised as Ganymede, Katy Stephens' Rosalind dressed in garments that were neither modern nor Jacobethan in style: a tailored, blazer-style jacket in a tan suede-like fabric, white shirt with Regency-style raised collar, and corduroy trousers seemed to position the character in the midst of a shift in time. Touchstone's costume—a black straitjacket and white ruff—literally fragmented and came apart as he journeyed through the Forest of Arden, with the

⁶⁹ Michael Billington, 'As You Like It', *Guardian*, 28 April 2009 <<https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2009/apr/29/as-you-like-it-stratford>> [accessed 25 November 2019]; Charles Spencer, 'As You Like It, review', *Telegraph*, 29 April 2009 <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/charles-spencer/5245542/As-You-Like-It-review.html>> [accessed 13 April 2020]

character eventually being liberated entirely from the physical constraints placed upon him by the usurping Duke's court. A similar transition was indicated for the wider world of the play through the company's eventual wearing of modern dress. For the wedding scene (5.4), Rosalind and other characters wore relatively loose-fitting modern garments in earthy shades of cream and brown, creating an absolute contrast with the sartorial culture established at the beginning of the production.⁷⁰

Described by Charles Spencer (*Telegraph*) as 'a vision of the play that powerfully captures the dramatic movement from pain and fear to reconciliation and love', and by Michael Billington (*Guardian*) as moving from 'a tyranny where black-costumed Elizabethans move in regimented order' towards real 'spiritual enfranchisement', the RSC's 2009 production manipulated period to create a categorical tonal shift.⁷¹ The period of Shakespeare's lifetime was used as a visual shorthand for restriction, repression (or oppression), and/or a figurative sense of imprisonment that must be broken for the narrative to reach a satisfactory conclusion. (This device had previously been used by Boyd and Piper in their 2007 RSC production of *Richard II*, discussed in Chapter Three.) Seen through this lens, Shakespeare's characters battle with the constraints of the period in which they were created and are ultimately made timeless or inherently modern in spirit.

Drawing on this association between Jacobethan dress and a tangible sense of restriction was, to an extent, an intention underpinning the 2018 Ensemble's use of costume—particularly for

⁷⁰ This sense of transition from a wintry court to a softer, freer environment corresponds closely with Northrop Frye's 'green world' theory. Frye suggests that Shakespeare's romantic comedies follow a literary tradition (established by Peele and developed by Greene and Lyly) comparable to the medieval seasonal ritual-play: '[w]e may call it the drama of the green world, its plot being assimilated to the ritual theme of the triumph of life and love over the waste land'. The action of such comedies 'begins in a world represented as a normal world, moves into the green world, goes into metamorphosis there in which the comic resolution is achieved, and returns to the normal world'. According to Frye, the green world 'charges the comedies with the symbolism of the victory of summer over winter'; *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 182-3.

⁷¹ Spencer, 'As You Like It, review'; Billington, 'As You Like It'.

Hamlet. Parry explains that, once the decision had been made to combine historical and modern clothing in an eclectic design, the company collectively established rules to imbue dateable garments with production-specific meanings. For *Hamlet*, characters who were ‘of the court’ (Gertrude, Claudius, Polonius, Laertes) wore Jacobethan-inspired garments that were later described by members of the Ensemble as indicating a sense of ‘pageantry’, ‘restrict[ion]’, ‘formal[ity]’, and ‘status’; those who were outside of or resistant to the court (Hamlet, Horatio, the players, Fortinbras) dressed in contemporary clothing.⁷² This established a spectrum on which characters could be placed to reflect allegiances, the extent to which individuals adhere to expected/enforced behaviours, and ‘a sense of identities that are quite fragmented’.⁷³ Similarly, in the company’s staging of *As You Like It*, Duke Frederick’s court was made to appear ‘quite formal’ through references to historical dress in the costumes worn by its inhabitants. Arden in comparison was significantly more eclectic in appearance: period signifiers were mixed to indicate a sense of freedom. In Parry’s words, ‘the further you got away from [Duke Frederick’s] court into this world that was sort of out of time, the more free you were to fashion yourself and express yourself and be who you wanted to be in terms of [...] gender and role and everything else’.⁷⁴

By drawing a direct link between the 2018 *As You Like It*’s increasingly eclectic costume design and a developing freedom of self-expression (particularly in relation to gender), Parry indicates a significant way in which period garments were deployed to shape the text’s possible meanings. Shifts and fractures in time (indicated through dateable garments) were coded to communicate subtle changes in characters’ sense of self. While this concept is certainly comparable to the approach followed by Piper for the RSC’s 2009 staging of the play, with

⁷² London, Shakespeare’s Globe Archive (SGA), Actor Q&A: *Hamlet*, 2018 (Helen Schlesinger and James Garnon).

⁷³ Interview, Parry.

⁷⁴ Interview, Parry.

period-specific clothing indicating a process of liberation as the play's narrative unfolds, the functions performed by the 2018 Globe production's costumes were complicated by the Ensemble's deliberately non-traditional approach to casting. The casting of Laskey as Rosalind was a decision made in line with Terry's philosophy that 'any person can play any character'—an intention described more recently by the Artistic Director as 'releas[ing] the plays from literal casting'.⁷⁵ This was not an attempt to experiment with early modern playing practices. Unlike the 'original practices' cross-gender casting practices explored at the Globe during Mark Rylance's tenure (1996-2005), the theatre's 2018 season ignored traditional gender binaries in its casting in favour of exploring 'what type of *human being*' each character is.⁷⁶ The production's costumes thus had an important and somewhat complex role to play in negotiating the relationship between actor and character. As well as communicating narrative developments and establishing the world in which the production was set, costume was responsible for mediating the cultural meanings engendered by the actor's own identity.⁷⁷

The performativity of gender is, as many critics and theatre-makers have attested, among *As You Like It*'s most prominent themes. As well as forming the primary factor on which the entire plot hinges—Rosalind adopts a male disguise to pass safely through the Forest of Arden, maintains her fictional persona to 'play the knave' with Orlando, and inadvertently becomes entangled in a love triangle with Phoebe and Silvius—social and cultural constructions of gender are referred to consistently and explicitly by the play's characters. To 'cry like a

⁷⁵ 'The Ensemble Experiment'; qtd in Natasha Tripney, 'Michelle Terry: "This Job Has Taught Me That Democracy Is Really Hard"', *The Stage*, 29 May 2019 <<https://www.thestage.co.uk/features/interviews/2019/michelle-terry-this-job-has-taught-me-that-democracy-is-really-hard/>> [accessed 25 November 2019]

⁷⁶ Terry is discussing the Globe's 2019 season here, but the same philosophy applied to the 2018 season; qtd in Tripney, 'Michelle Terry'. (Emphasis mine).

⁷⁷ Several forthcoming studies examine Terry-era Globe philosophies around casting, identity, and ensemble-led performance. See Robin Craig, 'Assimilation or Resistance: Medicalised Bodies in 21st Century Shakespeare' (forthcoming doctoral thesis, University of Roehampton, 2021); see also Hailey Bachrach on so-called 'gender-blind' casting: "'Gender blind" casting, who and what goes unseen?', *King's English*, 23 May 2018 <<https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/english/2018/05/23/shakespeare-and-gender/>> [accessed 14 April 2020]

woman' would be 'to disgrace [Rosalind's] man's apparel'; 'doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat' (2.4.3-5). Celia later reinforces this association, asserting that 'tears do not become a man' (3.4.2-3). Phrases like 'mannish cowards' (1.3.110) illustrate the text's wider preoccupation with discrepancies between the inner self and the identity performed socially. Preceded by 'A gallant curtel-axe upon my thigh, / A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart, / Lie there what hidden womans' fear there will' (1.3.106-8), 'mannish cowards' emphasises the constructedness of masculinity and femininity. As suggested by Juliet Dusinberre, social constructions of gender 'are in *As You Like It* the equivalent of a wardrobe of garments to be put on and off at will'.⁷⁸ In the pastoral world of the Forest of Arden, the boundaries demarcating masculinity and femininity are shown to be porous and negotiable; though the play's ending depicts a celebratory return to heteronormativity, Rosalind's capacity to move freely between gendered behaviours disturbs the foundations on which constructions of gender are built. This blurring of boundaries was naturally mirrored—extended, even—by the early modern staging practice of women's roles being performed by boys or men. It thus follows that, on the page and in performance, this particular play has formed a locus for discussion around gender identity and expression.

Outlining *As You Like It*'s complex relationship with gender is essential for identifying how the Globe's 2018 production was significant in its subtle renegotiation of identity through costume. While the fact that Rosalind was played by a male actor was far from revolutionary, and could indeed be interpreted as one of production's ghostly links to the past, the way in which sartorial signifiers of period and gender were manipulated formed a subtle act of reinvention. As well as highlighting that gender is an inherently performative act—an idea the text continually reiterates, that has been explored in countless ways over the course of the

⁷⁸ Juliet Dusinberre, 'Introduction', in *As You like It*, by William Shakespeare, ed. by Dusinberre (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), pp. 1-142 (p. 12).

play's performance history—the garments worn by Laskey's Rosalind undermined the gender binary the play's ending seems to re-establish.⁷⁹

To explain exactly how Laskey's Rosalind's sequence of increasingly eclectic costumes might be understood as an intervention in the character's critical trajectory, I will draw briefly on Aoife Monks' theorisation of how an actor's costumed body generates meaning in performance. In *The Actor in Costume*, Monks suggests 'the actor's body is a composite of many bodies', and that '[w]hen spectators look at actors in costume, they see bodies emerging continuously through the course of the performance'.⁸⁰ The actor's own physical form—referred to by Monks as the 'working body' (a term coined by Bert States in 1985)—brings to the performance a presence that exists somewhat separately from the *character* the actor is embodying. It is the actor's working body that produces sweat, for example. As well as providing a base onto which production- and character-specific meanings are mapped, the actor's physical form remains visible throughout the performance, blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality. When this blurring takes the form of the actor's 'real' persona competing with that of the character being represented, this layer of meaning is termed the 'self-expressive body'.⁸¹

Coexisting with the working body (and the self-expressive body, if it is present) are layers of meaning formed of visual 'codes and conventions' developed through the history of theatrical performance. The 'aesthetic body' describes the set of signifiers that function symbolically to communicate information about the world being represented in a performance and the figures who inhabit it. For example, the combination of a black hat, cloak, and pronounced facial hair 'might communicate villainy on the stage' (because audiences have been trained by previous

⁷⁹ See, for example, the all-male productions staged by the National Theatre (1967; dir. by Clifford Williams) and *Cheek by Jowl* (1991; dir. by Declan Donnellan).

⁸⁰ Aoife Monks, *The Actor in Costume* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 20.

⁸¹ Monks, pp. 20-3.

experiences to make such associations when these items are grouped together in a theatrical context), while the presence of codpieces, farthingales, and ruffs would usually indicate that the action is taking place in the early modern era.⁸² When such theatrical conventions apply to the representation of specific characters (such as the ‘tradition that Hamlet should look thin, or that Vladimir and Estragon should be dressed as tramps in Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*’), the ‘body’ in question falls into a category referred to by Monks as the ‘character’s body’.⁸³

A series of carefully managed adjustments in the relationships between these ‘bodies’ enabled Laskey’s Rosalind to challenge conventions relating to the representation of Shakespeare’s character and the performance of gender more generally. At the beginning of the production, the actor’s working body—Laskey’s own physicality and (to use Butler’s phrase) cultural intelligibility as a cisgender man—appeared to be entirely at odds with the *character’s* body—the theatrical codes that prime audience members to have an ‘ideal image’ of how an iconic character should appear. This sense of discord also existed between the working body and the aesthetic body: with the audience trained to recognise a structured bodice, wheel farthingale, floral decorations, and the colours pink and cream as indicators of femininity (and the historical period of the Elizabethan era), the distinction between the actor’s and character’s performed identities became notably pronounced. Conflicts of this kind fall firmly within definitions of drag performance, which, according to Butler, ‘plays upon the distinction between the anatomy of the performer and the gender that is being performed’.⁸⁴ This, of course, corresponds directly with *As You Like It’s* (and specifically Rosalind’s) interest in gender as performance and discrepancies between ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ identities. The Jacobethan garments worn by Laskey for Rosalind’s initial appearance thus contributed to the construction of a gender identity that

⁸² Monks, p. 21.

⁸³ Monks, p. 23.

⁸⁴ Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 187.

was visibly *manufactured*, anticipating the themes explored in the Forest of Arden and inheriting the same sense of extra-narrative boundary-blurring as that associated with early modern cross-gender performance.⁸⁵

What made Laskey's Rosalind particularly significant, however, was that these fractured relationships between bodies were visibly renegotiated over the course of the production. Almost as soon as an aesthetic body was introduced, with its unique collection of signs associating Rosalind with the social constructions of a particular cultural context, it was replaced by a new or altered aesthetic body. Prompting audience members to engage (subconsciously) in a continuous process of reinterpretation, Parry's costume design maintained a distinct sense of instability by constantly redefining the terms by which Laskey's costumed body generated meaning. In the context of the play's narrative, these developments provided a visual representation of the identity exploration undertaken by Rosalind while in Arden; by eluding attachment to the norms associated with a singular social context, the character evidently shifted between visibly different constructions of gender. Crucially, it was the design's pointed refusal to reinstate a familiar aesthetic body for the wedding scene of 5.4 that made a conspicuous amendment to the ending signalled by the text. Rather than associating Rosalind with an existing identity at the play's conclusion—one that the audience had already encountered within the world of the play, or indeed any culturally prescribed gendered identity of the real world (past or present)—Parry's design indicated that the character's identity had been permanently changed by the end of *As You Like It*'s final act.

⁸⁵ However, Sawyer K. Kemp draws attention to the exclusionary nature of this approach to representing transgender identities in performance: '[t]he discussion of trans actors in theater is almost completely divorced from the discussion of genderqueer or androgynous characterization in Shakespeare performance. The desire to either inject sexualized androgyny into or de-gender a role [...] is almost always fulfilled by a cis actor through hair, makeup, and costume choices. The willingness to see these as separate issues is both generative and problematic: it creates space within gender and gender performance, but edges trans people out of that conversation'; "'In That Dimension Grossly Clad": Transgender Rhetoric, Representation, and Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Studies*, 47 (2019), 120-13 (p. 121).

It is important to ask at this point how the character trajectory performed by the 2018 production's costume design shaped the meanings or 'message' associated with Rosalind—and, by extension, the play as a whole. In *Shakespearean Negotiations*, Stephen Greenblatt argues that *As You Like It*'s ending, with its overwhelming affirmation of heteronormativity in the wedding scene of 5.4, marks the erasure of all elements of Rosalind's identity developed through her 'improvisational self-fashioning' as Ganymede:

[T]he unique qualities of that identity—those that give Rosalind her independence, her sharply etched individuality—will not, as Shakespeare conceives the play, endure: they are bound up with exile, disguise, and freedom from ordinary constraint, and they will vanish [...] when the play is done.⁸⁶

Essentially, in this line of thought, the qualities accessed and explored by Rosalind in the liminal space of the forest are transitory, not a transition. This is because—in Greenblatt's view—the 'witty experimental fashioning' of the character's identity ultimately 'longs for self-effacement and reabsorption in the community'.⁸⁷ These ideas form part of an argument concluding that—read in relation to early modern conceptions of gender—'characters like Rosalind and Viola pass through the state of being men in order to become women'.⁸⁸ According to this reading, the power exerted by Rosalind in the Forest of Arden is not ultimately hers to keep. Though the barriers separating masculinity from femininity are in *As You Like It* shown to be porous (or, indeed, fictional), Greenblatt demonstrates that the play's ending can be interpreted as a firm ceasing of identity exploration and the demise of Rosalind's most distinctive features.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 90-1.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Greenblatt, p. 92.

⁸⁹ For more on the significance of the apparent reassertion of a patriarchal system at the end of *As You Like It* (and how this element of the play has been explored through performance), see Penny Gay, *As She Likes It: Shakespeare's Unruly Women* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 48-85.

In opposition to this ‘recuperative interpretation’ of Rosalind, however, Marjorie Garber argues in *Vested Interests* that, rather than ‘vanishing’ at the end of the play, the ‘residue’ of Ganymede—‘which is to say, [Rosalind’s] capacity for becoming or constructing Ganymede’—is ‘in fact what lingers, like the smile of the Cheshire cat’.⁹⁰ Garber attributes arguments such as Greenblatt’s to a ‘domesticated and [...] patriarchal or masculinist longing’; to believe that Rosalind ultimately longs for self-effacement and reabsorption into the community is arguably to deny the desires underpinning the character’s cross-dressing. Conversely, understanding Ganymede as being no less permanent than Rosalind, Orlando, or the remainder of the play’s characters opens the text to significantly more complex readings relating to desire and power.⁹¹ Earlier in this study, Garber makes an important distinction between looking *through* and *at* cross-dressing. Readings of cross-dressing which ‘regard transvestism as [a story’s] vehicle rather than its tenor, as [...] something to be looked *through* on the way to a story about men or women’, erase or repress the significance of gender being blurred.⁹² Such readings tend to ignore elements of narratives that present the *blurring* of gender as a site of power, rather than in one of multiple gendered identities.⁹³

With what is at stake made clear regarding how substantially the meanings associated with *As You Like It* can be shaped by differing interpretations of the play’s ending, the potential significance of Parry’s costume design for the Globe’s 2018 production becomes palpable. The series of increasingly eclectic costumes created for Laskey’s Rosalind meant that the character’s narrative could be read not as recuperative, but resulting in permanent change that acknowledged each step of the journey undertaken by the character (as Rosalind *and* as

⁹⁰ Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 75.

⁹¹ Garber, *Vested Interests*, p. 77; Valerie Rohy questions the supposedly temporary nature of desires in *As You Like It* in ‘As You Like It: Fortune’s Turn’, in *Shakesqueer: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Madhavi Menon (London, Duke University Press, 2011), pp. 55-61.

⁹² Garber, *Vested Interests*, pp. 6-17.

⁹³ The point I cite here comes from Garber’s discussion of the 1982 film *Tootsie*. However, Garber uses this example as part of her introduction to the book’s wider argument about gender performance.

Ganymede) in its final form. In this reading, Rosalind maintained the power she had experienced as Ganymede but channelled it into an identity that seemed to transcend binarization. Audience members were invited to look *at* the character's blurring of gender as a source of power, rather than a temporary exploration concluding with the reinstatement of societally constructed norms.

Where the RSC's 2018 *Merry Wives of Windsor* used Jacobethan design features to draw direct parallels between the gendered behaviours of the sixteenth and twenty-first centuries, then, the Globe's 2018 *As You Like It* pointedly interrupted and complicated the stylised repetition of such acts. In the costume design curated by Parry, Jacobethan dress demarcated the beginning of a process wherein an individual identity was shown to be constructed socially, deconstructed experimentally, and which settled ultimately in a form existing on its own terms. In a world where period was coded (on one level, at least) as a visual indicator of characters' liberation of self-expression, the forms of dress associated with the period of Shakespeare's lifetime represented restriction. That this approach to design functioned simultaneously as a highly visible form of theatrical haunting testifies to the multiplicity of ways in which eclectic staging is used to generate meaning in Shakespearean performance. Rather than simply representing the rejection of a 'superimposed schema' of setting or signalling that Shakespeare's works hold universal relevance, temporally eclectic design provides innumerable possibilities for shaping intricacies of identity, formulations of community, and for recalibrating the impact of plays' core themes.

Conclusion

This thesis began with a series of questions. Why do directors and designers turn regularly to Elizabethan/Jacobean dress when staging Shakespeare's plays for twenty-first-century audiences? What are the ideas, assumptions, and desires that cluster around the clothing of this period, and how have these associations been manipulated by theatre practitioners to mould the meanings of the playwright's works? With these questions, I sought to broaden our understanding of how Jacobethan costume design functions in practice. Previous studies (by W. B. Worthen, Ralph Berry, Bridget Escolme) have tended to encapsulate this element of modern Shakespearean performance in a single chapter or paragraph, usually assessing how an early modern setting might differ in impact from other approaches to staging the playwright's works (in modern dress, for example).¹

My intention in writing this thesis was to investigate Jacobethanism in all its variety and complexity. By exposing the production processes that have preceded the appearance of Jacobethan costumes and interpreting the diverse meanings engendered by such garments in performance, I wanted to demonstrate exactly how significant this element of modern Shakespearean performance is in its scope, application, and impact. Doing so would have ramifications for Shakespeare Studies, and for other related fields. Currently accepted theories of setting would be shown only to scrape the surface in representing an expansive, multifaceted assortment of design practices. The labels commonly applied by critics, scholars, and audience members to historical-dress productions ('period-dress', 'traditional', 'conventional') would be problematised and potentially replaced by more apposite alternatives. The artistry, influence, and labour of costume designers and makers would be brought centre-stage (rather

¹ See the introduction to this thesis (pp. 3-8) for a detailed review of previous studies in this area.

than sidelined or ignored, as is often the case in studies relating to Shakespeare in/or performance), and the space between historical accuracy and design-led interpretation in costumes designed for film and heritage sites would become more clearly available for fruitful interrogation.

Examining diverse approaches to Jacobethan costume design has resulted in a rich tapestry of findings. I have demonstrated that such garments are where notions of identity have been asserted, explored, contested, and deconstructed. From changing the trajectory of Shakespeare's iconic characters to expressing the evolving ideologies of major UK theatre institutions, Jacobethan costumes continually tell new stories about how we understand our past and ourselves in the present. In places, these stories intersect with conceptions of national identity. The shapes and textures of Elizabethan/Jacobean dress are associated with many powerful cultural myths, developed over a period of centuries in correlation with elements of English nationalism. Crucially, in the context of modern Shakespearean performance, Jacobethan costume design clearly is a vehicle for positioning productions in relation to the prominent, pervasive legends of the playwright and the period in which he lived. The productions discussed in these chapters used elements of early modern dress variously to assert their overt refusal of the reverence with which Shakespeare is often treated, to place certain texts in conversation with ghosts of the past, or to infuse otherworldly spaces with the beguiling sense of wonder and spectacle now associated with Elizabethan clothing and culture.

The extent to which these practices interact with genre is remarkable. While Jacobethanism self-evidently transcends distinctions of genre in its application—comedies, tragedies, and histories have all fallen within the scope of this study—its role seemingly differs depending on the qualities associated with the play being performed. Used to root the more 'real' comedies (*Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Twelfth Night*) in

the cultural context of their composition, to make the imaginary tangible for Shakespeare's more fantastical comedies (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest*), and to layer histories and tragedies (*Richard II*, *Othello*) with social and/or political commentary, Jacobethan costume design is chameleon-like in its ability to adapt to the requirements of the context in question. The fact that historical fashions play such a prominent and varied role in modern Shakespearean performance suggests something more significant about our modern culture and its interests: the past plainly continues to provide extraordinarily inspiring source material for the expression of ideas in the present.

Issues around retrospectivity have resurfaced with conspicuous regularity across this thesis. In Chapter Two, where my attention was focused on the reasons behind the widespread popularity of historical aesthetics, I found in definitions of nostalgia an explanation for the significance of historical-dress performance: retrospective representations of the past almost always reflect qualities that are imagined and mythical. Unsurprisingly, this theme came to resonate with almost every area of my argument, recapitulating through the productions, theories, and performance histories discussed in each chapter. Hauntology is in many ways the study of nostalgia by another name. Similarly, while notable in its efforts to extend what is actually *known* about early modern sartorial culture, 'original practices' costuming formed part of a romantic and highly selective approach to reviving the past. In Chapters Three and Four, the ties connecting retrospectivity, myth, and the imaginary became explicitly apparent. Jacobethan dress proved the primary means by which Elizabethan/Shakespearean myths and mythological qualities were consciously and intentionally inserted into the narratives of Shakespeare's plays. These connections are all, of course, inextricable from the broader argument (made compellingly by Susan Bennett) that Shakespeare's ongoing global

prominence is ‘perhaps the very best symptom’ of a present-day ‘epidemic’ of nostalgia.² If the obsessive reperformance, investigation, and merchandising of these centuries-old texts in modern culture is counted as evidence of a growing cultural and economic vacuum, is Jacobethanism ultimately a concentrated manifestation of this widespread contemporary ‘malaise’?

In this thesis, I have shown Jacobethan-dress Shakespeare to be significantly more complex in this respect than it might initially appear. To conclude that all productions of this kind are simply symptoms of a cultural obsession with the past would be to miss the richness of what these design practices represent. In twenty-first-century Shakespearean performance, Jacobethanism sees history mobilised to explore concerns that are inherently contemporary. Designers in this context look back in time not to facilitate an escape to a lost and better past, but to provide a space in which ideas of the present can play out with a degree of distance from reality. Drawing on the array of meanings currently associated with Elizabethan/Jacobean dress—ranging from restriction and repression to regality and extravagant performativity—designers manipulate historical styles to recalibrate the themes of intensely familiar narratives in response to current concerns. The Royal Shakespeare Company’s 2007 *Richard II* (discussed in Chapter Three) reflected contemporary anxieties about war and political leadership as much as it did the circumstances surrounding the play’s original performance; the downfall and replacement of the production’s ‘peacock-like’ Elizabethan Richard was legibly and intentionally analogous with the then-unfolding transition in Downing Street between Tony

² Susan Bennett, *Performing Nostalgia: Shifting Shakespeare and the Contemporary Past* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 1.

Blair and Gordon Brown.³ The permanent fracturing of *As You Like It*'s gender binary in Shakespeare's Globe's 2018 staging (see Chapter Five)—a process indicated through the calculated use of Jacobethan and modern garments—relates to a wider, ongoing social movement to erode historically-contingent constructions and limitations of gender. Even 'original practices' performance (Chapter One) held significant links with contemporary politics. As Stephen Purcell reminds us in *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Mark Rylance at the Globe*, Shakespeare's Globe opened during a period of extraordinarily rapid political change in the UK, when British national identity was in a state of flux and New Labour's 'Cool Britannia' project encouraged a wave of cultural renovation.⁴ Rather than representing an inherently 'backwards-looking search for "authenticity"', the clothing crafted by the theatre's costume team contributed to a growing collection of cultural products (such as the highly successful British film production *Elizabeth* [1998] and other historical biopics) interested in reimagining and performing national foundational myths.⁵

These practices have continued to be prominent and pressingly relevant in the months since the most recent productions discussed in this thesis were staged. In 2019, the Royal Shakespeare Company staged a gender-swapped *The Taming of the Shrew* (directed by Justin Audibert) that saw the play's patriarchal power structures and codes of gender entirely reversed. Petruchio became Petruchia, Bianca became Bianco, and the wealthy merchants and

³ Designer Tom Piper explained in an interview that the narrative of *Richard II* is 'so much politics now. In fact, we were doing it at the time of Blair and Brown, so there was an interesting thing with Tony Blair being the kind of peacock-y character, and everyone being fed up with him, bringing in Gordon Brown, then after a year everyone going "Oh God, we don't like Gordon Brown anymore"'. Reviewer Robert Hewison writes that 'Richard II's ruff, red wig and white face recall Elizabeth I, but it is impossible not to think also of Tony Blair, surrounded by favourites and provoking a serious crisis while going to war. Wood's solemn Henry IV is a Brown, concerned for his grass roots and worried about the legitimacy of his succession'; Tom Piper, interview with Ella Hawkins (Stratford-upon-Avon, 28 February 2019); Robert Hewison, 'The sweet smell of succession', *The Sunday Times*, 26 August 2007, pp. 20-1 (p. 20).

⁴ Stephen Purcell, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Mark Rylance at the Globe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 12-17.

⁵ Maddalena Pennacchia, 'Culturally British Bio(e)pics: From "Elizabeth" to "The King's Speech"', in *Adaptation, Intermediality and the British Celebrity Biopic*, ed. by Marta Minier and Pennacchia (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 33-49 (p. 34).

suitors whose marriage negotiations make up much of the plot (Baptista Minola, Gremio, Hortensio, Lucentio) were all played as women. Where Shakespeare's Globe's 2012 production employed a Jacobethan-inspired setting to avoid confronting *Shrew*'s 'dubious subject matter' and 'the sexual politics of it in our modern-day psyche' (discussed in Chapter Two), Hannah Clark's costume design for the 2019 staging did exactly the opposite.⁶ Sizeable, elaborate Jacobethan-inspired gowns were used to establish the production's women as powerful matriarchs. Worn with large ruffs and striking heart-shaped hairstyles, these garments allowed female cast-members to take up a significant amount of space and embody a real sense of grandeur, authority, and dominance. Structured undergarments were understood by the company as a statement of power and strength. In keeping with the historical function of 'bodies' (the structured underwear worn by women during the early modern period), which became a symbol of female restriction only when they evolved into the corset two centuries later, these status-asserting garments felt to the cast 'like armour'.⁷ The costumes designed for the men of this world (Katherine, Bianco, servants, and the Widower) were comparatively unobtrusive. Lightweight fabrics, subtle patterns, and diminutive silhouettes conveyed the inferiority of these characters within the production's social structure. Paired with the carved wooden panelling of Stephen Brimson Lewis's set design, Clark's costumes located the production in a past that was recognisable and dateable, but legibly reformed into a world that felt excitingly unfamiliar.

The centrality of Clark's Jacobethan costume design to this production's subversive recoding and reclamation of *The Taming of Shrew*—a play now considered deeply problematic due to its troubling sexual politics—is testament to the ongoing power and currency of this element

⁶ Mike Britton, interview with Ella Hawkins (London, 11 December 2018); see Chapter Two (pp. 117-35) for a detailed discussion of this production.

⁷ Qtd in Royal Shakespeare Company, *The Politics of Power Dressing*, online video recording, YouTube, 16 September 2019 <<https://youtu.be/fZCePKtqJEM>> [accessed 17 April 2020]

of modern Shakespearean performance. The manipulation of historical dress is, in this context, clearly far more than simply retrospective. Jacobethanism is to be treated not as a manifestation of cultural malaise, but a dynamic collection of practices capable of refashioning textual meanings, reflecting present-day political and societal shifts, and confronting contemporary injustices. Interpreting theatrical garments of this kind is a revealing process: historically-inspired costumes can often provide a key to understanding the concerns that (consciously or subconsciously) underpin the productions and broader contexts in which they appear.

This thesis is one of few studies to interpret modern stagings of Shakespeare's plays through costume design. While the study of costume is continually gaining traction as a field in its own right, the application of this approach to the study of early modern drama is rare. Published works in Shakespeare Studies with costume analysis as their primary methodology are few and far between; conference panels specialising in Shakespeare and the sartorial are even scarcer. I hope in this thesis to have taken a step towards developing this burgeoning area of scholarly interest. My methodology might provide a useful model for future studies of this kind: combining practical knowledge of costume construction processes with detailed interview insights, textual analysis, and a range of conceptual frameworks has allowed for practice and theory to be weighted equally in an interdisciplinary investigation. Perhaps more importantly, this thesis stands apart from previous works relating to Shakespeare and costume in its scope and depth. By producing a book-length study focused purely on (what is widely perceived to be) a single approach to costume design for a singular canon of plays, I have established that the intricate mechanics of setting are worthy of more detailed analysis than they have previously been afforded. If the practice of staging Shakespeare in Jacobethan dress is significantly more complex than commonly accepted theories of setting suggest, there is plainly enormous scope for investigating costume-based constructions of period on a far wider scale.

It is therefore clear that there is significantly more work to be done in this line of scholarship. The sheer variety of issues that became visible and explicable over the five chapters of this thesis testifies to the vast potential held by an in-depth, costume-focused approach to studying Shakespeare. A logical next step would be to conduct similarly-scoped studies on the significance of modern-dress and abstract approaches to costuming the playwright's works, as well as trends in setting the plays in alternative historical contexts (such as the Victorian and Edwardian eras). Such projects would usefully complicate the categories of setting popularised by Ralph Berry and W. B. Worthen and work towards the development of a new approach to theorising this element of Shakespearean performance. On a related issue, the relationship between popular culture and design for Shakespeare has proven worthy of additional attention. Much has been written about how the playwright's legacy has infiltrated the popular imagination over a period of several centuries, but the extent to which popular culture contributes to the design of onstage worlds for Shakespeare's plays has not yet been investigated in sufficient depth.⁸ The recent upsurge in productions inspired by fictional worlds of film, television, and literature invites close consideration for us fully to understand the significance of such intertextual approaches to world-building.⁹ It is also important that areas of performance falling beyond the scope of this study are introduced into this developing conversation. While my focus here was limited to Shakespeare, the design cultures of the plays of other early modern dramatists—Marlowe, Middleton, Jonson, Dekker, Ford, Lyly, Webster, and others—are worthy of attention in their own right. The same is true for regional,

⁸ See Chapter Three for more on the study of Shakespeare and popular culture; *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Popular Culture*, ed. by Robert Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) brings together the work of many scholars notable for their contributions to this area.

⁹ I refer here to the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2014 *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Love's Labour's Won* (*Much Ado About Nothing*; directed by Christopher Luscombe, designed by Simon Higlett), both seemingly drawing on the popularity of *Downton Abbey*; the company's 2018 *Troilus and Cressida* (directed by Gregory Doran, designed by Niki Turner), inspired by *Mad Max*; the Bridge Theatre's 2019 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (directed by Nicholas Hytner, designed by Bunny Christie), featuring elements based on *The Handmaid's Tale*; and others.

international, and amateur performance. Attending primarily to productions staged by major UK theatre companies has proven productive for an initial assessment of the significance of Jacobethanism in design for early modern drama, but contextualising my findings within a wider picture of modern performance practice would be a fruitful line of enquiry next.

It has been approximately 420 years since the peascod doublet fell out of fashion. But this garment and its sartorial contemporaries—the ruff, the rebato, farthingales, bodies, bands, and trunk hose—remain alive in our modern cultural imagination. The meanings originally telegraphed by the colour, fit, and embellishment of Elizabethan and Jacobean clothing continue to be renegotiated for twenty-first-century performance by designers and directors. We must pay close attention to this ongoing evolutionary process to recognise the ever-shifting significance of Jacobethanism in costume design for Shakespeare.

Appendix

Approaches to Setting at the Royal Shakespeare Company and Shakespeare's Globe: Performance History Data

The following pages feature a full list of Shakespeare productions staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC; 1960-2019) and Shakespeare's Globe ('the Globe'; 1996-2019). For each production, I specify the approach to setting followed by the creative team. I must emphasise that this list comes with several caveats. It is extremely difficult to organise productions into neat categories (as I explain in my introduction; see pp. 7-8). Most of the stagings listed below blended styles from multiple periods to some extent and/or reimagined dateable garments as part of a stylised approach to design. I have specified the period style that features most prominently in each production's design (e.g. 'Jacobethan'), listing multiple labels where the setting gives equal weight to multiple periods or adopts a particularly abstract/stylised approach to representing a specific period of dress history (e.g. 'Jacobethan/medieval' or 'Jacobethan/abstract'). My purpose in categorising these productions is to identify broader changes in each company's preferred approach to setting, rather than to offer a definitive assessment of individual stagings based on how they correspond with a concise list of labels.

This list is limited to in-house productions staged by each company (meaning, for example, that external contributions to the RSC's Complete Works Festival and the Globe's Globe-to-Globe seasons are not included). I only document stagings of plays written by Shakespeare, and I do not include revivals.

The labels I use are as follows (along with a brief definition of what I mean by each):

- Jacobethan** Elizabethan and/or Jacobean styles were the most prominent feature in the production's design
- (OP)** The design was created using the 'original practices' philosophy developed at Shakespeare's Globe between 1997 and 2005 (see Chapter One)
- Medieval** Medieval styles (e.g. those of the fourteenth and/or fifteenth centuries) were the most prominent feature in the production's design
- Roman/
Classical** Ancient Roman, Ancient Greek, or similar styles were the most prominent feature in the production's design
- Modern** The production was staged in clothing contemporary to the performance
- Abstract** The design was particularly stylised (e.g. it used imagined styles or foregrounded colour in a manner unlike any period of dress history)
- Eclectic** The production's design noticeably blended styles from multiple time periods
- Alternative
historical** The production was set in a past period that was dateable, but different to that specified in the text. Examples include the Victorian period, the Edwardian era, WWII, and the 1970s. (Though some might class the 1970s as modern dress, I class it as historical where the setting clearly predated the year in which the production was performed.)

Royal Shakespeare Company: 1960-2019

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1960	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	Peter Hall	Lila De Nobili & Renzo Mongiardino	Jacobethan
1960	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Michael Langham	Desmond Heeley	Alternative historical
1960	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Peter Hall	Lila De Nobili	Jacobethan
1960	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	John Barton	Alix Stone	Jacobethan
1960	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	Peter Hall & John Barton	Leslie Hurry	Classical
1960	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Peter Wood	Jacques Noel	Abstract/eclectic
1961	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Michael Langham	Desmond Heeley	Alternative historical
1961	<i>Hamlet</i>	Peter Wood	Leslie Hurry	Jacobethan
1961	<i>Richard III</i>	William Gaskill	Jocelyn Herbert	Medieval
1961	<i>As You Like It</i>	Michael Elliott	Richard Negri	Jacobethan
1961	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Peter Hall	Desmond Heeley & Sean Kenny	Jacobethan/ medieval
1961	<i>Othello</i>	Franco Zeffirelli	Peter John Hall & Franco Zeffirelli	Jacobethan
1962	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	John Blatchley	John Bury & Alix Stone	Jacobethan/ medieval

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1962	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Peter Hall	Lila De Nobili	Jacobethan/ abstract
1962	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Maurice Daniels	Alix Stone	Jacobethan
1962	<i>Macbeth</i>	Donald McWhinnie	John Bury & Annena Stubbs	Medieval
1962	<i>Cymbeline</i>	William Gaskill	Rene Allio	Medieval
1962	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Clifford Williams	Anthony Powell & Clifford Williams	Jacobethan
1962	<i>King Lear</i>	Peter Brook	Peter Brook	Medieval/abstract
1963	<i>The Tempest</i>	Clifford Williams with Peter Brook	Farrah	Eclectic
1963	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	John Blatchley	John Bury	Roman/abstract
1963	<i>The Wars of the Roses: Henry VI</i>	Peter Hall w/ John Barton and Frank Evans	John Bury	Medieval
1963	<i>The Wars of the Roses: Edward IV</i>	Peter Hall w/ John Barton and Frank Evans	John Bury	Medieval
1963	<i>The Wars of the Roses: Richard III</i>	Peter Hall w/ John Barton and Frank Evans	John Bury	Medieval
1964	<i>Richard II</i>	Peter Hall, John Barton, Clifford Williams	John Bury	Medieval

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1964	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	Peter Hall, John Barton, Clifford Williams	John Bury	Medieval
1964	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	Peter Hall, John Barton, Clifford Williams	John Bury	Medieval
1964	<i>Henry V</i>	Peter Hall	John Bury	Medieval
1965	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	John Barton	Sally Jacobs	Jacobethan
1965	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Clifford Williams	Nadine Baylis & Ralph Koltai	Medieval
1965	<i>Timon of Athens</i>	John Schlesinger	Ralph Koltai	Abstract/eclectic
1965	<i>Hamlet</i>	Peter Hall	John Bury & Ann Curtis	Eclectic
1966	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Clifford Williams	Sally Jacobs	Jacobethan
1967	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Trevor Nunn	Christopher Morley	Jacobethan
1967	<i>Coriolanus</i>	John Barton	John Bury & Ann Curtis	Roman
1967	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	John Barton	Timothy O'Brien	Jacobethan
1967	<i>As You Like It</i>	David Jones	Timothy O'Brien	Jacobethan/ abstract
1967	<i>Macbeth</i>	Peter Hall	John Bury & Ann Curtis	Medieval
1967	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Karolos Koun	Timothy O'Brien	Medieval
Trevor Nunn becomes Artistic Director				

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1968	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	John Barton	John Gunter & Ann Curtis	Roman
1968	<i>King Lear</i>	Trevor Nunn	Christopher Morley	Jacobethan/ abstract
1968	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Terry Hands	Timothy O'Brien	Jacobethan
1968	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	John Barton	Timothy O'Brien	Classical/abstract
1968	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Trevor Nunn	Christopher Morley	Jacobethan/ abstract
1969	<i>Pericles</i>	Terry Hands	Timothy O'Brien	Classical/abstract
1969	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Trevor Nunn	Christopher Morley	Eclectic
1969	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	John Barton	Christopher Morley & Stephanie Howard	Jacobethan
1969	<i>Henry VIII</i>	Trevor Nunn	John Bury	Tudor
1970	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	John Barton	Timothy O'Brien	Jacobethan
1970	<i>Richard III</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Medieval
1970	<i>Hamlet</i>	Trevor Nunn	Christopher Morley	Jacobethan/ abstract
1970	<i>King John</i>	Buzz Goodbody; Theatregoround	Christopher Morley	Medieval

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1970	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	Robin Phillips	Daphne Dare	Modern
1970	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Peter Brook	Sally Jacobs	Abstract
1970	<i>The Tempest</i>	John Barton	Ann Curtis	Jacobethan
1971	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Terry Hands	Timothy O'Brien & Tazeena Firth	Medieval/abstract
1971	<i>Richard II</i>	John Barton; Theatregoround	Ann Curtis	Medieval
1971	<i>Henry V</i>	John Barton; Theatregoround	Ann Curtis	Medieval
1971	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Ronald Eyre	Voytek	Alternative historical
1971	<i>Othello</i>	John Barton	Julia Trevelyan Oman	Alternative historical
1972	<i>Coriolanus</i>	Trevor Nunn, with Buzz Goodbody	Christopher Morley & Ann Curtis	Roman
1972	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Trevor Nunn, with Buzz Goodbody and Euan Smith	Christopher Morley & Ann Curtis	Roman
1972	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Trevor Nunn, with Buzz Goodbody and Euan Smith	Ann Curtis, William Lockwood, Christopher Morley, Gordon Sumpter	Roman

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1972	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	Trevor Nunn, with John Barton, Buzz Goodbody and Euan Smith	Ann Curtis, William Lockwood, Christopher Morley, Gordon Sumpter	Roman/abstract
1973	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Jacobethan
1973	<i>Richard II</i>	John Barton	Tazeena Firth & Timothy O'Brien	Jacobethan
1973	<i>As You Like It</i>	Buzz Goodbody	Christopher Morley	Eclectic
1973	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	David Jones	Tazeena Firth & Timothy O'Brien	Alternative historical
1973	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Clifford Williams	Farrah	Jacobethan
1974	<i>King John</i>	John Barton with Barry Kyle	Martyn Bainbridge, Ann Curtis, John Napier	Jacobethan
1974	<i>Cymbeline</i>	John Barton with Barry Kyle and Clifford Williams	Martyn Bainbridge, Sue Jenkinson, John Napier	Jacobethan/abstract
1974	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Peter Gill	Deirdre Clancy & William Dudley	Jacobethan
1974	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Keith Hack	Maria Björnson	Jacobethan

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1974	<i>Macbeth</i>	Trevor Nunn	John Napier	Abstract/eclectic
1975	<i>Henry V</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Eclectic
1975	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Medieval
1975	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Medieval
1975	<i>Hamlet</i>	Buzz Goodbody	Chris Dyer	Modern
1975	<i>Richard III</i>	Barry Kyle	John Napier	Abstract/eclectic
1976	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Trevor Nunn and Barry Kyle	Chris Dyer	Jacobethan
1976	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	John Barton	John Napier	Alternative historical
1976	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	John Barton and Trevor Nunn	Di Seymour	Eclectic
1976	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	John Barton and Barry Kyle	Chris Dyer	Classical
1976	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Trevor Nunn	John Napier	Modern/abstract
1976	<i>King Lear</i>	Trevor Nunn, John Barton and Barry Kyle	John Napier	Eclectic
1976	<i>Macbeth</i>	Trevor Nunn	John Napier	Abstract/eclectic
1977	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	John Barton and Gillian Lynne	John Napier	Jacobethan/ abstract
1977	<i>1 Henry VI</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Medieval
1977	<i>2 Henry VI</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Medieval
1977	<i>3 Henry VI</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Medieval
1977	<i>As You Like It</i>	Trevor Nunn	John Napier	Alternative historical

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1977	<i>Coriolanus</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Roman/abstract
Terry Hands and Trevor Nunn become joint Artistic Directors				
1978	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Michael Bogdanov	Chris Dyer	Alternative historical
1978	<i>The Tempest</i>	Clifford Williams	Ralph Koltai	Jacobethan/ abstract
1978	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Barry Kyle	Christopher Morley	Jacobethan
1978	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	John Barton	Ralph Koltai	Jacobethan
1978	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Peter Brook	Sally Jacobs	Roman
1978	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	John Barton	Christopher Morley	Eclectic
1979	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Trevor Nunn	John Napier	Jacobethan
1979	<i>Cymbeline</i>	David Jones	Christopher Morley	Abstract/eclectic
1979	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Terry Hands	John Napier	Jacobethan
1979	<i>Othello</i>	Ronald Eyre	Pamela Howard	Jacobethan
1979	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Barry Kyle	Christopher Morley	Roman
1979	<i>Pericles</i>	Ron Daniels	Chris Dyer	Classical
1980	<i>As You Like It</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Jacobethan
1980	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Ron Daniels	Ralph Koltai & Nadine Baylis	Eclectic
1980	<i>Hamlet</i>	John Barton	Ralph Koltai	Eclectic
1980	<i>Richard II</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Medieval

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1980	<i>Richard III</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Medieval
1980	<i>Timon of Athens</i>	Ron Daniels	Chris Dyer	Alternative historical
1981	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Ronald Eyre	Chris Dyer	Abstract/eclectic
1981	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Ron Daniels	Maria Björnson	Alternative historical
1981	<i>Titus Andronicus/The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	John Barton	Christopher Morley	Jacobethan
1981	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	Trevor Nunn	John Gunter & Lindy Hemming	Alternative historical
1982	<i>Macbeth</i>	Howard Davies	Chris Dyer & Poppy Mitchell	Eclectic
1982	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Terry Hands	Ralph Koltai & Alexander Reid	Alternative historical
1982	<i>King Lear</i>	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Eclectic
1982	<i>The Tempest</i>	Ron Daniels	Maria Björnson	Jacobethan
1982	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Barry Kyle	Bob Crowley	Jacobethan/abstract
1982	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Adrian Noble	Nadine Baylis	Roman
1983	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Ron Daniels	Farrah & Ann Curtis	Roman/abstract
1983	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	John Caird	Robin Don & Alex Stone	Jacobethan
1983	<i>Henry VIII</i>	Howard Davies	Deirdre Clancy & Hayden Griffin	Tudor

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1983	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Adrian Noble	Ultz	Modern/abstract
1983	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Alternative historical
1984	<i>Henry V</i>	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Medieval
1984	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	John Caird	Ultz	Jacobethan/abstract
1984	<i>Richard III</i>	Bill Alexander	William Dudley	Medieval
1984	<i>Hamlet</i>	Ron Daniels	Maria Björnson	Jacobethan/abstract
1984	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Barry Kyle	Bob Crowley	Alternative historical
1984	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Sheila Hancock	Bob Crowley	Eclectic
1984	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	John Caird	Bob Crowley & Priscilla Truett	Jacobethan
1985	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Bill Alexander	William Dudley	Modern
1985	<i>As You Like It</i>	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Eclectic
1985	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	Howard Davies	Liz Da Costa & Ralph Koltai	Alternative historical
1985	<i>Othello</i>	Terry Hands	Ralph Koltai & Alexander Reid	Jacobethan/abstract
Nunn leaves the company; Hands becomes sole Artistic Director				
1986	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Michael Bogdanov	Chris Dyer & Ginny Humphreys	Modern

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1986	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Terry Hands	Gerard Howland & Alexander Reid	Alternative historical/ abstract
1986	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Bill Alexander	William Dudley	Abstract/eclectic
1986	<i>Richard II</i>	Barry Kyle	William Dudley	Medieval
1986	<i>Macbeth</i>	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Jacobethan/ abstract
1986	<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>	Barry Kyle	Bob Crowley	Alternative historical
1987	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Eclectic
1987	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Bill Alexander	Adreane Neofitou & Kit Surrey	Jacobethan
1987	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Bill Alexander	Deirdre Clancy & Kit Surrey	Jacobethan/ abstract
1987	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Jonathan Miller	Stephanos Lazaridis	Jacobethan/Stuart
1987	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Nicholas Hytner	Mark Thompson	Modern
1987	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	Deborah Warner	Isabella Bywater	Roman/abstract
1987	<i>Cymbeline</i>	Bill Alexander	Allan Watkins	Jacobethan/ medieval
1988	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Di Trevis	Mark Thompson	Eclectic
1988	<i>The Tempest</i>	Nicholas Hytner	David Fielding	Eclectic
1988	<i>Henry VI Part 1 ('The Plantagenets')</i>	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Medieval

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1988	<i>Henry IV Part 2/3</i> (<i>'The Plantagenets'</i>)	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Medieval
1988	<i>Richard III</i> (<i>'The Plantagenets'</i>)	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Medieval
1988	<i>King John</i>	Deborah Warner	Sue Blane	Eclectic
1989	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	John Caird	Sue Blane	Modern/abstract
1989	<i>Hamlet</i>	Ron Daniels	Antony McDonald	Eclectic
1989	<i>Cymbeline</i>	Bill Alexander	Timothy O'Brien	Eclectic
1989	<i>As You Like It</i>	John Caird	Ultz	Modern
1989	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	Barry Kyle	Chris Dyer	Jacobethan/ abstract
1989	<i>Coriolanus</i>	Terry Hands with John Barton	Christopher Morley	Abstract/eclectic
1989	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Terry Hands	Farrah	Abstract/eclectic
1989	<i>Pericles</i>	David Thacker	Fran Thompson	Abstract/eclectic
1989	<i>Othello</i>	Trevor Nunn	Bob Crowley	Alternative historical
1990	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Bill Alexander	Kit Surrey	Jacobethan
1990	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Ian Judge	Mark Thompson	Abstract/eclectic
1990	<i>King Lear</i>	Nicholas Hytner	David Fielding	Modern
1990	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Terry Hands	Timothy O'Brien	Alternative historical

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1990	<i>Richard II</i>	Ron Daniels	Antony McDonald	Jacobethan/ abstract
1990	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	Sam Mendes	Anthony Ward	Eclectic
Adrian Noble becomes Artistic Director				
1991	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	Adrian Noble	Deirdre Clancy & Bob Crowley	Medieval
1991	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Griff Rhys Jones	Ultz	Alternative historical
1991	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	Adrian Noble	Deirdre Clancy & Bob Crowley	Medieval
1991	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	David Leveaux	Alison Chitty	Jacobethan/ abstract
1991	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Steven Pimlott	Tobias Hoheisel	Abstract/eclectic
1991	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	David Thacker	Shelagh Keegan	Modern
1991	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Trevor Nunn	Maria Björnson	Alternative historical
1992	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Bill Alexander	Tim Goodchild	Jacobethan
1992	<i>As You Like It</i>	David Thacker	Johan Engels	Jacobethan
1992	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Adrian Noble	Anthony Ward	Alternative historical
1992	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	David Thacker	William Dudley	Jacobethan/ abstract
1992	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	John Caird	Sue Blane	Roman
1992	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	Peter Hall	John Gunter	Alternative historical

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1992	<i>Richard III</i>	Sam Mendes	Tim Hatley	Eclectic
1993	<i>Hamlet</i>	Adrian Noble	Bob Crowley	Alternative historical
1993	<i>King Lear</i>	Adrian Noble	Anthony Ward	Alternative historical
1993	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	David Thacker	Shelagh Keegan	Modern
1993	<i>The Tempest</i>	Sam Mendes	Anthony Ward	Alternative historical
1993	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Ian Judge	John Gunter & Deirdre Clancy	Alternative historical
1993	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	David Thacker	Fran Thompson	Modern
1994	<i>Macbeth</i>	Adrian Noble	Ian MacNeil	Medieval/abstract
1994	<i>Henry V</i>	Matthew Warchus	Kandis Cook & Neil Warmington	Medieval
1994	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Ian Judge	Deirdre Clancy & John Gunter	Jacobethan
1994	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Adrian Noble	Anthony Ward	Abstract/eclectic
1994	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Steven Pimlott	Ashley Martin-Davies	Modern
1994	<i>Coriolanus</i>	David Thacker	Fran Thompson	Alternative historical
1994	<i>Henry VI (The Battle for the Throne)</i>	Katie Mitchell	Rae Smith	Medieval/abstract

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1995	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Adrian Noble	Kendra Ulliyart	Alternative historical
1995	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Gale Edwards	Russell Craig & Marie-Jeanne Lecca	Eclectic
1995	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Peter Hall	Deirdre Clancy & John Gunter	Roman/abstract
1995	<i>Richard III</i>	Steven Pimlott	Tobias Hoheisel	Jacobethan/abstract
1995	<i>The Tempest</i>	David Thacker	Shelagh Keegan	Jacobethan/abstract
1996	<i>As You Like It</i>	Steven Pimlott	Ashley Martin-Davies	Jacobethan
1996	<i>Macbeth</i>	Tim Alberry	Stewart Laing	Abstract/eclectic
1996	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	Ian Judge	John Gunter & Deirdre Clancy	Classical/abstract
1996	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Jacobethan
1996	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Ian Judge	Tim Goodchild	Eclectic
1996	<i>Henry VIII</i>	Gregory Doran	Robert Jones	Tudor
1996	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Tim Supple	Robert Innes Hopkins	Modern
1997	<i>Cymbeline</i>	Adrian Noble	Anthony Ward	Abstract/eclectic
1997	<i>Hamlet</i>	Matthew Warchus	Mark Thompson	Modern
1997	<i>Henry V</i>	Ron Daniels	Ashley Martin-Davies	Modern

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1997	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Adrian Noble	Anthony Ward	Abstract/eclectic
1997	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Gregory Doran	Robert Jones & Sue Wilmington	Jacobethan/abstract
1997	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Michael Attenborough	Robert Jones	Alternative historical
1998	<i>The Tempest</i>	Adrian Noble	Anthony Ward	Jacobethan/abstract
1998	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Alternative historical
1998	<i>Richard III</i>	Elijah Moshinsky	Rob Howell	Medieval
1998	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	Edward Hall	Michael Pavelka	Modern
1998	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Alternative historical
1999	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Gregory Doran	Robert Jones	Alternative historical
1999	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Modern/abstract
1999	<i>Othello</i>	Michael Attenborough	Robert Jones	Alternative historical
1999	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Steven Pimlott	Yolanda Sonnabend	Abstract/eclectic
1999	<i>Timon of Athens</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Abstract/eclectic
1999	<i>Macbeth</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Modern

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1999	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Lindsay Posner	Ashley Martin-Davies	Jacobethan
2000	<i>As You Like It</i>	Gregory Doran	Kaffe Fassett & Niki Turner	Jacobethan/abstract
2000	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Lynne Parker	Blaithin Sheerin	Alternative historical
2000	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Eclectic
2000	<i>Henry V</i>	Edward Hall	Michael Pavelka	Eclectic
2000	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	Michael Attenborough	Kandis Cook & Es Devlin	Medieval/abstract
2000	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	Michael Attenborough	Kandis Cook & Es Devlin	Medieval/abstract
2000	<i>1 Henry VI</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Medieval/abstract
2000	<i>2 Henry VI</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Medieval/abstract
2000	<i>3 Henry VI</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Medieval/abstract
2000	<i>Richard II</i>	Steven Pimlott	Sue Willmington	Modern
2000	<i>The Tempest</i>	James Macdonald	Kandis Cook	Modern/abstract
2001	<i>Hamlet</i>	Steven Pimlott	Alison Chitty	Modern
2001	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Lindsay Posner	Ashley Martin-Davies	Alternative historical
2001	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Edward Hall	Michael Pavelka	Eclectic
2001	<i>Richard III</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Modern/abstract
2001	<i>King John</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Eclectic

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2001	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Loveday Ingram	Colin Falconer	Modern
2002	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Richard Jones	Nicky Gillibrand & Giles Cadle	Modern/abstract
2002	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Alternative historical
2002	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Michael Attenborough	Es Devlin	Eclectic
2002	<i>The Tempest</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Jacobethan
2002	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Matthew Warchus	Vicki Mortimer	Modern
2002	<i>Pericles</i>	Adrian Noble	Peter McKintosh	Abstract/eclectic
2002	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Rachel Kavanaugh	Peter McKintosh	Alternative historical
2002	<i>Coriolanus</i>	David Farr	Ti Green	Abstract/eclectic
Michael Boyd becomes Artistic Director				
2003	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Sean Holmes	Anthony Lamble	Alternative historical
2003	<i>Richard III</i>	Sean Holmes	Anthony Lamble	Alternative historical
2003	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Jacobethan
2003	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	Bill Alexander	Ruari Murchison	Eclectic

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2003	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	Gregory Doran	Deirdre Clancy & Stephen Brimson Lewis	Jacobethan
2003	<i>As You Like It</i>	Gregory Thompson	Hilary Lewis	Alternative historical
2003	<i>Cymbeline</i>	Dominic Cooke	Rae Smith	Modern/abstract
2004	<i>Hamlet</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Jacobethan
2004	<i>King Lear</i>	Bill Alexander	Kandis Cook & Tom Piper	Alternative historical
2004	<i>Macbeth</i>	Dominic Cooke	Robert Innes Hopkins & Tania Spooner	Modern
2004	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Peter Gill	Simon Daw & Deirdre Clancy	Alternative historical
2004	<i>Othello</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Alternative historical
2004	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	Fiona Buffini	Liz Ascroft	Alternative historical
2004	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	David Farr	Ti Green	Modern
2005	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Modern
2005	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Nancy Meckler	Katrina Lindsay	Abstract/eclectic
2005	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Alternative historical
2006	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis & Kandis Cook	Roman/abstract

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2006	<i>King John</i>	Josie Rourke	Peter McKintosh	Medieval/abstract
2006	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Marianne Elliott	Lez Brotherston	Alternative historical
2006	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Nancy Meckler	Katrina Lindsay	Modern
2006	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Alternative historical
2006	<i>The Tempest</i>	Rupert Goold	Nicky Gillibrand & Giles Cadle	Abstract/eclectic
2007	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper & Emma Williams	Medieval/abstract
2007	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	Richard Twyman	Emma Williams	Medieval/abstract
2007	<i>King Lear</i>	Trevor Nunn	Christopher Oram	Abstract/eclectic
2007	<i>Richard II</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Jacobethan/abstract
2007	<i>Richard III</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Modern/abstract
2007	<i>Henry V</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper & Emma Williams	Medieval/abstract
2008	<i>Hamlet</i>	Gregory Doran	Robert Jones	Modern
2008	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Gregory Doran	Katrina Lindsay & Francis O'Connor	Jacobethan
2008	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Neil Bartlett	Kandis Cook	Alternative historical
2008	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Tim Carroll	Laura Hopkins	Modern
2008	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Conall Morrison	Francis O'Connor & Joan O'Clery	Jacobethan/abstract

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2009	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Lucy Bailey	Fotini Dimou & William Dudley	Roman/abstract
2009	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Gregory Doran	Robert Jones	Alternative historical
2009	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	David Farr	Jon Bausor	Alternative historical
2009	<i>As You Like It</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Eclectic
2010	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Modern
2010	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Rupert Goold	Tom Scutt	Eclectic
2010	<i>King Lear</i>	David Farr	Jon Bausor	Abstract/eclectic
2011	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Nancy Meckler	Katrina Lindsay	Modern/abstract
2011	<i>Macbeth</i>	Michael Boyd	Tom Piper	Jacobethan
2011	<i>Merchant of Venice</i>	Rupert Goold	Tom Scutt	Modern
2011	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Roxana Silbert	Garance Marneur	Modern
Gregory Doran becomes Artistic Director				
2012	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Gregory Doran	Michael Vale	Modern
2012	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Amir Nizar Zuabi	Jon Bausor	Modern
2012	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	David Farr	Jon Bausor	Modern
2012	<i>The Tempest</i>	David Farr	Jon Bausor	Eclectic
2012	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Phillip Breen	Max Jones	Modern
2012	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Lucy Bailey	Ruth Sutcliffe	Modern
2012	<i>King John</i>	Maria Aberg	Naomi Dawson	Modern
2012	<i>Richard III</i>	Roxana Silbert	Ti Green	Eclectic
2013	<i>All's Well that Ends Well</i>	Nancy Meckler	Katrina Lindsay	Modern
2013	<i>As You Like It</i>	Maria Aberg	Naomi Dawson	Modern
2013	<i>Hamlet</i>	David Farr	Jon Bausor	Modern

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2013	<i>Richard II</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Medieval
2013	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Lucy Bailey	William Dudley	Alternative historical/abstract
2013	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Tarell Alvin McCraney	Tom Piper	Alternative historical
2013	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	Michael Fentiman	Colin Richmond	Modern
2014	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Medieval
2014	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Medieval
2014	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Christopher Luscombe	Simon Higlett	Alternative historical
2014	<i>Much Ado About Nothing (Love's Labour's Won)</i>	Christopher Luscombe	Simon Higlett	Alternative historical
2014	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	Simon Godwin	Paul Wills	Modern
2015	<i>Henry V</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Medieval
2015	<i>Othello</i>	Iqbal Khan	Fotini Dimou & Ciaran Bagnell	Abstract/eclectic
2015	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Polly Findlay	Anette Guther & Johannes Schütz	Modern
2016	<i>Hamlet</i>	Simon Godwin	Paul Wills	Modern
2016	<i>Cymbeline</i>	Melly Still	Anna Fleischle	Modern/abstract
2016	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Erica Whyman	Tom Piper	Alternative historical/abstract
2016	<i>King Lear</i>	Gregory Doran	Niki Turner	Abstract/eclectic
2016	<i>The Tempest</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Eclectic

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2017	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Iqbal Khan	Robert Innes Hopkins	Roman
2017	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Angus Jackson	Robert Innes Hopkins	Roman
2017	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	Blanche McIntyre	Robert Innes Hopkins	Modern
2017	<i>Coriolanus</i>	Angus Jackson	Robert Innes Hopkins	Modern/abstract
2017	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Christopher Luscombe	Simon Higlett	Alternative historical
2018	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Erica Whyman	Tom Piper	Modern
2018	<i>Macbeth</i>	Polly Findlay	Fly Davis	Modern
2018	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Fiona Laird	Lez Brotherston	Eclectic
2019	<i>As You Like It</i>	Kimberley Sykes	Stephen Brimson Lewis & Bretta Gerekce	Eclectic
2019	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Justin Audibert	Stephen Brimson Lewis & Hannah Clark	Jacobethan
2019	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Gregory Doran	Stephen Brimson Lewis	Alternative historical

Shakespeare's Globe: 1996-2019

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
1996	<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>	Jack Shepherd	Jenny Tiramani & Susan Coates	Modern
1997	<i>Henry V</i>	Richard Olivier	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
1997	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	David Freeman	Tom Phillips	Abstract
1998	<i>As You Like It</i>	Lucy Bailey	Bunny Christie	Jacobethan
1998	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Richard Olivier	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
1999	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Mark Rylance	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
1999	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Kathryn Hunter	Liz Cooke	Eclectic
1999	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Giles Block	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
2000	<i>The Tempest</i>	Lenka Udovicki	Bjanka Ursulov	Abstract/eclectic
2000	<i>Hamlet</i>	Giles Block	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
2000	<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>	Tim Carroll	Roger Butlin	Abstract/eclectic
2001	<i>King Lear</i>	Barry Kyle	Hayden Griffin	Eclectic
2001	<i>Macbeth</i>	Tim Carroll	Laura Hopkins	Modern
2001	<i>Cymbeline</i>	Mike Alfreds	Jenny Tiramani	Abstract
2002	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Tim Carroll	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
2002	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Mike Alfreds	Jenny Tiramani	Modern
2003	<i>Richard II</i>	Tim Carroll	Jenny Tiramani & Luca Costigliolo	Jacobethan (OP)

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2003	<i>Richard III</i>	Barry Kyle	Jenny Tiramani & Luca Costigliolo	Jacobethan (OP)
2003	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Phyllida Lloyd	Jenny Tiramani & Imogen Ross	Jacobethan (OP)
2004	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Tim Carroll	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
2004	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Tamara Harvey	Paul Burgess	Jacobethan (OP)
2004	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	John Dove	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
2005	<i>The Tempest</i>	Tim Carroll	Jenny Tiramani	Eclectic (OP)
2005	<i>Pericles</i>	Kathryn Hunter	Liz Cooke	Modern
2005	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	John Dove	Jenny Tiramani	Jacobethan (OP)
2005	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	Giles Block	Rebecca Seager	Modern
Dominic Dromgoole becomes Artistic Director				
2006	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Christopher Luscombe	Janet Bird	Abstract/eclectic
2006	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Mike Britton	Jacobethan
2006	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	Lucy Bailey	William Dudley	Roman
2006	<i>Coriolanus</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Mike Britton	Jacobethan
2007	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Jacobethan
2007	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Rebecca Gatward	Liz Cooke	Jacobethan/ eclectic
2007	<i>Othello</i>	Wilson Milam	Dick Bird	Jacobethan

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2008	<i>Timon of Athens</i>	Lucy Bailey	William Dudley	Abstract
2008	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Christopher Luscombe	Janet Bird	Jacobethan
2008	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Jonathan Munby	Mike Britton	Abstract/eclectic
2008	<i>King Lear</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Jacobethan
2009	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>	Matthew Dunster	Anna Fleischle	Classical/eclectic
2009	<i>As You Like It</i>	Thea Sharrock	Dick Bird	Jacobethan
2009	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Simon Daw	Jacobethan
2010	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Jacobethan
2010	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Jacobethan
2010	<i>Henry VIII</i>	Mark Rosenblatt	Angela Davies	Tudor
2010	<i>Macbeth</i>	Lucy Bailey	Katrina Lindsay	Abstract/eclectic
2011	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Jeremy Herrin	Mike Britton	Jacobethan
2011	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	John Dove	Michael Taylor	Jacobethan
2011	<i>Hamlet</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Eclectic
2012	<i>As You Like It</i>	James Dacre	Hannah Clark	Eclectic
2012	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Toby Frow	Mike Britton	Jacobethan

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2012	<i>Henry V</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Medieval
2013	<i>1 Henry VI</i>	Nick Bagnall	Ti Green	Jacobethan
2013	<i>2 Henry VI</i>	Nick Bagnall	Ti Green	Jacobethan
2013	<i>3 Henry VI</i>	Nick Bagnall	Ti Green	Jacobethan
2013	<i>Macbeth</i>	Eve Best	Mike Britton	Jacobethan
2013	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Jacobethan/ abstract
2013	<i>The Tempest</i>	Jeremy Herrin	Max Jones	Jacobethan
2014	<i>The Comedy of Errors</i>	Blanche McIntyre	James Cotterill	Abstract/eclectic
2014	<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Eclectic
2014	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Jonathan Munby	Colin Richmond	Eclectic
2015	<i>Pericles</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Eclectic
2015	<i>Cymbeline</i>	Sam Yates	Richard Kent	Jacobethan/ abstract
2015	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Jacobethan
2015	<i>As You Like It</i>	Blanche McIntyre	Andrew D Edwards	Jacobethan
2015	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Jonathan Munby	Mike Britton	Jacobethan
2015	<i>Richard II</i>	Simon Godwin	Paul Wills	Medieval

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2016	<i>The Tempest</i>	Dominic Dromgoole	Jonathan Fensom	Jacobethan
2016	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Michael Longhurst	Richard Kent	Jacobethan/ abstract
Emma Rice becomes Artistic Director				
2016	<i>Macbeth</i>	Iqbal Khan	Joan O'Clery	Eclectic
2016	<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Caroline Byrne	Chiara Stephenson	Alternative historical
2016	<i>Cymbeline (Imogen)</i>	Matthew Dunster	Jon Bausor	Modern
2016	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Emma Rice	Moritz Junge & Börkur Jónsson	Eclectic
2017	<i>King Lear</i>	Nancy Meckler	Rosanna Vize	Modern
2017	<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Matthew Dunster	Anna Fleischle	Alternative historical
2017	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Emma Rice	Lez Brotherston	Modern
2017	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Daniel Kramer	Soutra Gilmour	Eclectic
2017	<i>Othello</i>	Ellen McDougall	Fly Davis	Jacobethan/ abstract
Michelle Terry becomes Artistic Director				
2018	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Nick Bagnell	Katie Sykes	Eclectic
2018	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Blanche McIntyre	James Perkins	Eclectic
2018	<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>	Barrie Rutter	Jessica Worrall	Abstract/eclectic
2018	<i>Hamlet</i>	Federay Holmes & Elle While	E M Parry	Eclectic

Year	Play	Director	Designer(s)	Setting
2018	<i>All's Well That Ends Well</i>	Caroline Byrne	Colin Richmond	Jacobethan
2018	<i>As You Like It</i>	Federay Holmes & Elle While	E M Parry	Eclectic
2018	<i>Othello</i>	Claire van Kampen	Jonathan Fensom	Eclectic
2018	<i>Macbeth</i>	Robert Hastie	Peter McKintosh	Eclectic
2018	<i>Richard II</i>	Adjoa Andoh & Lynette Linton	Rajha Shakiry	Eclectic/modern
2019	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Sean Holmes	Jean Chan	Abstract/eclectic
2019	<i>1 Henry IV</i>	Sarah Bedi & Federay Holmes	Jessica Worrall	Eclectic
2019	<i>2 Henry IV</i>	Sarah Bedi & Federay Holmes	Jessica Worrall	Eclectic
2019	<i>Henry V</i>	Sarah Bedi & Federay Holmes	Jessica Worrall	Eclectic
2019	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Nicole Charles & Elle While	Charlie Cridlan	Alternative historical/abstract

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