

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

AT

STRATFORD

by

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# ERRATUM

The references to the second edition of The Duchess of Malfi, the New Mermaids, should be corrected as follows:

The Duchess of Malfi, edited by Elizabeth M. Brennan, the New Mermaids, second edition (London: A.C. Black, 1983 (first published, London: Ernest Benn, 1964))

Sh3897





## SYNOPSIS

This thesis offers a descriptive and analytic study of the productions of John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi created by the Royal Shakespeare Company (formerly named the Stratford-on-Avon Company) in 1960, 1971 and 1989. Each of the three productions is separately considered in terms of its theatrical realization. Discussion derives from the evidence of prompt-books, production records and contemporary reviews. In Introduction I refer to the stage history of The Duchess of Malfi and discuss what aspects in the play has been considered problematic in performance. In Conclusion I summarize how each director of the RSC productions has attempted to solve the problems in his production. Appendices contains accounts of the performed texts; cast lists with details of production personnel; list of the plays produced in each respective season; and my interview with Bill Alexander, director of the 1989 production.

This thesis contains approximately 44,000 words.

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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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## INTRODUCTION

John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi has been staged three times by the Royal Shakespeare Company. It was first directed by Donald McWhinnie in 1960; Clifford Williams directed the second production in 1971 and the third took place in 1989, directed by Bill Alexander. So far the play is the only play by Webster to have been staged by the company.

The paucity of productions of The Duchess of Malfi is a direct result of the RSC's necessary emphasis on plays by Shakespeare. In 1960 the RSC gained a London base at the Aldwych Theatre. This enabled the company to embrace a wider repertoire and they decided to open the Aldwych with a production of The Duchess of Malfi, which they previewed at Stratford. This was the decision of Peter Hall, who was the director of the RSC at that time, though it was then named the Stratford-on-Avon Company. Before the Aldwych opened, he explained the role of the company's London base in an essay published in the Daily Telegraph. He clearly asserted that, under his direction, '[the company's theatre at] Stratford [existed] only to present Shakespeare',<sup>1</sup> and made it clear that he intended to explore at the Aldwych 'an all-the-year-round programme of the new plays and non-Shakespearean classics',<sup>2</sup> which he thought he could not provide at Stratford.

The company's policy changed after that. In his history of the Peter Hall years at the RSC, David Addenbrooke remarks that '[s]ince 1960, it [was] part of the RSC's seasonal-planning policy to include, whenever possible, a non-Shakespearean play in the Stratford repertoire'.<sup>3</sup> Such plays were often selected from the works of Shakespeare's contemporaries. Though the company made no official statement about this policy, there

existed

a shared commitment [...] to presenting as many as possible of the works of Shakespeare's contemporaries, both to discover more of Shakespeare's context, and to educate [themselves], and because [they] were certain that there were all kinds of buried treasures to be uncovered.<sup>4</sup>

The company's first attempt to perform non-Shakespearean plays, in particular works of Shakespeare's contemporaries, at Stratford was made in 1965, when Christopher Marlowe's The Jew of Malta, directed by Clifford Williams, transferred to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre from the Aldwych. The company, encouraged by the success of the production, sought to stage another non-Shakespearean play in the following season. In one of its newsletters issued in 1966, the company suggested to its readers that it would like to know what non-Shakespearean plays they wanted to see.<sup>5</sup> Influenced by the readers' reaction, the company decided to stage Cyril Tourneur's The Revenger's Tragedy under Trevor Nunn's direction. The production, first created in 1966, revived at Stratford in the following year and then at the Aldwych in 1969, was highly successful both critically and financially. This success encouraged the RSC to continue to stage non-Shakespearean classical plays. The financial success of The Revenger's Tragedy was, however, exceptional. According to Trevor Nunn, when non-Shakespearean plays, such as The Duchess of Malfi, Doctor Faustus and Women Beware Women, were performed at the RST in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the company 'suffered noticeably at the box office'.<sup>6</sup> Audiences, it seemed, wanted to see plays by Shakespeare at the RST.

From the mid-1970s financial considerations led the RSC to stage non-Shakespearean plays at The Other Place, which had been used for the company's small-stage theatre work. It was 'a small corrugated-iron hut',<sup>7</sup> originally built as a studio in the sixties, and converted to a theatre in

1974. With a capacity of only 140, The Other Place was fairly easily filled, and its low budget enabled the company to stage non-Shakespearean plays without taking financial risks. Productions at the theatre, however, caused other problems. One was that the restricted capacity left many theatregoers unable to see productions at the theatre; another problem was that 'a production that had originated at The Other Place was very unlikely to be able to transfer to a larger space and maintain its integrity'.<sup>8</sup> The company began to consider the desirability of owning a new theatre, which would have a larger capacity and would generate productions which could transfer to other theatres.

The RSC concluded that the remains of the first Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, destroyed by fire in 1926, be restored to solve these problems. The restoration was completed in 1986, and the theatre was named the Swan. It is a Jacobean-styled theatre, with a thrust stage and two galleries surrounding the acting area, and its capacity is 430. Its size and structure filled both financial and artistic demands; the actors were able to create intimacy with the audience, as they had done at The Other Place. The theatre enabled the company to mount productions of non-Shakespearean plays, which the company had wished since the sixties, with a moderate financial risk. The company declared that the aim of the Swan was 'to provide a stage for neglected sixteenth- and seventeenth-century plays including the Shakespeare Apocrypha -- plays that may well have been popular in their own days but that have seldom or, in some cases, never been performed since'.<sup>9</sup> It was at this theatre that the third production of The Duchess of Malfi was staged.

The stage history of The Duchess of Malfi at the RSC began as late as 1960, but the play had had a stage history in the British theatre long

before that. A full account is provided by David Carnegie's list of professional productions of The Duchess of Malfi, The White Devil and The Devil's Law-Case from the first productions of them at the beginning of the seventeenth century up to 1983.<sup>10</sup> This list suggests the change in popularity of these plays. The Duchess of Malfi was initially popular and continued to be so during the Restoration period. The play was only rarely staged in the first half of the eighteenth century. After Lewis Theobald's adaptation in 1733, the play was not staged for more than one hundred years. It regained popularity in the latter half of the nineteenth century, when it was adapted by Richard Hengist Horne. The play began to be staged with the original text at the beginning of the twentieth century, and since then it has been staged with increasing frequency, especially after World War II. David Carnegie's list also suggests that the play has been more popular than Webster's other masterpiece, The White Devil, which had not been staged by a professional company for more than two hundred years until 1925. In the following section I will consider briefly how the play has been staged in the modern theatre -- from the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The fact that The Duchess of Malfi became popular when it was adapted suggests a rejection of the original text by the theatre and the public. Richard Hengist Horne's adaptation, first used in 1850, reveals the taste of the period, but it also suggests, to some extent, that some of the same features of the original text troubled the nineteenth-century theatre as they do directors nowadays. Richard Hengist Horne adapted the play so that it would move more rapidly, appear more naturalistic and less brutal.<sup>11</sup> The Cardinal's investiture in the form of dumb show and much of the sub-plot which involves Julia are omitted; characters explain to themselves and



the audience what they are doing and why. The horror is mitigated; the madmen do not appear but are heard off-stage, and the Duchess is strangled off-stage, being heard to cry for help, 'Mercy!'. These features of the adaptation change or remove the perceived difficulties of the original. These problems include its length; the fact that the characters do not always explain their behaviour clearly; old theatrical conventions like the dumb show, which need to be re-examined in the modern theatre; the relevance of the sub-plot of Julia to the main-plot of the Duchess; and the handling of horror in the second half of the play.

After the decline of the adaptation, another attempt to revive the play was made in 1892. The play was produced at the Opera Comique as the first play directed by William Poel, who was committed

to return to authentic Elizabethan methods of production -- to a stage which emphasized the playwright's words and which, in its simplicity, shifted away from nineteenth-century concern with scenic elaboration toward a concern with the delivery of lines and the verbal shape of the play as a total composition.<sup>12</sup>

William Poel's concern with the reconstruction of 'authentic Elizabethan methods' of staging seemed almost archaeological to the public and failed to win wide spread support. He had many failures, including his production of The Duchess of Malfi.

The first professional production in the twentieth century was mounted in 1919 at the Lyric Theatre by the Phoenix Society, 'an organization devoted to the re-establishment of classic authors on the English stage'.<sup>13</sup> A review in the Nation and reviews quoted in Don D. Moore's account of modern productions of Webster's plays suggest that the society was occupied by archaeological interest and did not pay much attention to directorial skills to make the play convincing.<sup>14</sup> The successive murders appeared explicitly comic; especially that of Ferdinand, who died 'standing on his

head'.<sup>15</sup> The next production, created at the Embassy Theatre in 1935, received 'lukewarm to cold reviews'.<sup>16</sup> It provoked discussion about whether it was possible nowadays to stage the play convincingly. A review in the New Statesman pointed out problems which continue to trouble directors and actors: the slackening of tension after the Duchess's death; the handling of what appears sensational nowadays -- the dead man's hand, the waxworks, and the madmen; and the successive murders at the end of the play, which can all too easily look rather ridiculous.<sup>17</sup>

The stage history of The Duchess of Malfi in the first half of the twentieth century seemed to 'indicate that where Webster [belonged was] not on the stage, but in the study'.<sup>18</sup> But the theatre's efforts to convince the audience of the play's worth proved successful in 1945, when George Rylands directed it at the Haymarket Theatre, with Peggy Ashcroft in the title role and John Gielgud as Ferdinand. With the acting of such established actors and George Rylands's directorial skills, this became, according to Don D. Moore, the first acclaimed production of Webster.<sup>19</sup> The production was mounted just after World War II. It seems the success of the production partly derived from the experience of the war, which encouraged the audience to view seriously the Aragonian brethren's torture on the Duchess and the successive murders. For example, Edmund Wilson perceived 'the emotions of wartime'<sup>20</sup> in the play and argued that 'one [saw] [...] in The Duchess of Malfi, the scene where her doom is announced to the Duchess amidst the drivellings of the liberated madmen, at the moment of the exposé of the German concentration camps'.<sup>21</sup>

Remarks like this suggest that the experience of war gave the theatre the clue to discover modernity in the play and even to view the play as an existential statement about the evil and helpless condition of the world.

This tendency became evident at the beginning of the 1970s, and notable productions of this period employed features of the abstract or avant-garde. In these productions the directors attempted to reveal what they regarded as the play's modern essence. In a free adaptation of the play produced by the Freehold Company at the Young Vic in 1970, '[b]alletic and acrobatic movement replaced much of the dialogue'<sup>22</sup> and the Duchess's body, 'roped to a scaffolding tower, [...] [looked] very like Rupert Brooke's "writhing grubs in an immense night"'.<sup>23</sup> In Peter Gill's production staged at the Royal Court in 1971, austerity dominated the setting; 'the brick wall of the stage [was] left exposed, while to either side was a row of peeling, delapidated, matchwood doors'<sup>24</sup>; and the characters were 'dressed uniformly in acid yellow, the costumes intimating the simplest lines of Jacobean dress'.<sup>25</sup> The austerity enabled the audience to pay attention to the language and the characters' psychology.

With the decline in the influence of existentialism, it seems that there has not been a theatrical movement influential enough to unify production styles. Directors have discovered various themes in the play and reflected them in the settings and the acting. Adrian Noble's production at the Royal Exchange, Manchester, in 1980 and at the Round House, in 1981, emphasized the conflict between the Duchess and her brothers. The cutting of the Cardinal's investiture and a strong suggestion that Ferdinand's obsession with the Duchess was sexual made the production 'a domestic tragedy, a play about family breakdown which almost [dispensed] with any political moments'.<sup>26</sup> In Philip Prowse's production at the National Theatre in 1985, the director-designer's stress on the characters' awareness of death and of the other world made the setting look symbolic. Glass cases and crucifixes 'suggested a pallid, stark crypt'<sup>27</sup>

and a newly created character, Death, was on stage throughout the performance.

A survey of modern productions of The Duchess of Malfi suggests two points. One is that the play has gradually come to be evaluated in theatrical terms. The other is that the directors' attitudes towards the play have changed. Struggles to conceal what they considered its flaws and to adjust it to modern audiences' sensibility have changed into efforts to make audiences appreciate the play's structure and the play's concern.

It is not clear whether the change in directors' attitudes was influenced by the change in literary criticism of Websterian plays. Discernible links cannot be found between productions and criticism. It seems that the two have developed quite separately; and that when there has been a similarity between productions and criticism, it has been because both were influenced by literary or philosophical movements rather than having influenced each other.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Webster's plays, especially The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfi were often criticized in terms of thematic considerations and dramatic framework. Criticism of the former was dominated by the opinion that Webster's work reflected his nihilistic and pessimistic view of the world and his lack of moral integrity. The former view was summarized in a passage in Rupert Brooke's critical study of Webster, published in 1916: 'Human beings are writhing grubs in an immense night. And the night is without stars or moon'<sup>28</sup>; and the latter in lines from one of T.S. Eliot's poems published in 1919: 'Webster was much possessed by death | And saw the skull beneath the skin'.<sup>29</sup> These two passages were understood not only by critics but by the general public to represent the themes of Webster's plays, and they have

often been quoted in reviews. The play's framework was long considered to be flawed, and it was thought that Webster, though an excellent poet, was an unskilled dramatist. William Archer attacked Webster from this point at the end of the nineteenth century, and the view seemed to hold sway. T.S. Eliot attempted to defend the play, claiming that the play could be defined as 'poetic drama',<sup>30</sup> because its 'dramatic poetry'<sup>31</sup> was for theatrical presentation. But the defence was not able to change the view established by William Archer. For example, in his critical study of Webster's plays published in 1951, Clifford Leech summarized Webster's dramatic skills as follows: 'we may come to the conclusion that, [...] The Duchess of Malfi gives fair warning of Webster's imminent decline in dramatic power. He has excelled in the moving exploration of the human mind, yet his play is blurred in its total meaning. It is a collection of brilliant scenes, whose statements do not ultimately cohere'.<sup>32</sup> Clifford Leech regarded Webster as 'a dramatic poet'.<sup>33</sup> The viewpoint continued to be supported in the 1960s. Concluding his essay on Webster, Ian Scott-Kilvert wrote: 'His plots lack the unity and the impetus which are the reward of devotion to a single dominant theme [....] He surpasses Middleton and Ford in the imaginative depth and concentration of his poetry [...]'.<sup>34</sup>

In the mid-1950s, however, critics who became aware of the limitations in viewing the play in naturalistic terms began to see them from a different angle. They found a subtle technique and order in the structure of the plays, some by observing the use of imagery and others by examining how theatrical convention was used in the seventeenth century. For example, in 1955 Hereward T. Price argued that verbal images given to the characters closely paralleled<sup>l</sup> their dramatic action.<sup>35</sup> Cecil W. Davies discussed how several sorts of imagery were interrelated with each other

throughout the play, and how they led to the climax in the madmen scene of The Duchess of Malfi.<sup>36</sup> Inga-Stina Ekeblad discussed Webster's aim of employing Elizabethan theatrical conventions, examining the use of the marriage masque mocked in the madmen scene.<sup>37</sup> She started her essay by re-considering T.S. Eliot's remark on the coexistence of realism and theatrical convention in Elizabethan drama: '[t]he art of the Elizabethans is an impure art.... The aim of the Elizabethans was to attain complete realism without surrendering any of the advantages which as artists they observed in unrealistic conventions'.<sup>38</sup> While admitting that Webster's use of theatrical conventions appeared to have been used for sensational effect, she argued that Webster aimed to fuse such conventions and realism in a precarious balance.

At the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, existentialism had an influence on criticism of Webster; some critics compared pessimistic and sceptical remarks in Webster's plays to existentialism or regarded them as an existential statement. A typical example is David Cook's essay, 'The Extreme Situation', in 1969. He perceived 'a dominant fear -- the fear of meaninglessness: the fear which threatens an age of doubt' and argued that 'Webster [offered] us a deeply-disturbing reflection of our own doubts'.<sup>39</sup> In 1972 Ralph Berry argued in his book that '[t]he term best adapted to describe -- not define -- the philosophy expressed in The Duchess of Malfi [was] existentialism.'<sup>40</sup>

At the end of the 1970s, feminist critics began to discuss the play. They examined the Duchess's position in the patriarchal and aristocratic society, and discussed to what extent the Duchess was aware of the conflict between her womanhood and her position as a ruler. One of the early examples of this view is Charlotte Spivack's essay in 1979, in which she

defined the Duchess as '[a] wife and mother as well as a political woman, [...] a perfect woman, with both integrity of self-hood and the power to transform others'.<sup>41</sup>

Books and articles published in the twentieth century suggest that re-valuation of Webster's plays has taken place and that the plays have been discussed from various viewpoints. But most of the studies are concerned with subjects like thematic considerations, examinations of what the play meant to the Jacobean audience, and explorations of the historical and social background. Compared to them there have only been a small number of essays and books which discuss the theatrical significance of Websterian plays in the contemporary theatre.

One of the earliest examples is George Rylands's introductory essay to a text of The Duchess of Malfi published in 1945. He examined problems in staging the play, which was, for him, 'at once a dramatic poem and poetic drama',<sup>42</sup> and which did not always fit modern dramatic approaches -- for example, the handling of the anticlimactic Act V; the difficulty of playing Ferdinand, who was presented as fire, one of the four elements in Elizabethan philosophy, rather than as a character; and the need to appreciate the distinct characteristics of Webster's verse. George Rylands's essay suggests that the function of performance was merely to convey the play's poetry, which Rylands believed compensates Webster's unskilled stagecraft.

But by the 1960s Webster's dramatic technique was recognized and its meaning to the modern theatre began to be considered, as Louis D. Giannetti's essay, 'A Contemporary View of The Duchess of Malfi',<sup>43</sup> in 1969 suggests. He first argued that Bosola's action on stage reflected his position in the play as a character who did not belong to either of the two

clusters of characters -- that of the Duchess and Antonio, and that of the Cardinal and Ferdinand. Next he examined the theatricality of the waxworks scene and the madmen scene in Act IV, and concluded that it was 'a highly complex and economical way to convey a number of subtle ideas and emotions', such as 'a grotesque parody of the Duchess's wooing scene' and 'a theatrical externalization of Ferdinand's soul'.<sup>43</sup> The recognition and respect for the theatricality in Webster's plays can also be discerned in Roger Warren's essay in John Webster, a collection of essays published in 1970.<sup>44</sup> Roger Warren paid attention to the effective contrast of the light and the dark sides of the play -- gaiety as seen in the court scene and the bedroom scene and horror in the second half of the play. He discussed the Donald McWhinnie production in 1960 as an example of a successful presentation of the two sides. The recognition that Webster's plays are most appreciated in performance has continued to develop in recent years. For example, in her study of Webster's dramatic technique, Christina Luckyj argues that repetition characterizes Webster's plays: juxtapositions, parallels and repetitions of scenes, characters and remarks.<sup>45</sup> The examination of the repetitions leads her to conclude that Webster's plays are not loosely structured as has generally been asserted and that it is the structure which lends theatrical impact. Her frequent references to notable productions of Webster's plays suggest the significance of productions to literary criticism.

It has been pointed out, however, that problems remain in staging Webster's plays even when his dramatic technique is recognized and understood. Lois Potter's essay in 1975, 'Realism versus Nightmare', was concerned with the problem of keeping a balance between realism and the metaphoric or symbolic aspect raised by theatrical conventions in the



seventeenth century.<sup>46</sup> Reviewing some of the recent productions she concluded that the two elements could be fused by nonverbal means such as music and setting. The problem remains a major concern in Richard Allen Cave's book, in which he examines four recent notable productions of The Duchess of Malfi and The White Devil. Before beginning to discuss them he points out that difficulties of staging Webster's plays lie not only in the realism which reflects hierarchy in Jacobean England but in the fusion of the realistic and symbolic aspects: '[t]he passionate physicality of [Webster's] plays is repeatedly a metaphor with deep metaphysical resonances'.<sup>47</sup>

These articles and critical works on performance suggest that productions of Webster's plays are beginning to prompt and develop criticism of the plays, and that links between productions and criticism of Webster's plays are being established, as has happened in the study of Shakespeare's plays.

## NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Peter Hall, 'Why Stratford is Coming to London', Daily Telegraph, 12 December 1960.
2. Ibid.
3. David Addenbrooke, The Royal Shakespeare Company: The Peter Hall Years (London: William Kimber, 1974), p. 144.
4. Trevor Nunn, 'From Conference Hall to Theatre', in This Golden Round: The Royal Shakespeare Company at the Swan, ed. by Ronnie Mulryne and Margaret Shewring (Stratford-upon-Avon: Mulryne and Shewring, 1989), pp. 1-8 (p. 1).
5. This suggestion was made in an article entitled 'Fifth Stratford Production?', in Flourish: Royal Shakespeare Theatre Club Newspaper, no. 6 (Spring 1966), p. 9.
6. Nunn, p. 1.
7. Sally Beauman, The Royal Shakespeare Company: A History of Ten Decades (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 320. The capacity of The Other Place before it was demolished in 1989 is also given by Beauman, p. 321.
8. Nunn, p. 2.
9. Ronnie Mulryne and Margaret Shewring, 'The Repertoire at the Swan', in This Golden Round, pp. 23-40 (p. 23).
10. David Carnegie, 'A Preliminary Checklist of Professional Productions of the Plays of John Webster', Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama, 24 (1983), 55-63. e
11. The details of Richard Hengist Horne's adaptation are from Frank W. Wadsworth, '"Shorn and Abated" -- British Performances of The Duchess of Malfi', Theatre Survey, 10 (1969), 89-104.
12. Ejner J. Jensen, 'Lamb, Poel and Our Postwar Theatre: Elizabethan Revivals', Renaissance Drama, n.s. 9 (1978), 211-34 (p. 220).
13. Don D. Moore, John Webster and his Critics 1617-1964 (Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1966), p. 152.
14. Frank Swinnerton, in 'The Duchess of Malfi', Nation, 29 November 1919, examined the performed text which was not severely cut, the playing time of three hours and a half and the simple setting which was experimental, and concluded: '[i]n paying homage to literature and to theatrical art [the production] divorces itself from the jolly improvization which might make good plays (new and old) a healthy and enjoyable pastime for intelligent people. All the natural fun, or the rough seriousness, of robust art is sapped by this aesthetic anaemia'. A review in the London Times, 25 November 1919, quoted in

Moore, p. 152, suggests a similar reaction to the production: 'The Duchess of Malfi is no longer a live classic but a curio for connoisseurs'.

15. Moore, p. 152.
16. Moore, p. 153.
17. Quoted from the New Statesman in Moore, p. 154.
18. Moore, p. 151.
19. Moore, p. 155: 'Finally, in April of 1945, a production of Webster was acclaimed'.
20. Edmund Wilson, Europe without Baedeker: Sketches among the Ruins of Italy, Greece and England (London: Secker & Warburg, 1948), p. 7.
21. Ibid.
22. Lois Potter, 'Realism versus Nightmare: Problems of Staging The Duchess of Malfi', in The Triple Bond: Plays, Mainly Shakespearean, in Performance, ed. by Joseph G. Price (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), pp. 170-89 (p. 173).
23. Ibid.
24. Richard Allen Cave, The White Devil and The Duchess of Malfi, Text and Performance (London: MacMillan Education, 1988), p. 46.
25. Ibid.
26. Jacqueline Pearson, 'Man Bites Man', Times Literary Supplement, 26 September 1980.
27. Marion Lomax, Stage Images and Traditions: Shakespeare to Ford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 151.
28. Robert Brooke, John Webster and the Elizabethan Drama (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1916), p. 158.
29. T.S. Eliot, 'Whispers of Immortality', in Poems (Richmond: L. & V. Woolf, Hogarth Press, 1919), pp. 77-78 (p. 77).
30. This definition was made in the title of his review of the production of The Duchess of Malfi by the Phoenix Society, 'The Duchess of Malfi at the Lyric: and Poetic Drama', Arts and Letters, 3 (Winter 1920), 36-39.
31. 'The Duchess of Malfi at the Lyric', p. 36.
32. Clifford Leech, John Webster: A Critical Study, Hogarth Lectures on Literature, no. 16 (London: Hogarth Press, 1951), p. 65.

33. The final chapter of John Webster: A Critical Study is entitled 'Webster as a Dramatic Poet'.
34. Ian Scott-Kilvert, John Webster, Writers and their Work, 175 (London: Longmans, 1964), p. 45.
35. 'The Function of Imagery in Webster', PMLA, 70 (1955), 713-39.
36. 'The Structure of The Duchess of Malfi: An Approach', English, 12 (1958), 89-93.
37. 'The "Impure Art" of John Webster', Review of English Studies, n.s. 9 (1958), 253-67.
38. As quoted by Ekeblad, p. 253, from Selected Essays, second ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1934 (first published in 1932)), p. 96 and p. 97.
39. David Cook, 'The Extreme Situation: A Study of Webster's Tragedies', Komos, 2 (1969), pp. 9-15 (p. 12 and p. 15).
40. Ralph Berry, The Art of John Webster (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 126.
41. 'The Duchess of Malfi: A Fearful Madness', Journal of Women's Studies in Literature, 1 (1979), pp. 122-32 (p. 122).
42. 'On the Productions of The Duchess of Malfi', in John Webster, The Duchess of Malfi (London: Sylvan Press, 1945), pp. v-xiv (p. xiv).
43. These quotations are from 'A Contemporary View of The Duchess of Malfi', Comparative Drama, 3 (1969-70), 297-307 (p. 306, p. 305 and p. 305).
44. 'The Duchess of Malfi on the Stage', in John Webster, ed. by Brian Morris (London: Ernest Benn, 1970), pp. 47-68.
45. A Winter's Snake: Dramatic Forms in the Tragedies of John Webster (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989).
46. See note 21.
47. Cave, p. 42.

## CHAPTER 1

### 'A Grisly Tale is Uplifted'<sup>1</sup> (1960)

The first production of The Duchess of Malfi by the Royal Shakespeare Company (then the Stratford-on-Avon Company before being re<sup>c</sup>named in January 1961), directed by Donald McWhinnie,<sup>2</sup> opened at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre on 30 November 1960 for eight performances up to 7 December 1960. This was a preview of the first production to be performed at the Aldwych Theatre, the company's second theatre. It opened there on 15 December 1960, and ran for forty-eight performances up to 19 April 1961. The costumes and the settings were designed by Leslie Hurrey,<sup>3</sup> and the music was composed by Humphrey Searle.<sup>4</sup> An interval of fifteen minutes divided the play into two parts; the average playing time was one hour and twenty minutes for the first part, and one hour and thirteen minutes for the second.<sup>5</sup>

This production was created under the influence of epoch-making decisions by Peter Hall, then director of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre.<sup>6</sup> In 1960 he devised a scheme to acquire another theatre in London for the company. Peter Hall intended to present at the new theatre not only Shakespearean plays, selected from productions at Stratford, but other classic and modern plays. The Aldwych Theatre was chosen for the company's London branch. Its opening attracted much attention because of the commitment to presenting a wide range of plays. In deciding to stage non-Shakespearean classic plays at the Aldwych Peter Hall began with The Duchess of Malfi, which had not been staged in London since the George Rylands production at the Haymarket Theatre in 1945, to open the Aldwych.<sup>7</sup>

When its production was announced, what drew the general public's attention was, however, that Peggy Ashcroft, who had played the title role at the Haymarket, would play the role again.

In launching the new project, Peter Hall attempted to establish a different style of staging Shakespearean plays -- different from the Victorian tradition, which he thought still prevailed in those days. He needed 'the new style of staging: "a style in which visual effects would remain secondary to the speaking actor"',<sup>8</sup> and in which verse speaking would be given prominence. It followed that the new style laid less emphasis on visual effect and required more imagination from the audience. The stages both at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and the Aldwych were redesigned to fit the purpose. The stage of the former was

raked, and [on each stage] the apron was cut away at both sides to allow two rows of angled seats to be added at the front of the stalls. The new stage apron extended 14 feet into the auditorium and was intended to bring the players into [close] contact with the audience.<sup>9</sup>

The stage of the Aldwych was redesigned in the same manner.

As well as Peter Hall, Donald McWhinnie was aware of the possibility of the apron stage. In his essay published in Plays and Players, he argued that an actor should be 'in close contact with [the] audience'; and he was also aware that the stage should be used as 'a direct stimulus to the imagination of the audience'.<sup>10</sup> This recognition required minimum pieces of furniture and properties. The set photographs<sup>11</sup> show that under '[t]hree renaissance [sic] arches [which formed] a false proscenium',<sup>12</sup> there was no large furniture used throughout the performance, and that in most cases the locations were suggested by back cloths and pieces of furniture which could be easily moved on- and off-stage: for example, chairs, a table and a chest (see plate I). By the standard of setting in

those days, Leslie Hurry's settings were 'deceptively simple',<sup>13</sup> making the stage look stark; they were considered novel but effective. As a result of the sparse settings the actors had a large acting space.

The function of the stage as 'a direct stimulus to the imagination of the audience' led the director to regard the settings as

functional [...] "super-props" [...]; objects which [were] integral to the action and which also [incorporated] the essence of any given scene.<sup>14</sup>

It followed that anything in the settings should be brought in at the right time, and they should be carried away promptly when not needed any more.

Thus the manner of changing scenes became a matter of significance to the director. He invented two methods of changing scenes. One was to have actors carry properties on- and off-stage. The accounts of the prompt-book show that most of the properties were transferred by minor characters such as servants and ladies-in-waiting.<sup>15</sup> The effect was, in the director's words,

maximum pace of scene-changing without losing visual interest or suspending belief in the context because of a black-out.<sup>16</sup>

Among reviewers who referred to this method of changing scenes, R.B.

Marriot and H.A.L. Craig praised <sup>it</sup> To R.B. Marriott, the properties were moved 'without the trace of disturbing the flow of the play'<sup>17</sup>; H.A.L.

Craig saw 'choreography in the carrying of a prop'.<sup>18</sup> Philip Hope-Wallace admitted that the manner of carrying properties was 'elaborate-simple', but felt that it '[grew] distracting'.<sup>19</sup>

Another method required the audience's imagination. For instance the Cardinal's throne, turned around at the end of Act V, scene ii, served as a monument in a graveyard in the echo scene.<sup>20</sup> Another piece of furniture, a chest, changed what it stood for during the final scenes; for example, it

was used as a chest in Act V, scene ii, and as a 'tomb'<sup>21</sup> in the echo scene. The throne and the chest were present on stage from the beginning of Act V, scene ii, to the end of the performance, suggesting the change of locations: from the Cardinal's palace to the graveyard and to the Cardinal's palace again (see plate I). It seems that the method of changing scenes was devised out of the director's intention to establish that catastrophe had become prevalent in the world of the play.

As the production records include no wardrobe plot,<sup>22</sup> information on the costumes is provided by black-and-white production photographs.<sup>23</sup> The costumes were Renaissance (see plate II). Male characters wore doublets, hose, knee-breeches, short capes and ruffs; female characters wore dresses with fitted bodices, puffed sleeves with slashes or slits, and with what looked like stomachers. It seems that the women's costumes were modified to emphasize femininity; without ruffs or high collars, the line from the neck to the shoulders was revealed. All the male characters, except for the Cardinal, were bearded, probably a way to emphasize their virility. The costumes expressed the elegance and luxuriousness of a Renaissance aristocratic society; most of them were made of '[h]eavy, sumptuous materials [and] [r]eal Renaissance texture'.<sup>24</sup> Only the Old Woman<sup>25</sup> and peasants in the market <sup>T</sup> were dressed in coarser fabric or rags, which implied their low rank (see plate III).

Some of the costumes reflected the director's interpretation of the characters. For example, in the earlier scenes the Duchess wore a white dress and <sup>a</sup>light-coloured dress,<sup>26</sup> which were embroidered and decorated with gems. The elaborate dress<sup>es</sup> indicated her high rank as a duchess; they also suggested her noble and graceful nature. Darker-coloured costumes worn by the other characters made the brightness of the Duchess's dress stand out.



On the other hand Julia's dress, cut low off the shoulder, suggested her sensuality, which led her to be unfaithful to her husband Castruccio and to be the Cardinal's mistress.

Not only the costumes but the settings suggested the luxuriousness of the society; furniture and properties -- from a brush to a fountain -- were heavily and intricately carved; the back cloth used for representing Malfi had silhouettes of trees, pillars, hanging decorations, and what looked like a palace<sup>27</sup>; a 'red and golden',<sup>28</sup> huge and draped curtain was used to suggest the anteroom. The settings conveyed the aristocratic atmosphere without being overcrowded.

The text used was taken from Selected Plays, Everyman's Library, which is a selection of plays by John Webster and John Ford.<sup>29</sup> The text has several problems which affect the examination of the prompt-book. It has no line references, and blank verse is neglected; a new line starts with a change of speaker, even when the verse line is unfinished. There is another problem which comes from the unidentified edition on which the text is based. Act I does not indicate the scene division, which appears in the Quarto and which has been retained in recent editions.<sup>30</sup> In this chapter, therefore, I will standardize the scene division and all the line references to the New Mermaid edition.<sup>31</sup>

The prompt-book is made of looseleaves ten and a half inches long and eight inches wide. One page of printed script is pasted in the middle of every left-hand side page.<sup>32</sup> A few pieces of simple stage business are written in the scripts. Cues for lighting, flies and orchestra are written on the margin of the left-hand side pages. On the right-hand side pages almost all the stage business is written. Some of the pages also have

simple diagrams of the actors and furniture.

In his essay in Plays and Players, Donald McWhinnie also discussed his editing of the original text. At the beginning of the essay he referred to Webster as 'a poet who happened to write for the theatre in spite of a supreme lack of talent for the "well-made play"'. The director felt that Webster wrote 'in a dramatic frame-work which was often clumsy and inconsistent but which was strangely appropriate for his purpose [of expressing his imaginative apprehension of the world]'. McWhinnie perceived a modern view of the world in Webster's vision 'in spite of conventions and fallacies which surround "the classics"':

[Webster's] characters live closer to the shadow of the concentration camp and the hydrogen bomb than to that of the romantic poniard in their attack of life, their encounter with death. The Duchess of Malfi is one of the first modern plays; closer in feelings to Godot than to Othello. [...]

Webster looked unromantically, unsentimentally at the human race, and he didn't often like what he saw; this indeed is the clue to his modernity.

The comparison of The Duchess of Malfi to Waiting for Godot makes it clear that McWhinnie regarded The Duchess of Malfi as existential.

All these remarks suggest the director's interpretation of the play: a play which he saw as characteristic of its modern and existential view of the world, but which had considerable shortcomings in terms of its dramatic framework. This interpretation led him to think that the text nowadays needed thorough but careful editing:

Do not be reverent towards the shortcomings; there's quite a lot of dead wood which can be ruthlessly cut, but be sure you're cutting in the right place, and don't assume that because a writer slips occasionally you will always know better than he does.<sup>33</sup>

The thoroughness with which the director edited the text is obvious in the number of the removed lines; the performed text is 2,248 lines long as against 2,864 lines in the full text. The 616 removed lines, which include

sixteen cuts with unclear markings, comprise twenty-two per cent of the original text. The performed text also has a small number of transposed lines, changes in the original wording, and inserted words. These cuts and emendations show the characteristics of the play, which the director believed needed to be cut as 'dead wood', and, less frequently, to be altered.

Some of the changes in the wording suggest the director's consideration for the convenience of modern audiences. For example, the phrase 'ruts and foul sloughs' (II.i.27) is simplified into 'furrows'; 'cabinet' (V.ii.214), which is used in an obsolete sense, is replaced by 'chamber'. Some words are changed so that the altered words would fit the context better. 'Who' in the Duchess's 'Who do I look like now?' (IV.ii.31) is changed to 'What'; Cariola, replying to her, compares her to a picture of her (IV.ii.32-33). The Duchess's 'Kneel' (I.ii.389), which is not only uttered to Antonio but to Cariola to make her witness the private marriage ceremony of the Duchess, is changed to 'Cariola!'. There is, however, a less explicable change. 'Sad' on line 60 in the following passage is changed to 'glad':

Some men have wish's to die  
At the hearing of sad tidings: I am glad  
I shall do't in sadness. (V.iv.59-61)

These lines are delivered when Antonio, after being stabbed by Bosola, hears that his family have been murdered. Antonio means that he can accept the imposed death, now that he hears the sad news and is one of those who 'have wish's to die | At the hearing of sad tidings'. It seems that the change of 'sad' to 'glad' unnecessarily complicates the passage.

Two examples of inserted words suggest the director's consideration for the audience in terms of clarity. 'Castruccio' is inserted between



people whom he trusts, would seem justifiable, if these lines came later. The transpositions of lines are made so that the development of the narrative would look more straightforward and the changes in the characters' thoughts and emotions would appear natural.

The director's cuts also show his consideration for the audience's convenience. It is evident even in cuts which are made mainly to shorten the text. A few lines which may sound repetitive are cut: for example, Pescara's report to the noblemen that Delio has arrived with Antonio's eldest son (V.v.105-07). The audience is informed of it (V.iii.50), though the noblemen hear the news for the first time. Another example is seen in the Cardinal's lines. He orders a servant to prevent the noblemen from visiting Ferdinand, fearing that the mad Ferdinand would reveal the murder of the Duchess (V.ii.221-24). Afterwards the noblemen visit the Cardinal and ask him permission to visit Ferdinand, to be refused by the Cardinal (V.iv.1-7), who, this time, intends to dispose of Julia's body secretly (V.iv.22-25). The Cardinal's lines to the servant are removed, probably because these two speeches are the same in content, though different in purpose, and because the latter speech affects more the course of event<sup>s</sup>; the noblemen, obeying the Cardinal, refuse to visit him even when he is <sup>in fact</sup> assaulted by Bosola.

Lines are removed which refer to what are now forgotten or unfamiliar: references to myths, legends, medical knowledge, customs, historical facts and figures, and quotations from works then popular: for example, Ferdinand's reference to rhubarb, with which he wants to calm down his rage on knowing the Duchess's childbirth (II.v.12-13), and the Duchess's reference to Tasso in comparing her false accusation of Antonio to the lie cited in one of Tasso's works (III.ii.179-81), and the Cardinal's remark on

how to discover Antonio in his exile by searching picture-makers and Jews, and by bribing Delio's confessor (V.ii.126-40). But some references in significant scenes are retained in spite of their difficulty to modern audiences: for instance, references to mythical metamorphoses and Paris's choice in the domestic bedroom scene (III.ii.25-32, 36-42); and references to heraldry, made by one of the madmen in the climactic madmen scene (IV.ii.87-91).

Most of the similes and metaphors, with which the play is filled, are removed as well. The director must have thought that these lines, which convey the manners of comparison and association in the past, were as difficult to modern audiences as references to things which are forgotten. Even lines in important scenes are removed, when they are not comprehensible to modern audiences: for example, the Duchess's lines in her imprisonment:

I am acquainted with sad misery,  
As the tann'd galley-slave is with his oar. (IV.ii.28-29)

So are nearly half of the lines of Bosola's exaggerated praise to the Duchess, when he knows that Antonio is her husband. But two parables are retained probably because they contribute to dramatic impact. One is about Death, Love and Reputation, told by Ferdinand after witnessing the Duchess's married life. In telling the Duchess that one can never find Reputation again if he or she once parts with him, Ferdinand emphasizes the significance of the fact that her reputation is irrecoverable. The other is about a salmon and a dogfish, told by the Duchess in the misery of banishment and parting with Antonio and her eldest son. Narrating that the salmon will prove more valuable than the dogfish only when it is caught, she protests that a person's true value is known most clearly in adversity,

and she conveys her resignation to the reversal of fortune.

Some lines are removed to stop speeches meandering. For example, Bosola says, at the end of Act II, scene iii, after he picks up a piece of paper dropped by Antonio, and reads what is written in it:

Why, now 'tis most apparent. This precise fellow  
Is the Duchess' bawd: I have it to my wish.  
This is a parcel of intelligency  
Our courtiers were cas'd up for! It needs must follow,  
That I must be committed, on pretence  
Of poisoning her: which I'll endure, and laugh at.  
If one could find the father now. (lines 64-70)

The omission of lines from <sup>line</sup> 66 to 69, in which Bosola thinks about the plot inflicted on the courtiers and about its consequences, makes Bosola concentrate on the main topic, i.e., the Duchess's childbirth. In most cases deletions like this shortens speeches and make the story develop more speedily. There is one case, however, in which this sort of deletion did not succeed. In Bosola's final speech in Act V, scene v:

Oh this gloomy world,  
In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness  
Doth, womanish, and fearful, mankind live?  
Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust  
To suffer death or shame for what is just:  
Mine is another voyage. (lines 99-104)

Lines 102 and 103 are omitted probably because of the change of topic: change from the pessimistic view of mankind, in which Bosola is certainly included, to 'worthy minds', with whom he thinks he has nothing to do. This omission, however, makes Bosola's final words, 'Mine is another voyage', obscure. He means by these words that his death is different from that of those who have fought for right causes. As a result Bosola's final speech, which conveys the extent of his pessimistic view of life, became less effective.

These emendations and cuts suggest the director's effort to adjust the

play to the standards of a modern dramatic framework in giving the play comprehensibility, brevity, naturalness and straightforwardness, for better appreciation by modern audiences. It was this function of cuts and emendations of a classic play which the director emphasized in his essay. But he did not mention interpretative cuts.

A small number of cuts affect characterization. For Bosola the following lines are cut: Delio's lines which reveal that Bosola once was a scholar devoted to studying historical but meticulous topics (III.iii.40-46); and Bosola's lines in which he reveals his wish to have a human relationship with his employer Ferdinand (IV.ii.323-27). The deletions of these lines deprived the audience of the clues to understanding Bosola's complexity. For Antonio the interpretative cuts worked effectively. The director's intention not to present Antonio as a weak and pathetic person is evident in the removal of the Duchess's lines in the wooing scene:

You do tremble:  
Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh  
To fear, more than to love me. (I.ii.366-68)

and in the removal of the lines of Antonio and Delio at the end of Act II, scene i, in which Antonio reveals his bewilderment as the Duchess goes into labour. The removal of the following lines affects the interpretation of the Duchess: 'I would have my ruin | Be sudden' (III.v.94-95), and 'Indeed I have not leisure to tend so small a business [as life]' (IV.i.86). Probably the director did not want to emphasize the Duchess's temporary impulse to destroy herself before she finally accepts death with serenity and courage.

Some other interpretative cuts can be regarded as significant because they affect the interpretation of the relationship of the house of Aragon with the social world of the play. The most notable examples are the



removal of the episode in which the emperor has ordered the Cardinal to become a soldier and to join the war (III.ii.1-8), and the removal of the ceremony of the Cardinal's investiture as a soldier in Act III, scene iv. In these scenes the original text implies to the audience the existence of a world which surrounds the realm governed by the house of Aragon, and reveals that the Aragonian siblings are ruled by the emperor, and that they are part of a larger political world. Some of the lines are also removed which refer to the aristocratic society ruled by the members of the house of Aragon: most of Antonio's references to the courtiers' malicious rumour on Antonio's advancement (III.i.29-35) and the noblemen's contemptuous remarks on Malatesti's unsoldierly behaviour (III.iii.8-33). These lines imply the atmosphere of the society, through the expression of its inhabitants' inclination towards envy and malice, and of what they regard as important. The removal of these lines suggests that director wanted to lay less emphasis on the position of the house of Aragon in the world of the play than referred to in the original text.

The removal of the Cardinal's investiture is significant in another way. This removal changes the implication of the banishment of the Duchess, which, in the original text, is performed during the ceremony. The motive of the banishment by the Aragonian brethren is their rage, especially the Cardinal's, caused by the fact that the Duchess has stained the family honour in marrying a man of lower rank. The rage is expressed publicly in front of those who come to see the Cardinal's investiture, to make common people realize that the banishment is authorized by the power of the pope and of the house of Aragon. The manner of the banishment of the Duchess suggests that the conduct of a member of the royal family is not only a private matter; as the family are rulers, their conduct must be

seen in public terms. Their public roles as rulers thus affect their private and familial relationship. The director may have considered the removal of the Cardinal's investiture justifiable, because it is performed in the form of dumb show, a form which is forgotten, and because the banishment is reported in detail by the pilgrims (the pilgrims' lines are retained). It seems that, however, more was lost by this removal than was gained; the scene of the banishment is important in that this scene demonstrates that the Duchess is destroyed by the political power of the pope and the house of Aragon. The removal made the audience unable to understand the public nature of the banishment. The audience was led to regard the conflict between the brethren and the Duchess only as a private matter, and to miss the significance of the family's position in the social world of the play.

Another significant interpretative cut is made in Act V, scene v. This scene lost the whole of the noblemen's lines during Bosola's assault on the Cardinal (lines 19-32), and most of the mad Ferdinand's nonsense speeches delivered when he wounds the Cardinal and Bosola and is stabbed by Bosola (lines 55-61, 66-68): the farcical lines which undercut the seriousness in the scene and which may provoke the audience's laughter. The laughter has always been one of the problems in staging the play, even when these lines were cut.<sup>34</sup> It can be argued that the director was cautious in removing lines which could have destroyed the tragic tension.

The director not only edited the text; he also created new act and scene divisions, which are recorded in the prompt-book. The details in the scene divisions are listed in Appendix A. Here I will discuss notable scene divisions. First the director divided the original Act I (undivided in Everyman's Library edition) into two scenes at the re-entrance of the

Aragonian siblings after the exit of Ferdinand and Bosola. This scene division suggests the director's intention to emphasize the private and familial aspect of the relationship of the siblings in the warning of the Cardinal and Ferdinand to the Duchess not to remarry without their permission. Other significant scene division is made in Act II, scene i. The opening of the original Act II, scene i, to Bosola's words on line 74, is treated as one scene and its location is a market. The rest of Act II, scene i, is combined with Act II, scene ii, to make up another scene. It seems that the director intended to prevent the performance from becoming monotonous by inserting a lively scene of peasants in the play's generally aristocratic world.

In the following section I will reconstruct how the production was performed. The reconstruction will be made from the prompt-book, production records, production photographs, and reviews in newspapers and periodicals.

The performance began with a bustle. Upstage was seen 'a shouting, cachinating crowd of odds-and-ends [which] rushed across the stage carrying a tilting-lance'.<sup>35</sup> This manner of opening established the liveliness of the Duchess's court. Antonio and Delio emerged from upstage, accompanied by a servant. On appearing on stage, Antonio gave his helmet, gloves and pike to the servant, who left with these things. Then Antonio approached a fountain stage right, wet his handkerchief and mopped his brow; he had just come back from a joust. While reporting to Delio the French king's banishment of 'dissolute, | And infamous persons' (I.i.8-9), Antonio advanced centrestage right, to deliver the following lines about the French king:

Consid'ring duly, that a Prince's court

Is like a common fountain, whence should flow  
Pure silver drops in general. [...] (I.i.11-13)

The property fountain, which 'dominated the scene',<sup>36</sup> gave this speech prominence, and suggested that not only the French court but the Duchess's was as ideal as 'a common fountain' in Antonio's speech. Thus the property fountain, which looked realistic with heavy carving, was symbolic at the same time; it established the atmosphere of the Duchess's court in terms of dramatic impact as well as verbal image.

Just after Delio reminded Antonio of the promise to narrate the nature of those who are at court, Bosola appeared and walked towards the right-hand side of the fountain, as if to suggest that Bosola were 'Some curs'd example' (I.i.14) which would poison 'a Prince's court' (I.i.11) and bring confusion to the whole country. Antonio and Delio walked downstage, and Antonio began to narrate Bosola as 'The only court-gall' (I.i.23). Soon they saw the Cardinal appear stage right. Bosola approached him on 'I do haunt you still' (I.i.29). The Cardinal, finding him, ostentatiously showed his neglect of Bosola; he turned anticlockwise to avoid him and walked away centrestage. The Cardinal met Antonio and Delio, who genuflected to show respect to him. The Cardinal walked on upstage and left, deaf to Bosola's complaint to the end. Antonio and Delio advanced downstage to talk to Bosola, who left the stage through the orchestra pit after much complaining. The appearance of Bosola and the Cardinal changed the atmosphere of the scene and left uneasiness about the course of events.

Bosola's exit was followed by the entrance of the noblemen and Ferdinand. They walked towards the bench in front of the fountain, talking about the result of the joust in which Antonio had taken part. Their action and the topic of the joust drew the audience's attention back to the

pompous atmosphere of the court. Sitting down on the bench, Ferdinand ordered one of the servants to give a jewel to Antonio as the reward for winning the joust. The servant received the jewel from another servant and gave it to Antonio. Ferdinand began to talk to the noblemen, who drew near him. As a result of the deletion of Silvio's bawdy joke on Castruccio's Spanish gennet and of Ferdinand's anger provoked by the joke (I.ii.36-58), the audience lost the opportunity to see Ferdinand's menacing presence to the noblemen through his anger and the noblemen's sycophantic replies to him. The cutting made clear the director's intention to emphasize the gaiety at the court of Malfi.

The Duchess, the Cardinal, Julia, Cariola and the Duchess's ladies-in-waiting appeared upstage left immediately after Silvio's announcement (see plate II). The Duchess held a mask, which gave the impression of the extravagance of her court life through the suggestion that she had just come back from one of 'chargeable revels' (I.ii.252). Ferdinand and the noblemen approached the Duchess to salute. Ferdinand introduced Silvio to her. Silvio advanced downstage and kissed her hand. After that the Aragonian siblings, the noblemen, Julia, ladies-in-waiting and the servants <sup>approached</sup> the bench, on which the Duchess sat down. During the greetings Antonio and Delio stood apart from them, downstage left, to observe the Aragonian siblings. The audience's attention was divided between Antonio's speech and the Duchess, who was the central figure of the silent play performed during Antonio's speech. While Antonio narrated the Cardinal's character, Roderigo and Grisolan respectively approached the Duchess and kissed her hand. When Antonio began to talk about the Duchess, the Cardinal and Ferdinand went upstage and the audience's attention was fixed on the Duchess. At the end of the speech Silvio walked away from the

Duchess, and met Cariola, who walked towards the Duchess. Thus the Duchess continued to attract the audience's attention all through Antonio's speech, and linked the silent scene naturally to the ensuing dialogues between her and Ferdinand, and between her and Silvio, after the exit of Antonio and Delio.

The Duchess and the others made their exit, leaving the Cardinal and Ferdinand. On seeing Bosola appear, the Cardinal walked away upstage left. Bosola appeared stage left, immediately after the Cardinal's exit. Bosola might have seen him leaving; Bosola delivered 'I was lur'd to you' (I.ii.152), after a pause. Ferdinand walked centrestage towards Bosola and threw a purse of gold to him, on 'There's gold' (I.ii.167). Though Bosola once received the purse, he threw it back at Ferdinand's feet, knowing that Ferdinand wanted to use him as a spy to watch the Duchess. But Ferdinand insisted on hiring Bosola. Ferdinand offered him a place at the Duchess's court, adding that this action was worth thanks. Ferdinand's arrogance drew sarcastic reaction from Bosola, who, in accepting the offer, picked up the purse on 'say then my corruption | Grew out of horse dung' (I.ii.208), and bowed to Ferdinand, on 'I am your creature' (I.i.208). Due to the cut made in the conversation of Ferdinand with the noblemen, it was in Ferdinand's encounter with Bosola that he revealed his arrogance and cold nature hidden beneath his courtly appearance. The encounter made a striking contrast to the court scene, leaving the audience to anticipate that something ominous was to happen in the Duchess's court under the appearance of gaiety and extravagance.

The first scene, entitled 'the Fountain',<sup>37</sup> finished when Ferdinand, and then Bosola, left the stage. The Duchess's servants set a draped curtain, a table, two chairs and a prie-dieu, changing the location into

'the Ante-room'<sup>38</sup> in the Duchess's palace. The Duchess, the Cardinal, Ferdinand and Cariola entered the room. Cariola stood apart near the prie-dieu. Left alone in the private place, the Cardinal and Ferdinand revealed their distrust of the Duchess. The two warned her not to remarry without their permission, each of them coming next to her during his speech; Ferdinand even followed the Duchess when she turned away. The stage business would have made both of the brothers look equally menacing and made them look alike during the warning. Ferdinand's speech after the Cardinal's exit, however, changed in tone, as if to suggest that Ferdinand, alone with his sister, began to reveal what he thought of the Duchess. For example, pauses gave more expression to Ferdinand's speech: first a long pause before 'You are my sister' (I.ii.249), and a short pause before 'This was my father's poniard' (I.ii.250). Not only the pauses but the stage business implied a difference in Ferdinand's attitude towards the Duchess from the Cardinal's. The following lines were delivered as he took the Duchess's hand to bid farewell: 'And women like the part, which, like the lamprey, | Hath nev'r a bone in't' (I.ii.255-56). The Duchess, perceiving the bawdiness in the lines, withdrew her hand and turned away one step. Ferdinand replied to her with 'Nay, | I mean the tongue' (I.ii.256-57). During a pause after these words he watched the Duchess's embarrassed reaction. Ferdinand finally left the stage, warning against men's eloquence with which they would seduce women. The manner of his speech and his stage business emphasized the sexual implication in his speech; they would have allowed the audience the interpretation that Ferdinand viewed his sister with sexual interest.<sup>39</sup>

The Duchess sent for Antonio, after directing Cariola to hide behind the curtain. The Duchess began the dialogue after a long pause, which

conveyed her hesitation to propose to him. At first the dialogue between her and Antonio was that of a mistress and her steward. As the dialogue went on, the Duchess began to hint at her intention to marry Antonio, in giving prominence to lines like 'If I had a husband now, this care were quit' (I.ii.301), and 'What good deed shall we first remember? Say' (I.ii.303), with pauses before them. Antonio was led to talk about marriage. When the topic concentrated on marriage, Antonio began to show playfulness, which was suggested by pauses before his humorous remarks on marriage. But he prevented their intimacy from developing into that of lovers with his negative point of view of marriage. The Duchess decided to reveal her intention; she gave him her wedding ring on 'They say 'tis very sovereign' (I.ii.324). In this context 'sovereign' means 'efficacious'; but at the same time the Duchess's stage business made it clear that she wanted to make Antonio 'sovereign' in status and her equal, by marrying him. Antonio, however, refused to accept her proposal. He removed the ring from his finger and held it out to the Duchess. This decisive action would have looked shocking both to the Duchess and to the audience. Antonio's attitude of refusal was firm; he turned away on the Duchess's 'Now she [i.e., virtue] pays it [i.e., the reward for Antonio's service]' (I.ii.356). Antonio's action would have reminded the audience of Bosola, who refused to take Ferdinand's purse. It is clear that the director emphasized the parallel between Antonio and Bosola; both are men of relatively low rank, and each of them is offered something by his superior, who promises higher rank for him. What makes the two parallels different is the motives of those who make the offers to Antonio and Bosola. Ferdinand offers gold to corrupt Bosola, while the Duchess offers her ring to Antonio for love.



The Duchess expressed her shock in being refused by breaking away and exclaiming 'The misery of us, that are born great': (I.ii.357). A change was produced in Antonio, who, perceiving agony in her words and action, approached her. Her ensuing persuasion convinced him that her affection for him was sincere. Antonio finally accepted the Duchess's proposal, and she put her ring on Antonio's finger, confirming their marriage. Thus the wooing scene established strength and righteousness in Antonio, a character who tends to be considered passive, while establishing the Duchess's vivacity.<sup>40</sup>

The wooing scene was followed by 'the Market' scene (see plate III).<sup>41</sup> The location was suggested by a barrow full of fruit and vegetables, carried from upstage by peasants. The entrance and exit of two more peasants, which occurred after Bosola and Castruccio entered and began to talk, suggested the bustle and liveliness of the market. The dialogue *between* Bosola and Castruccio provided comic relief after the elegance and seriousness of the previous scenes. Castruccio's gait and facial expressions, which revealed his stupidity, increased the comic effect. The serious nature of Bosola's abuse of women's cosmetics and of the hypocritical nature of mankind was mitigated by the continued use of comedy; for example, Castruccio was seen to bring fruit and eat it, and the Old Woman, unable to bear Bosola's abuse, slapped Bosola's face. At the end of his speech Bosola drew the Old Woman and Castruccio together, saying 'you two couple' (II.i.64). This business would have provoked the audience's laughter; but at the same time it echoed and made a contrast to the marriage of the Duchess and Antonio. The positioning of Bosola between Castruccio and the Old Woman would have reminded the audience of that of Cariola between the Duchess and Antonio. It seems that the director, in


'the Market' scene, emphasized contrasts and parallels between this scene and the previous scenes on several levels, suggested in the original text. But


[the Old Lady's] exchanges with Bosola give Webster a chance to say some very rude things about court cosmetics.<sup>42</sup>

The success of 'the Market' scene was achieved at the cost of highlighting hypocrisy in court life, originally implied by the Old Lady's cosmetics.

The director's emphasis on contrast and parallel was seen also at the beginning of a scene entitled 'the Plot',<sup>43</sup> which combined the original Act II, scene iv, and scene v. This time the contrast was made between Julia and the Duchess, and between Julia and the men who had been offered the chances for advancement, i.e., Bosola and Antonio. The Cardinal entered his palace with Julia, his mistress. Julia's red hair,<sup>44</sup> revealing dress, coquettish look and heavy makeup established her as a lascivious woman. He had Julia sit down on the throne and stood by the throne. As their dialogue went on, the Cardinal revealed his distrust of women in general. Hearing his remarks Julia stood up and made to go. The Cardinal's second remark to her husband Castruccio made her break away, but the Cardinal caught her by the hand and reminded her of his kindness in making her his mistress. This series of actions suggested that Julia was aware of the prick of conscience in being unfaithful to her husband, but her appearances, which made her  $\top$  the Duchess's complete foil, undercut the seriousness in her business. As the servant came in, the Cardinal pretended that Julia's visit to him was for devotion; Julia knelt down and kissed his ring. This business suggested that the rendezvous was used for comic effect as well as for establishing the Cardinal's cruel nature.

The Cardinal left, and Delio entered to visit Julia. Delio's

intention to woo Julia was evident from the beginning when he tried to take her hand. But Julia withdrew a pace. Her reaction made Delio try to bribe her in order to succeed in his wooing; he presented a purse to her. Though Julia held out her hand to receive it, she showed her refusal in withdrawing her hand, knowing that the purse was not her husband's but Delio's. Delio continued to tempt her to accept the money by giving her some coins. Julia reacted to him with a contemptuous attitude. She took the purse and dropped the coins into it, saying 'A lute-string far exceeds it' (II.iv.63). But when Delio made it clear that he wanted Julia to be his mistress, she left him without returning the purse to him. Thus '[w]hat began as rejection ended in mute consent'.<sup>45</sup> Her exit was followed by Delio's 'Very fine' (II.iv.76), which must have provoked the audience's laughter. It is certain that Julia was used for comic effect in this scene. But this scene also made clear the director's emphasis on the parallel of Bosola and Antonio and Julia in terms of 'the "service and reward" motif'<sup>46</sup>; each of them was presented  something as the reward for the service which he or she was supposed to perform; each of them received it after once refusing to do so. As a result, the difference of the character of the three was emphasized when each of them received what was offered. Bosola took Ferdinand's purse because he had an ambition to become advanced; Antonio received the Duchess's ring because he himself loved her and because he knew that her love for him was sincere; Julia's 'mute consent' comically suggested her wanton nature.

The latter half of 'the Plot' scene consisted of the dialogue <sup>between</sup>  the Cardinal and Ferdinand, who, being informed of the Duchess's childbirth, plotted against her. Ferdinand's stage business was restrained. Generally his rage was expressed by his facial expression when he stood still, as

expressed in the production photographs. Ferdinand moved only on several of the lines in the scene, walking towards the Cardinal or away from him. How he saw his relationship with the Duchess was hinted in a few lines. Ferdinand approached the Cardinal on 'Apply desperate physic' (II.v.23), by which he meant that the Duchess's blood must be purged by the 'physic'. His emphasis on the Duchess's blood was made clear also by a pause in the following words: 'for that's the mean | To purge infected blood, [a pause] such blood as hers' (II.v.25-26). While 'blood' in the Cardinal's 'The royal blood of Aragon and Castile' (II.v.22) means 'family lineage', Ferdinand's 'blood' means literal blood. The emphasis on 'blood' in Ferdinand's speech through his movement and a pause suggested that Ferdinand was obsessed with the blood ties between himself and the Duchess. Another pause before the following lines would have allowed the audience to have the interpretation:

I could kill her now,  
In you, or in myself, for I do think  
It is some sin in us, Heaven doth revenge  
By her. (II.v.64-67)

The sinister atmosphere in the latter half of 'the Plot' scene remained at the beginning of 'the Corridor' scene.<sup>47</sup> Antonio and Delio met each other after several years of Delio's absence. While they were glad they saw each other again, they felt uneasy about the behaviour of the Cardinal and Ferdinand; Antonio expressed his uneasiness by breaking away as Delio referred to the Aragonian *brethren*. But the entrance of the Duchess and Ferdinand provided an elegant atmosphere, which replaced the uneasiness. The positioning of the characters at the moment of the entrance created a similarity between the court scene and 'the Corridor' scene. Antonio and Delio stood downstage left, observing the Duchess and

Ferdinand, who came downstage side by side. Ferdinand's servants stood upstage right, and the Duchess's ladies upstage left. This time, however, it was clear that the serenity at the Duchess's court was merely temporary and superficial. After the Duchess and all the attendants left, Ferdinand rebuked the absent Duchess and told Bosola to lead him into the Duchess's bedroom. The uneasiness again became evident.

'The Bedroom' scene<sup>48</sup> came at the end of the frequent shifts of atmosphere. A bedroom curtain, which suggested the existence of the Duchess's bed behind it, was hung from the ceiling. The curtain and the furniture -- a chest, a chair, a table and a stool -- established the private atmosphere of the scene. On entering the bedroom, Antonio embraced the Duchess, expressing freely his affection for her, which he was not allowed to show in the public world. The relaxed atmosphere made him playful; he knelt down and clasped the Duchess's waist as he asked her to allow him to sleep with her. The Duchess disengaged herself and sat down on the chair. After this the removal of the Duchess's jewellery was made along with the increasingly affectionate exchanges between the Duchess and Antonio. The Duchess removed her rings and put them into a casket brought in by Cariola. She patted Antonio's cheek on his 'I shall like her the better for that (III.ii.14) [i.e., for being '~~the~~ sprawling' st bedfellow' (III.ii.13)]'; Antonio kissed her hand. While Antonio and Cariola were talking, the Duchess removed her earrings. Antonio approached the Duchess and stood up behind her. On his bawdy joke of 'Labouring men' (III.ii.18), she pulled his head down and kissed him. While discussing the curse of single life, Antonio removed the Duchess's necklace and put it on the table. Then the Duchess removed her bracelets, handed them to Antonio, who put them on the table. After removing all her jewellery, the Duchess let

her hair loose. The removal of her jewellery, which symbolized her public status as a duchess, emphasized the private nature of the bedroom scene, and established the Duchess as a wife.

Antonio and Cariola left the bedroom, leaving the Duchess alone. While the Duchess talked to herself, supposing that she was addressing to Antonio, Ferdinand stole in the bedroom. The prompt-book reads that he appeared from the right-hand side of the orchestra pit and stood downstage right. Martin Holmes reported that '[Ferdinand] was brought into her bedroom up an unexpected flight of steps from the cellerage'.<sup>49</sup> This manner of entrance might have appeared comical to some extent. But Ferdinand's business after the entrance succeeded in making him look dominant and even menacing. The Duchess, who had been combing her hair in front of the table upstage left, turned to find Ferdinand behind her. At the Duchess's declaration that she would live or die like a prince, Ferdinand, after a pause, exclaimed 'Die' (III.ii.71). Then he approached the Duchess and gave her a dagger, as if to suggest that the shock of discovering the Duchess's marriage life had frozen him into inactivity until this moment. Recovering from the shock of discovering Ferdinand, the Duchess turned around and faced him. Ferdinand reacted calmly to the Duchess's report of her marriage, but her reference to her husband made him rush towards her. He walked around while rebuking her and her unidentified husband. It was the Duchess's claim that her reputation was safe which prompted Ferdinand to react more violently; he rushed towards her, grasped her right wrist and forced her to kneel down on the floor. After narrating a parable of Death, Love and Reputation, he threw her down, rebuking her for damaging her reputation irrecoverably. Exclaiming, 'I will never see you more' (III.ii.137), he broke away downstage. He left the bedroom to

the orchestra pit, crying, 'I will never see thee more' (III.ii.141).

The dialogue between the Cardinal and Ferdinand, which directly followed the end of Act III, scene ii, began 'the Fort-bridge' scene.<sup>50</sup> The brief dialogue, in which the brothers planned to banish and catch the Duchess in ambush, was followed by the conversation of three pilgrims, who reported the banishment of the Duchess. The manner of changing scenes from the Aragonian brethren's exit to the entrance of the pilgrims was slightly different between at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and at the Aldwych Theatre. At the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre the pilgrims dragged a log from upstage left and placed it stage right, as was instructed in the prompt-book. At the Aldwych, this business was cut, probably because the transfer of the log, which looked painful, was considered to disturb the flow of the performance.<sup>51</sup> The heavy cutting of lines in Act III, scene iii, and Act III, scene iv, made clear the director's intention to emphasize the result, not the process, of the banishment.

In the next scene, entitled 'the Road',<sup>52</sup> the Duchess was seen with Antonio, her eldest son by him, two officers, Cariola and a lady. The two women held the Duchess's two other children. The Duchess's costume, a dark-coloured hooded mantle over a dark-coloured plain dress, suggested that they had appeared immediately after the banishment. A piece of business seen only at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre -- the Duchess and Antonio sitting on the log -- emphasized the misery of those who were banished and robbed of their social status. Bosola appeared upstage centre and approached the Duchess to hand her a letter from her brothers. The eldest son of the Duchess and Antonio knelt, probably to show respect to the royal messenger; after Bosola left, the boy was seen to relax. The Duchess told Antonio to escape with the boy to avoid ambush. Antonio

expressed his surprise at her advice by moving towards her one step, but accepted it after considering for a moment. The Duchess bade farewell to Antonio, and she knelt down and embraced her son. Her affection for her son as well as for her husband was emphasized when she came next to her son and fastened his cloak, preparing for his departure, while Antonio bade farewell to Cariola and the other two children. After she parted from Antonio and her son, the Duchess still showed her strength not only in her lines but in her action. She was seen as a protective figure even in the misery of banishment; her two ladies came near her at the sight of Bosola and several soldiers; when Bosola approached the remaining children, the Duchess stood between him and her children. Though the scene ended with the Duchess's parable of a salmon and a dogfish, which conveyed her resignation to her ordeal, her business established her strength, with which she stood up to the mental torture.

An interval which came after this scene divided the play into two parts, in spite of the prompt-book's account, which shows that the director divided the play into three acts.<sup>53</sup> Probably the director decided at a later stage to simplify the structure of the performance and to attract the audience's attention to how the Duchess reacted to the reversal of fortune.

The second part began with 'the Waxworks Scene'.<sup>54</sup> The setting made it clear that the Duchess was imprisoned in her own palace; the stage was furnished with the draped curtain, used for 'the Ante-room' scene, and a chair. Bosola and Ferdinand entered the room separately and met downstage. When Bosola, replying to Ferdinand, began to describe the Duchess's sorrow, the Duchess was seen to enter the room with one of her ladies. The Duchess's entrance was made earlier than in the original text (IV.i.17), certainly to give dramatic impact by making it occur on the same lines as



Bosola's narration about her. The Duchess's dark-coloured dress, the same as the one seen after the banishment, matched her decline and her sorrow. She sat on the chair, and the lady stood at one end of the curtain, holding a candelabra. After Ferdinand's exit, Bosola saluted to the Duchess and told her that Ferdinand would see her in darkness. The Duchess had her lady remove the candelabra, while two servants began to set the waxworks. The prompt-book's account suggests that the stage became dark at this moment. But it was not completely dark; according to the director, there was light enough to 'let the audience see Ferdinand's arm as he [held] out the dead hand to the Duchess, but not anything else'.<sup>55</sup> Several contact sheets which covered the scene, however, suggest that the audience would have seen the Duchess and Ferdinand, though very vaguely.<sup>56</sup> The audience would have managed to see the Duchess receive the hand and drop it in fright on knowing that it was severed. Compared to Clifford Williams's production and Bill Alexander's, in both of which the audiences were shocked at the sight of the severed hand as the stage was lit, the shock of the scene would have been softened in this production.

The waxworks were presented right after the stage was lit. From behind the chair Bosola talked to the Duchess to show her the waxworks.<sup>57</sup> Though the stage direction of the original text reads 'Here is discover'd, behind a traverse, the artificial figures of ANTONIO and his children; appearing as if they were dead' (IV.ii.55), the prompt-book makes it clear that Antonio was presented only with his eldest son.<sup>58</sup> This change was made certainly to prevent the Duchess's following remarks on her children in the next scene from sounding contradictory:

I pray thee look thou giv'st my little boy  
Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl  
Say her prayers, ere she sleep. (IV.ii.200-02)

On seeing the waxworks the Duchess knelt, overwhelmed by the shock at the supposed death of her husband and the eldest son. She rose and tried to approach them on 'If they would bind me to that lifeless trunk, | And let me freeze to death' (IV.i.68-69), as if she had really wished to be bound to the bodies. Bosola drew the Duchess downstage grasping her arm, to prevent her from knowing that the bodies were waxworks. The Duchess broke away upstage, exclaiming, 'Who must dispatch me?' (IV.i.82), and suggesting her hysterical state. A servant, who had come to salute the Duchess, surprised her, because he stood where the waxworks had been placed. The positioning would have made the servant's salutation that he wished her a long life sound more ironical, for the Duchess was forced to see the waxworks and to lose the desire to live. The sight of the waxworks drove the Duchess to curse the universe and nature. When Bosola attempted to console her with 'Look you, the stars shine still' (IV.i.99), she fiercely replied to him with 'my curse hath a great way to go' (IV.i.100), which made him step back in fright.

After the Duchess's exit, Ferdinand re-entered the room. His obsession with the Duchess was given prominence; at Bosola's reference to the Duchess's skin, next to which she should wear a garment to express penitence, Ferdinand broke away centrestage, referring to her body, in which his blood had run pure. Ferdinand's words echoed his reference to the Duchess's 'infected blood' (II.v.26). It seems that the director here suggested an interpretation that Ferdinand had identified himself with the Duchess until he knew her secret marriage, with which she stained her own blood and Ferdinand's.

After Ferdinand and Bosola left, the scene was changed into the Duchess's bedroom; the bed curtain was hung, and the furniture which had

been used in the bedroom scene was carried in: the chest, the table and the stool. The setting suggested that the following scene was paralleled to the bedroom scene. The Duchess and Cariola entered the room, hearing the madmen's cry off-stage. The Duchess sat on the chair, and Cariola sat at her feet, when told to sit down. The Duchess's sorrow made the audience feel that 'it [was] so terrible to see [the buoyancy of heart] being desolated'.<sup>59</sup> Cariola, seeing her mistress's sorrow, made to take the Duchess's hand to comfort her. Right after the madmen's cry was heard again, a servant appeared and informed them that Ferdinand would let the Duchess see the madmen for sport. Cariola rose astonished as the Duchess agreed to let the madmen in, but was told to sit down on the stool. Six madmen entered the room separately and gathered downstage. Their restless movements gradually became violent while they were talking to each other. Two madmen began to fight with the mirror on the table, and were stopped by the servant; one madman threatened the Duchess, but was stopped by another; the two madmen, who had fought, began to fight again, and this time others joined them. The madmen's behaviour and howls frightened the Duchess and Cariola, who, drawing near each other, tried not to see or hear them by closing their eyes and ears (see plate IV). Thus the setting, which had been used in the bedroom scene to present the harmony and peace produced by the Duchess and Antonio, now ironically presented the confusion and disorder brought in to torture the Duchess by the Aragonian brethren.

Bosola's entrance followed the madmen's exit. He wore a mask instead of being disguised as an old man as in the stage direction (IV.ii.113). The madmen's dance and Bosola's mask might have been contrasted to the revel, which the Duchess had attended, and to the mask she held at the opening scene. Bosola's 'I am come to make thy tomb' (IV.ii.115)

astonished the Duchess, who rose from the chair. Coming next to her Bosola lectured her on the fragility of man's flesh and on the vanity of life.

The Duchess replied to him with 'I am Duchess of Malfi still' (IV.ii.139).

To Edmund Gardner,

'I am Duchess of Malfi -- still' [came] out triumphantly as a climax of emotions: desire, loneliness, terror, nobility and dignity.<sup>60</sup>

But the same line, to one reviewer, sounded as if it were 'almost thrown away'.<sup>61</sup> This account seems to suggest that the delivery of the line was marked by restraint to make the line sound more effective.

A coffin was carried in by three executioners, masked and dressed in black, on the Duchess's 'Let me see it' (IV.ii.165). The horror of imminent death was overcome when she began her defiant speech after a pause. She was prepared to accept her death with dignity; she stopped Cariola, who tried to protect her when the executioner made to approach her after Bosola's dirge. The Duchess embraced and instructed Cariola to look after her remaining children. The Duchess's defiance was the most evident at her last moment. After a rope was set around her neck and the executioners were ready to strangle her, she stretched her arms in front of them to make them delay the strangulation while she prepared herself for 'heaven gates' (IV.ii.228). This action made the strangulation 'an episode of perfect martyrdom',<sup>62</sup> establishing the Duchess's righteousness and defiance. Peggy Ashcroft's performance suggested that the Duchess had changed into a super-human figure. The Duchess's change from her first appearance to her death was commented as follows: 'She was fire, air and the duchess then; not until her last rites of poetry did she kick off the woman'.<sup>63</sup>

After strangling the Duchess, the executioners laid her body on the

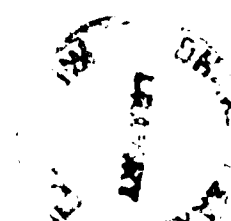
lidded coffin, which was too small to contain the Duchess's body. This imbalance attracted the audience's attention to the Duchess's body and made her death look more unjustifiable and cruel. Ferdinand appeared and walked to the right-hand side of the coffin. Ferdinand, after a long pause and certainly after staring at the Duchess's body, asked Bosola, 'Is she dead?' (IV.ii.251), as if to suggest that he did not want to realize that the Duchess was dead, even at the sight of her corpse. He delivered 'Cover her face. Mine eyes dazzle' (IV.ii.259) after a long pause. The rest of the line, 'she di'd young' (IV.ii.259), was preceded by another long pause, which suggested that Ferdinand had not realized the Duchess was dead until this moment. Bosola covered the Duchess's face and knelt by her body. At Ferdinand's request to let him see the Duchess's face, Bosola removed the cover. The following business of Ferdinand and Bosola, most of which had the coffin at the centre, would have conveyed the impact of the sight of the Duchess's body, even before Bosola was left alone with it. On seeing her face again, Ferdinand began to rebuke Bosola for not having pitied her. The rebuke provoked Bosola's anger; he stood up. As Ferdinand concluded that Bosola had 'done much ill, well' (IV.ii.285), Bosola stepped back downstage of the coffin to remind Ferdinand that he had caused the Duchess's death in ordering Bosola to murder her. Ferdinand moved upstage of the coffin, <sup>the</sup> left-hand side of Bosola, to give the reward, which stunned Bosola: a pardon for the murder. Ferdinand moved downstage left of the Duchess, referring to a wolf which would reveal the murder. On 'Never look upon me more' (IV.ii.311) Ferdinand knelt next to the coffin; it was as if to suggest that the sight of the Duchess's body had stirred Ferdinand's conscience, which had made him <sup>u</sup>able to endure to be watched by those who accused him. After Ferdinand's exit, Bosola moved upstage left of the

coffin and stared at the Duchess's body, delivering 'What would I do, were *this to do again?*' (IV.ii.333); the sight of the Duchess's body made him recognize the cruelty of the murder. The treatment of the Duchess's body emphasized its importance in waking Bosola from 'a sweet and golden dream' (IV.ii.318) and prompting his penitence.

The original Act V, scene ii, was entitled 'Julia's Death',<sup>64</sup> though it began with a significant scene which presented the consequences of the murder of the Duchess: Ferdinand in total madness. The Doctor and Pescara appeared stage left and walked downstage centre. They broke away and stood on the left-hand side of the Cardinal's throne at the entrance of Ferdinand, Malatesti, the Cardinal, and Bosola. The interesting point of the performance of the scene was the use of Malatesti; the action of all characters involved him. Malatesti followed Ferdinand centrestage. When Ferdinand threw himself on the floor to strangle his own shadow, Malatesti left him and walked downstage left. Instead Pescara approached Ferdinand to persuade him to rise. At the Cardinal's request to lift Ferdinand up, Malatesti tentatively approached him, but again retired downstage left, without helping Pescara lift up Ferdinand. When Ferdinand avoided the Doctor and ran away from him, Malatesti advanced downstage and observed him at a distance. The Doctor left his gown to Malatesti before attempting to cure Ferdinand. Ferdinand suddenly became violent and made to attack the Doctor; then Malatesti advanced and grabbed Ferdinand's arm, while the Doctor retired to the left-hand side of the throne. Ferdinand threw Malatesti down, moved to the right-hand side of the throne, and left the stage. Malatesti rose and helped the Doctor put on his gown. This use of Malatesti would have made the audience laugh at him, not at Ferdinand or the Doctor, both of whom the original text makes look comic to some extent.

The description of Ferdinand lying on the floor to see an imaginary race of snails inevitably provokes the audience's laughter; the Doctor also contributes to making Ferdinand look comic with his attempt to cure Ferdinand with 'some forty urinals filled with rose-water' (V.ii.68-69). It seems that the director attempted to avoid making Ferdinand look comic or absurd in making Malatesti the main subject of the audience's laughter; for the purpose the director even ran the risk of making him the focal point of the scene.

Malatesti, Pescara and the Doctor left the stage. So did the Cardinal after ordering Bosola to murder Antonio. Then Julia appeared, pointing a pistol at him. After Bosola understood that she was in love with him, Julia directed Bosola to the chest, on which the two sat down side by side. Bosola embraced her at 'Know you me, I am a blunt soldier' (V.ii.169). Julia removed her dressing gown to attract Bosola sexually. After this the two became increasingly intimate; Bosola as well as Julia was positive. The deletion of his aside, 'I will work upon this creature' (V.ii.180), made it ambiguous whether he merely used Julia to discover the Cardinal's secret or he was interested in her to some extent. As Bosola held out his hand to stroke her face, she bit it. He then pulled her backwards and embraced her. They kissed each other, and Julia lay down on the chest, leaning on Bosola. Julia's lasciviousness was emphasized in her amorous gestures. While wooing Bosola Julia was presented as a woman who was blindly dominated by her sensuality. This description of Julia would have appeared to be contradictory to that in the scene of her death. Poisoned by the Cardinal's Bible, Julia collapsed on the floor. In her death throes she struggled to crawl up to the Cardinal, who grabbed her wrists to hear her final words. As Julia confessed that she had let Bosola overhear the



dialogue between the Cardinal and her, the Cardinal threw her down in anger. Bosola approached and knelt to support Julia. She died nobly, without thinking too much 'what should have been done' (V.ii.283), or blaming the Cardinal, who had brutally poisoned her. Philip Hope-Wallace, embarrassed by the gap between Julia's lasciviousness, which an actress playing the figure was naturally supposed to emphasize, and the nobility of Julia's death, which is described too clearly to be neglected, wrote as follows:

Sian Phillips did not shirk the part of the cardinal's [sic] mistress Julia, but what can any actress today make of the last scenes?<sup>65</sup>

The original Act V, scene iv, and scene v, were combined into the 'Last Scene'.<sup>66</sup> The chest and the throne, which had been used in the preceding scene as a tomb and a monument, remained on stage. The throne indicated the location: the Cardinal's chamber. The chest may have stood for a coffin for Julia's body.<sup>67</sup> Bosola appeared after the exit of the noblemen and the Cardinal, and he heard Ferdinand's soliloquy, which he understood as a plot to murder him. After Ferdinand's exit Antonio and a servant secretly entered from the left-hand side of the orchestra pit and advanced centrestage left. Antonio approached the Cardinal's throne, delivering his plan to visit the Cardinal. Bosola approached and stabbed Antonio, mistaking him for an assassin. Antonio crawled up the throne and sat down on it as he replied, 'A most wretched thing' (V.iv.47), to Bosola's 'What art thou?' (V.iv.47). Antonio died on the throne. This echoed the function of the throne as a monument in the echo scene, and reiterated the image of a graveyard. The echo scene and this scene were linked to each other with the symbolic use of the properties, which provoked the image of death.



As the Cardinal appeared, Bosola approached him and threatened to kill him. The servant, seeing this, approached the Cardinal to *save* him. Bosola stabbed the servant. The deletion of "'Cause you shall not unbarricade the door | To let in rescue' (V.v.34-35) contributed to emphasizing Bosola's brutality which increased in his desperate search for revenge. Then he approached the throne and showed Antonio's body on it. Fear made the Cardinal abandon his dignity; he knelt, asking for mercy. Bosola rejected it and stabbed the Cardinal, whose cry brought Ferdinand. The mad Ferdinand mistook the two for enemies and stabbed them. The Cardinal sank down and crawled towards the throne, which had been the symbol of his power and authority, and which had stood for his identity. As Ferdinand advanced downstage, Bosola approached and stabbed him. While hearing Ferdinand's final speech, Bosola walked towards the chest and sat down on it. The tumult brought the noblemen: Pescara, Malatesti, Roderigo and Grisolan. For a few moments the throne became the focal point, as if to suggest that power and authority symbolized by it had been the cause of these murders. The Cardinal died, next to the throne, after delivering 'let me | Be laid by, and never thought of' (V.v.88-89), with his face turned away from Pescara, who stood next to him. The manner of the Cardinal's death indicated his distress in dying miserably. As the Cardinal had died, Pescara, standing by the throne, mourned his death. Malatesti, who had knelt next to Ferdinand, approached the throne, as he asked Bosola how Antonio had died. Bosola stood up as he began to deliver his final speech. At the end of it he fell down and died; his death was more dignified than that of the Aragonian brethren. Right after Bosola's death Delio appeared with Antonio's eldest son. When Delio began to appeal to the noblemen to help the son inherit the duchy, the son approached

Antonio's body on the throne and knelt, mourning his father's death. This manner of ending would have established sorrow rather than the sign of hope for the future.

Reviewers' discussion on the production of The Duchess of Malfi concerned whether it was successful not only artistically but strategically. Some reviewers, who emphasized the strategic significance of the choice of the first production at the Aldwych, thought that The Duchess of Malfi was too flawed for the purpose. What they regarded as its defects can be classified as follows. One point was that<sup>ot</sup> the play's structural problem; the Duchess, the central figure, dies in the middle on the play. The second point was that the play appeared problematic in terms of naturalism or realism. For example, Ferdinand's murder of the Duchess cannot be explained away by a motive delivered by himself: 'An infinite mass of treasure [which he would have gained] by [the Duchess's] death' (IV.ii.279); Bosola's change from a hired villain to an agent of justice appears to be sudden. The third was that a dead man's hand, a group of madmen and the successive murder<sup>s</sup> tended to look sensational.

In spite of the anxiety about the choice of the play the production was regarded as successful by most reviewers, who were led to think that it was a good start for the Aldwych Theatre. As the title of a review for The Times, 'Webster's Play Well Handled',<sup>68</sup> shows, McWhinnie's production was generally praised in terms of directorial skills.

One of the point<sup>s</sup> which the reviewers approved of was the 'swift but unhurried'<sup>69</sup> pace throughout the performance. This was partly a result of the director's device of having the properties carried by servants and ladies for changing scenes. In fact pace was one of the points which the

director was careful about; he was aware that the speed in changing scenes affected the atmosphere of the play, in which 'Webster's cross-cutting from scene to scene is usually filmic'.<sup>70</sup> The apron stages of the theatres at Stratford and London and the simple settings, which were originally designed to increase intimacy between the actors and the audience by allowing the actors a larger acting space, also contributed to the speedy presentation of the play. For example, Eric Keown reported that the maximum excitement was given by the apron stage, where each scene flew quickly out of the last.<sup>71</sup>

The actors' delivery of verse lines was also evaluated. Reviewers who saw the performances at the Aldwych noted that Peter Hall's attempt to improve the standard of verse speaking, made for the first time outside Stratford, proved successful. Mervyn Jones for Tribune reported that verse lines were spoken, not recited, and that the actors 'always [understood] their lines, even when these [included] some highly-compressed philosophical statements.'<sup>72</sup>

It seems that the director aimed with the acting primarily to resolve the structural problem and inconsistencies of the text, which remained even after the heavy cutting of the text. H.A.L. Craig felt that the director's attempt had proved successful:

None of the disconnections -- the inadequate motivations for the theme of revenge, the inadequate matching of Antonio and the Duchess, which always troubled my reading of the play -- were present in this production.<sup>73</sup>

This effort was made especially to resolve the structural problem, or 'to conceal a slackening of tension after the somewhat too early death of the heroine'.<sup>74</sup> This 'slackening of tension', first caused by the death of the central figure, the Duchess, is maintained and is increased in the final

scenes, where the successive murders tend to appear rather ridiculous than tragic. To avoid this the director attempted to emphasize the serious nature of the scenes after the Duchess's death. The reviewer for The Times praised the treatment and reported that:

The mad scene of the lycanthropic Duke Ferdinand [was] tellingly acted, and before the fatal stabbings and poisonings [multiplied] themselves with comic regularity the actors [contrived] to hold us fascinated by the consummate calm with which the [...] Machiavellian Cardinal [contemplated] the possibility of damnation, and by the stumbling approach of [...] Bosola, to the point at which a self he [had] never recognized through his mental disguisings [began] to emerge.<sup>75</sup>

As a result of this effort there was hardly a giggle at the scene at the end of the play.<sup>76</sup> This fact suggests Donald McWhinnie's success in retaining tragic tension up to the end. But a small number of reviewers argued that the director's efforts had failed to save the performance from the defects of the play. For example, the reviewer for the Times Educational Supplement thought that Webster rather than McWhinnie was responsible for the failure in making the audience accept the improbabilities of the plot.<sup>77</sup> Eric Keown, who praised McWhinnie's directorial skills, was dissatisfied with the manner of the characters' death.<sup>78</sup>

Most reviewers, who focussed their attention on the directorial skills, thought that McWhinnie had kept the action going with the effectively rapid pace and that he had succeeded in achieving unity and consistency throughout the performance through the treatment of the final scenes. Only Harold Hobson for the Sunday Times criticized the production for containing 'no drive, no force, no continuity'. The reason for his criticism was that quiet, meditative and sententious single lines, which were given prominence in the actors' delivery, were not integrated in the

performance.<sup>79</sup>

Several reviewers regarded the aspect of horror as essential to the play and commented on the production, laying emphasis on the treatment of scenes of horror. Their opinions were not always in accordance. For example, Mervyn Jones praised the director for the serious presentation of scene of the severed hand and of the madmen scene. To Jones the aspect of horror, especially that before the murder of the Duchess, was closely related to the theme of the play. He argued that

[t]he interest of the play [rested] in the resolve of the Duchess's horrible brothers, [...] to subject her to psychological torture -- 'to drive you to despair.' [sic] This theme [was] ingenious, it [was] fascinatingly "modern," and [he thought] it had the depth and scope to true tragedy.<sup>80</sup>

Richard Findlater for Time and Tide, on the other hand, criticized the production for distracting the audience's attention from the the nature of the play as:

a nightmare, a dream-world caricaturing the world of waking facts and logic, where shadows of monstrous vice and virtue [projected] the despairing vision of a poet

with 'external extravagance [Findlater's emphasis]' of the settings.

McWhinnie's restrained (as Findlater saw it) and serious treatment of the madmen scene led him to think that McWhinnie's insufficient visual sense had left him unable to 'put the absurd story in theatrical perspective' by highlighting the luridness and grotesqueness of scenes like the madmen scene and by 'playing with [the grotesqueness] [Findlater's emphasis]'.<sup>81</sup> These reviews suggest that it was the scenes of horror which made clear the director's policy of stimulating the audience's imagination by suggestion, not by display.

The acting was generally praised. Peggy Ashcroft's Duchess was praised by many reviewers. Her portrayal of the Duchess was, as R.B.

Marriott perceived, 'coloured by deep inner feeling and intellectual understanding of a noble woman'.<sup>82</sup> But this approach led reviewers like Harold Hobson to think that Peggy Ashcroft failed to establish 'the grandeur that Webster doubtless thought was in [the Duchess's] soul'.<sup>83</sup> Another subject of the reviewers' discussion was the restraint of the expression of happiness in the earlier scenes, such as the wooing scene and the bedroom scene. Though the image of 'a woman of high natural spirits and vitality'<sup>84</sup> was established during these scenes, it is certain that Peggy Ashcroft lay more emphasis on the Duchess's defiance and dignity in spite of the tortures and the fear of strangulation. Many reviewers considered this emphasis effective.<sup>85</sup> Comparison of Peggy Ashcroft's performance at the Aldwych to that at the Haymarket Theatre in 1945 was also made. Most reviewers who referred to her former portrayal of the role thought that her interpretation had deepened.<sup>e</sup> Some, however, argued that less emphasis on the Duchess's identity as a wife and a mother caused the Duchess to lose pathos.<sup>86</sup>

Derek Godfrey's Antonio was, in H.A.L. Craig's words, a 'good match for the Duchess'.<sup>87</sup> Though Godfrey gave strength and dignity to the character who tends to appear passive to modern audiences in the wooing scene, it was in the bedroom scene, in which Antonio cooperated with the Duchess to convey the happiness in his married life, that Godfrey proved H.A.L. Craig's description. Godfrey's performance in the scene impressed the audience strongly enough to exemplify Roger Warren's argument of Antonio's importance in the play:

[In the bedroom scene] Antonio has as important a part to play as the Duchess; he matches her in wit and in elegance, [....] The effect is that Antonio joins with the Duchess to provide a warmly human contrast to the sterner scenes later on. And as with the Duchess, the actor of Antonio must be able to capture the wit and poise of these lines [....] Mr Godfrey was then able to show how much vital gaiety The

Duchess in fact contains.<sup>88</sup>

Max Adrian's Cardinal was generally praised for presenting the character's cold, wicked and lascivious nature. Critics' opinions were in accord, and there was little discussion about the acting or the role. Even the harshest critic, Harold Hobson, commented that '[o]nly Max Adrian's ascetically lecherous Cardinal, thinking on hell, [retained] one's interest throughout'. But Hobson, at the same time, thought that the success was partly brought out because the role was 'a comparatively easy task'.<sup>89</sup>

There was discussion on how Eric Porter interpreted Ferdinand's motive for having the Duchess murdered. To Ivor Brown, who wrote the preface in the programme, the motive for the murder was financial to both of the Aragonian brethren; he wrote that they revenged themselves because 'the Duchess, a widow, [chose] for her second husband her steward Antonio, thus taking money out of the family'.<sup>90</sup> This interpretation was drawn probably from Ferdinand's words after the murder that he would have acquired 'An infinite mass of treasure by [the Duchess's] death' (IV.ii.279) if she had remained a widow. But most reviewers did not support the interpretation or even refer to it. They sought more satisfactory explanations in Eric Porter's performance. Many of these critics were concerned about whether his Ferdinand suggested incestuous love for his sister. Among those who discussed it, many critics thought that he did so.<sup>91</sup> Only R.B. Marriott argued that '[t]he incest motive [...] [was] practically ignored, avarice and a desire for power being made uppermost. This [robbed] the play of a great deal of its force and conviction'.<sup>92</sup> Critics were generally favourable to scenes in which the director was cautious to prevent the audience's laughter at the mad Ferdinand. But Porter's acting of madness, in itself, gave some reviewers the impression that he had failed to convey

the horror of the madness and that he was merely 'barking mad'.<sup>93</sup>

Partick Wymark's Bosola strongly reflected the director's interpretation of the figure, which did not please reviewers who saw the figure from a literary point of view. It was pointed out that the director attempted to fix Bosola's image and present the figure as defined by Bosola himself: as 'a blunt soldier' (V.ii.169).<sup>94</sup> This attempt can be discerned also in the cutting of lines which reveal that Bosola was once a scholar, and in the emphasis on Wymark's stout physique through his costume. It seems that the director attempted to simplify the image of Bosola, who, in the original text, shows complexity. Bosola is not merely 'a blunt soldier' as he defines himself. From the beginning of the play Bosola's lines suggest that he has intelligence which makes him see clearly the dark side of human nature, and a potential to change from a hired assassin to an agent of justice. Reviewers who had expected Wymark to present the complexity did not evaluate the director's attempt to simplify Bosola's image or Wymark's acting. For example, Don Chapman criticized the loss of impact in Bosola's lines when he attempts to convince the Duchess of the vanity of the world.<sup>95</sup> R.B. Marriott thought that Wymark's acting had 'a clownish element that often [destroyed] conviction' in Bosola's lines.<sup>96</sup> But some reviewers praised Wymark's acting in terms of theatrical presentation. For example, H.A.L. Craig argued that:

by refusing both the operatic and the Iago possibilities of the part, [Wymark] saved the play's credit as a work for the stage

and that this interpretation of Bosola led to 'the unification of Webster's separate pieces'.<sup>97</sup> Edmund Gardner thought that the image of Bosola presented by Wymark should be evaluated on its own:

it [was] a fine, downright theatrical portrayal which [reminded] us that Mr. Wymark's talent and imagination [were] too wide to be hemmed



in by traditional or over-rigid interpretations.<sup>98</sup>

Donald McWhinnie's interpretation of The Duchess of Malfi as a modern and even existential play finally led him to lay emphasis on the successful staging of the play in order to make his audience appreciate its modernity. For this purpose he made his efforts to adjust the play, which he thought had become too flawed by modern standards, to a modern dramatic framework. The thorough editing of the original text, which not only made the play develop with more speed but changed the narrative in some scenes, reflected the director's criticism of the original text. In performance he highlighted the contrasts and parallels suggested in the original text by means of the settings and the acting. He also paid attention to the pace of the performance to retain the tension up to the end by making much of the apron stage. As a result, his production was praised for reanimating the play which had been dismissed as flawed and sensational with the directorial skills. His efforts, however, involved defects; he sacrificed some of the complexity in the original text. For example, characters like Bosola suffered from a simplification. The exploration of the psychological or metaphysical aspect of the play was ignored in most part. The McWhinnie production, however, should be valued in proving that contrasts and parallels of actions and characters could be rendered most effective in performance, and that the serious and tragic nature in the final scenes, which tends to be overlooked, could be conveyed by the mastery of directorial skills.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. Taken from the title of a review by B.C. W. in Solihull and Warwick News, 10 December 1960.
2. Donald McWhinnie, born in 1920, had been assistant head of sound drama at BBC; he adopted The Duchess of Malfi as one of radio dramas. He made a debut as a director at the Royal Court in 1958, with Krapp's Last Tape for the English Stage Company. The Duchess of Malfi was the third play he directed.
3. Leslie Hurry was born in 1909. His first production was the ballet Hamlet, at the New Theatre with the Sadler's Wells Ballet in 1942. Since then he designed for many productions.
4. Humphrey Searle had composed for Troilus and Cressida in 1960 before he composed for The Duchess of Malfi. His others works include symphonies, piano concertos, opera, ballet and chamber music.
5. Calculated from the scene timings, which is included in the production records held at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon. Scene timings have incomplete records both for the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and the Aldwych Theatre. For the former the playing time of seven out of the eight performances is recorded; the playing time on 6 December 1960 was not calculated, due to the breakdown of the stopwatch. For the latter there are records for two rehearsals or previews, one charity performance, and five performances, the date of one of which is unidentified.
6. Peter Hall, born in 1930, directed more than twenty plays while he studied at Cambridge University. He made his first professional production at the Theatre Royal, Windsor, in 1953. He began to direct at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in 1956 with Love's Labour's Lost, and was appointed director of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in 1960.
7. Peter Hall made no reference to the choice of The Duchess of Malfi as the first production at the Aldwych. But he referred to the staging of non-Shakespearean classic plays in his essay published in the Daily Telegraph on 12 December 1960. He wrote: '[the company's theatre at] Stratford exists only to present Shakespeare. I am taking the London theatre to provide the company with an all-the-year-round programme of the new plays and non-Shakespearean classics'.
8. David Addenbrooke, The Royal Shakespeare Company: The Peter Hall Years (London: William Kimber, 1974), p. 44. The phrase in the double quotation marks are taken from Peter Hall, 'A New Way with Shakespeare', January 1963, Royal Shakespeare Theatre Tapes, held at Shakespeare Centre Library, Stratford-upon-Avon.
9. Addenbrooke, p. 44.

10. These quotations are from 'Working on Webster', Plays and Players<sup>5</sup>, 8, no. 5 (February 1961), 5. Hereafter I refer to the essay as 'McWhinnie'.
11. The production records, held at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon, include the set photographs. Probably they were taken by Angus McBean; one of the series of production photographs, taken by Angus McBean, has a notice which reads 'For set photos see production records'. The set photographs cover 'the Fountain' scene, 'the Anteroom' scene, 'the Plot' scene, 'the Bedroom' scene and the final scenes from 'Julia's Death' to the 'Last Scene'.
12. Addenbrooke, p. 44.
13. 'Duchess of Malfi at Stratford', Warwickshire Advertiser, 2 December 1960. The writer's name is unknown.
14. McWhinnie.
15. Ibid.: 'Use the insolent and sloppy serving-men of Malfi, Rome and Milan to shift the furniture'. The prompt-book lists who should strike and set properties. Sometimes the list is more detailed as to assign which actor should carry which property. For example, at the beginning of 'the Bedroom' scene: 'Chest -- Voss, Thomas; Chair -- Thorne; Stool, Table -- Thorne, Cruise; Drape [used as a curtain to suggest a bed behind it] -- Rigg, Gifford'.
16. McWhinnie.
17. 'Stratford Comes -- Season Opens with The Duchess of Malfi', Stage, 22 December 1960. Hereafter referred to as 'Marriott'.
18. 'A Miracle of Pity', New Statesman and Nation, 24 December 1960. Hereafter referred to as 'Craig'.
19. These quotations are from 'The Stratford Company Goes to Town', Guardian, 17 December 1960. Hereafter referred to as 'Hope-Wallace'.
20. It is recorded by E[dmund] G[ardner], in 'What will be the Impact on London of Malfi?', Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 2 December 1960 (this article is hereafter referred to with its title), and by a 'Prompter' in 'The Evil that Men Do', Western Independent, 18 December 1960.
21. The property was called 'tomb' in 'the Fortifications' scene in the prompt-book.
22. The production records do not record the existence of a wardrobe plot.
23. The production records include the production photographs. The photographs consist of the following groups: Series A and Master set, taken by Angus McBean; Duplicate photographs selected from Series A; Series B, taken by David Sim, which includes a programme for the performances at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre; Series C, taken by Joe Cocks, and his duplicate photographs. It seems that David Sim's

photographs were taken at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. David Sim's photographs show differences from others in 'the Bedroom' scene and 'Julia's Death', and photographs of the performances at Stratford, printed in the Stratford-upon-Avon Herald on 2 December 1960, are the same as David Sim's.

24. McWhinnie.
25. The Old Lady in the original text, though retained in the prompt-book, was changed into the 'Old Woman' in performance.
26. One of the Duchess's dresses in the earlier scenes was white; George W. Bishop, 'Stratford-atte-Aldwych', Daily Telegraph, 5 December 1960: 'Peggy Ashcroft, [...] in a white silk dress'.
27. There were three backcloths each of which represented Malfi, Rome and Milan. The running plot makes it clear that the cloth representing Malfi was used in 'the Fountain' scene and 'the Corridor' scene.
28. 'What will be the Impact on London of Malfi?'.  
 29. Introduction by G.B. Harrison, Everyman's Library, no. 899, Poetry & Drama (London: J.M. Dent, 1958 (first published, 1933)). The editor's name is unknown.
30. Elizabeth M. Brennan, in her edition of The Duchess of Malfi, the New Mermaids, second ed. (London: Ernest Benn, 1983 (first ed., 1964)), makes it clear that each of four quarto editions of the play contains a scene division in Act I (p. 118). The scene division has been followed by recent editions, for example, the Revels Plays edition, published in 1964; the New Mermaid edition, published also in 1964; and the Penguin English Library edition, published in 1972, which contains three plays of Webster.
31. See note 30.
32. On a few pages of the prompt-book more than one script are pasted: pages 106-07, 122-123, 128-29, 129-30 of the original text (page 129 is cut into two); the prompt-book does not have its own page number. Pages 140 and 142 of the original text, which cover 'the Fort-bridge' scene, are pasted on one page; under the scripts the pilgrims' conversation up to line 34, Act III, scene iv, on page 144 is written.
33. These quotations are from 'Working on Webster'.
34. For example, the final scenes, i.e., Act V, scene iv, and scene v, in Clifford Williams's production in 1971 at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre received much laughter in spite of the cutting of all the lines of the noblemen during Bosola's assault on the Cardinal (see Chapter 2). In Bill Alexander's production in 1989 and 1990 at the Swan Theatre and the Pit, in which all lines during the murders in the final scenes were retained, the murders, especially those of the Cardinal and Ferdinand, provoked the audience's laughter, though it became much smaller at the Pit (see Chapter 3).

35. Martin Holmes, 'Players and Productions', Quarterly Review, 299 (1961), pp. 448-59 (p. 450).
36. Holmes, p. 450.
37. Prompt-book.
38. Ibid.
39. For example, Bernard Levin, in 'When Horror is No Problem', Daily Express, 16 December 1960, argued that '[McWhinnie established] from the beginning that Ferdinand [was] driven consciously by his guilty lust for his sister'.
40. The anonymous reviewer in 'Webster's Play Well Handled', The Times, 16 December 1960, reported that '[t]he scene of [the Duchess's] stooping to conquer her steward [was] alive with vivacity'. (This article is hereafter referred to with its title.)
41. Prompt-book.
42. Holmes, p. 452.
43. Prompt-book.
44. Felix Barker, Evening News, 16 December 1960: 'Sian Phillip's red-haired wanton'.
45. Christina, Luckyj, A Winter's Snake: Dramatic Forms in the Tragedies of John Webster (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989), p. 79.
46. Lois Potter, 'Realism Versus Nightmare: Problems of Staging The Duchess of Malfi', in The Triple Bond: Plays, Mainly Shakespearean, in Performance, ed. by Joseph G. Price (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1975), pp. 170-89 (p. 180).
47. Prompt-book.
48. Ibid.
49. 'Players and Productions', p. 451.
50. Prompt-book.
51. The change is recorded by Edmund Gardner in 'Stratford Takes over its Home in London', Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 23 December 1960: 'gone are the pilgrims and that dreadful log -- dragged so painfully across the stage on the first Stratford night'. This article is hereafter referred to with its title.
52. Prompt-book.

53. The division, which divided the play into two parts, is recorded in almost all the production records like the scene timings, the running plot and the property plot. Only the prompt-book contains the three act divisions.
54. Prompt-book. The following scene is entitled 'the Madmen Scene'.
55. 'Working on Webster'.
56. Included in the production records. Contact sheets are several series of photographs which cover successive movements of the actors in several short scenes, and from which the production photographs were selected.
57. There is no account in the prompt-book or any other production record on how the waxworks were presented.
58. At the beginning of 'the Waxworks' scene, the prompt-book lists the names of the actors who appeared in the scene. Among them are listed Derek Godfrey, who played Antonio, and 'Boy'; the word certainly means Robert Langley, who played Antonio's eldest son.
59. T.C. Worsley, 'The Duchess of Malfi', Financial Times, 16 December 1960. Hereafter referred to as 'Worseley'.
60. 'Stratford Takes over its Home in London'.
61. H.L., 'Duchess Peggy', Glasgow Herald, 17 December 1960.
62. Marriott.
63. Craig.
64. Prompt-book.
65. 'The Stratford Company Goes to Town'.
66. Prompt-book.
67. But the property continued to be called 'tomb' in the 'Last Scene' in the prompt-book.
68. See note 40 for reference.
69. Richard Findlater, 'Holding up a Mirror to Madame Tussaud's', Time and Tide, 31 December 1960. Hereafter referred to as 'Findlater'.
70. 'Working on Webster'.
71. 'Criticism -- At the Play', Punch, 28 December 1960. This article is hereafter referred to as 'Keown'.
72. 'Stratford in London', Tribune, 30 December 1960. Hereafter referred to as 'Jones'.

73. 'A Miracle of Pity'.
74. 'Webster's Play Well Handled'.
75. Ibid.
76. J.C. Trewin, 'The Duchess of Malfi at the Aldwych', Birmingham Post, 16 December 1960.
77. 'A Correspondent', 'In Good Health', Times Educational Supplement, 30 December 1960: 'the improbabilities in this play are such as to inhibit the suspension of belief in a twentieth century audience'.
78. At the beginning of 'Criticism -- At the Play', Eric Keown suggested his great dissatisfaction with the plot in the summary of the play as follows: 'The Duchess of Malfi is a play to the death. Every single character expires, by strangling, poisoning or stabbing, until at length the slaughter becomes mildly laughable'.
79. The quotation is from 'The Duchess is Dead', Sunday Times, 18 December 1960. Hobson felt that quiet, meditative and sententious lines were treated like 'isolated jewels' and criticized the director for 'not [making] them part of any necklace'. This article is hereafter referred to as 'Hobson'.
80. 'Stratford in London'.
81. These quotations are from 'Holding up a Mirror to Madame Tussaud's'.
82. 'Stratford Comes -- Season Opens with The Duchess of Malfi'.
83. 'The Duchess is Dead'.
84. Worsley.
85. For example, Robert Speight<sup>a</sup> in 'The Duchess of Malfi', Tablet, 23 December 1960, argued that '[Peggy Ashcroft] [was] careful to avoid too heavy emphasis in the earlier scenes'. But a small number of reviewers like Mervyn Jones argued that '[t]his Duchess [was] superb in her misery, but less convincing in her earlier days of ardour and happiness' ('Stratford in London').
86. Caryl Brahms, in 'Blue Stocking and Blue Beard', Plays and Players, 8, no. 5 (February 1961), 7, suggested in the following passage her dissatisfaction with the fact that Peggy Ashcroft laid less emphasis on the Duchess's motherly aspect in this production than she had done at the Haymarket: 'I can remember the earlier revival of Malfi when a Miss Peggy Ashcroft made my throat ache with the with the maternal feeling in her voice in just this question [i.e., 'Why did the Duchess at the point of death ask her lady to see that her little son took his cough mixture [...]?']
87. 'A Miracle of Pity'.

88. Roger Warren, The Duchess of Malfi on the Stage', in John Webster, edited by Brian Morris, Mermaid Critical Commentaries (London: Ernest Benn, 1970), pp. 47-68 (p. 52 and p. 54).
89. 'The Duchess is Dead'.
90. Programme.
91. For example, Speaight: 'Mr. Eric Porter, [...] seemed to give a clearly incestuous motive to Ferdinand'. David Nathan, in 'A Marvel of Drama and Evil', Daily Herald, 15 December 1960, also argued that: 'Duke Ferdinand [...] who finally [realised] that his real reason [for the murder of the Duchess] was his forbidden lust'.
92. Marriott.
93. Keown.
94. Craig: 'Patrick Wymark played Bosola to Bosola's own description "bluff soldier"'. Don Chapman, in 'Horrors of Webster are Toned Down', Oxford Mail, 1 December 1960, also argued that 'Mr. McWhinnie [had] taken as his text for the portrayal of [Bosola] the words [Bosola spoke] to Julia: "I am only a common soldier [sic]"'.
95. 'Horrors of Webster are Toned Down'.
96. 'Stratford Comes -- Season Opens with The Duchess of Malfi'.
97. These quotations are from 'A Miracle of Pity'.
98. 'Stratford Takes over its Home in London'.



The Duchess of Malfi

1960

- I.           the setting after Act V, scene ii
- II.          the court scene
- III.        the market
- IV.         the madmen scene

PLATE I

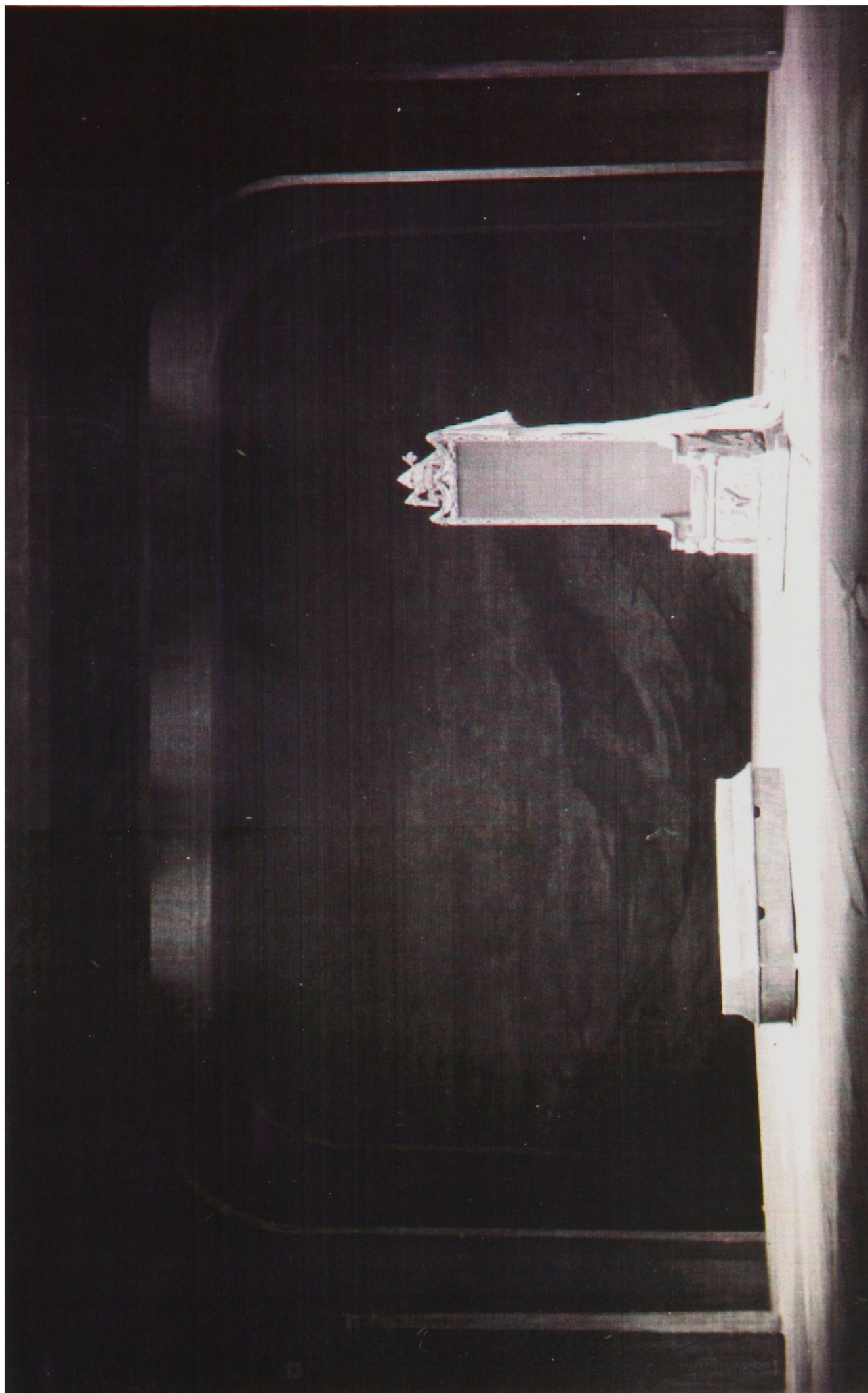


PLATE II





PLATE III



PLATE IV



## CHAPTER 2

### 'This Sane Duchess of Malfi Won't Do'<sup>1</sup> (1971)

Clifford Williams's<sup>2</sup> production of The Duchess of Malfi opened at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre on 15 July 1971 and ran for thirty-two performances up to 9 December 1971. The production did not transfer to any other theatre. Both the costumes and the setting were designed by Farrah.<sup>3</sup> The music was composed by Marc Wilkinson.<sup>4</sup> The average playing time for the first part of the performance was one hour and twenty-one minutes, and for the second part one hour and twenty-seven minutes.<sup>5</sup>

The director's interpretation of the play was revealed in an interview given in the Birmingham Post before the production opened. Asked how he thought of directing the play, he answered as follows:

"I really enjoy working on the Jacobean writers like Webster. It makes extra demands on the company because of the differences between Webster and Shakespeare in speech and psychology.

"The Jacobeans had this realistic view of heaven and hell. It wasn't just hell that was terrible; there was something very wrong with heaven, too. In a way, the Jacobean plays are like Greek tragedies -- there is this terrible inevitability about the action: gods won't intervene.

"I suppose the 'clean up the theatre' people might approve of the Duchess; she has a relationship which is not correct and dies for it. Very moral -- if your morals are that way inclined.

"Really, you have to go as far as Sartre to find the same kind of atmosphere as there is in The Duchess of Malfi and to the modern psychologists for the imagery.

"Just look at the Cardinal when he begins to get guilty." (The Cardinal, in fact, dreams that when walking in his garden, he looks in his fishpond "and methinks I see a thing armed with a rake, which seemed to strike at me." [sic])

"In fact," [...] "the worst character in the play, Ferdinand, says that you mustn't take any notice of heaven or hell. It is what happens here that matters. The Jacobeans were among the first to realise that man alone is responsible for his actions."<sup>6</sup>

These remarks suggest that Clifford Williams saw the play in terms of

existentialism. Though he did not use the term, this viewpoint is evident in his reference to Sartre and remarks such as '[i]t is what happens here that matters', and 'man alone is responsible for his actions'. It seems that the director thought that these remarks summarized the theme of the play.

In the following section I will examine what image the director attempted to establish by means of the programme, the setting and the costumes and discuss how his thematic considerations, based on existentialism, were related to the image expressed in the visual elements.

The programme consists of the following: a cast list, notes of the sources of the play, notes on Ferdinand's motive in having the Duchess murdered, a short bibliography of John Webster, a note on the criticism of the play in the twentieth century, an account of the recent notable productions, short bibliographies of the actors and rehearsal photographs. An examination of some of the articles reveals how the director saw the world of the play and the characters.

The organization of the cast list gives a clue about how the director saw the society of the play; the characters are categorized according to their relationship with the Aragonian siblings as well as according to their social status. Each category has a name, under which the characters belonging to it are introduced. The first category, 'The house of Aragon', of course, includes the Cardinal, Ferdinand and the Duchess. The Cardinal is referred to as the 'brother of' Ferdinand and the Duchess, who are 'twins'. The fact that the two are twins is referred to only once in the text proper.<sup>7</sup> It seems that the director considered the blood ties among the siblings as important as their being members of the family of power and influence.

The next group, 'The household of the Duchess', consists of Antonio, Bosola and Cariola, while the Duchess's other attendants are in another group, 'Attendants of the house of Aragon'. The three are separated from them probably because of their significance in the play. There is a slight change in the reference to Cariola. She is a 'companion to the Duchess' in this production, not 'her woman',<sup>8</sup> as in the original text. This change was made probably to emphasize the closeness between the Duchess and Cariola and the Duchess's trust of Cariola.

The members of the group named 'Courtiers to the house of Aragon' are Delio, Silvio, Castruchio, Julia, Roderigo, Malateste and Pescara. Courtiers whose ranks are indicated in the text are listed with their titles, for example, 'Count Malateste' and 'the Marquis of Pescara'. Delio, whose status is not indicated in the original text in spite of his frequent appearances at court, is reasonably identified as a courtier. This identification is probably made for the audience's convenience. It seems that it is made also to suggest to the audience the atmosphere of this aristocratic world, the inhabitants of which must be identified in terms of his or her social position at the Aragonian court.

The notable point about the group, 'Attendants on the house of Aragon', is the wide range in rank of the characters included: the Duchess's ladies-in-waiting, her officers, a monk, who is the Cardinal's servant, another monk at the shrine of Our Lady of Loretto, the Dignitary of the state of Ancona, soldiers of Ferdinand and the Cardinal, a soldier on guard of the Duchess, and the executioners. The Dignitary is the director's invention. One of the production photographs<sup>9</sup> shows that he watched the banishment of the Duchess and her family by the Cardinal. This invention would have been effective in impressing the audience with the influence of the house of



Aragon, to which a high-ranking person like the Dignitary was one of its attendants. Another significant point is, as the title of the group shows, that the characters are categorized not according to whom they serve, but according to the family to which their masters belong. This serves to emphasize the fact that it is the family which gives its members power and authority.

The group named 'In the professions' consists of those who do not serve any member of the house of Aragon: the Old Lady, who is the Duchess's midwife, the pilgrims, the madmen, the Doctor who attempts to cure the mad Ferdinand, and the Friend of Antonio. The group of madmen consists of the Astrologer, the Lawyer, the Priest, the Doctor, the English Tailor, the Gentleman Usher and the Broker. The Mad Farmer, who was retained in the prompt-book,<sup>10</sup> was lost probably because the reason for his madness, that he failed to gain a fortune with his harvest (IV.ii.56-57)<sup>11</sup>, was too difficult for modern audiences to appreciate. The prompt-book also makes it clear that the Friend of Antonio was invented later; 'a Servant' appears in the prompt-book, as in the original text. The appearance of a friend instead of a servant must have given the audience the impression that Antonio's virtue enabled him to find someone to help him even in adversity and isolation. The change might have been made to confirm the audience's good impression of Antonio.

The rest of the characters are the Duchess's children, listed separately from any of the groups. Probably the director thought that the children, the Duchess's illegitimate offspring, could not be regarded as members of the house of Aragon. It can be argued that the categorization of the characters is made to emphasize the influence of the house of Aragon on the aristocratic society of the play.

The emphasis on the significance of the family in the play is discerned in another article in the programme. The untitled article is concerned with Ferdinand's motive for having the Duchess murdered. Referring to the Duchess's remarriage which provokes Ferdinand's rage, the unidentified writer gives prominence to the fact that she is a member of a royal family which has political influence, and to the significance of family honour in the world of the play. Though the writer introduces the theory that Ferdinand's incestuous love for his sister is the motive of the murder, he or she leaves the theory undiscussed.

The atmosphere which the director discovered in the play is most clearly expressed on two pairs of facing pages of the programme, in which quotations are made both from the play and from some of the distinguished critical works, on how life and the play's world can be viewed. The quotations from the play are as follows:

Oh this gloomy world,  
In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness  
Doth, womanish, and fearful, mankind live? (V.v.99-101)

Of what is't fools make such vain keeping?  
Sin their conception, their birth, weeping:  
Their life, a general mist of error,  
Their death, a hideous storm of terror. (IV.ii.183-36)

Thou art a box of worm seed, at best, but a salvatory of green mummy.  
(IV.ii.123-24)

all our fear,  
Nay, all our terror, is lest our physician  
Should put us in the ground, to be made sweet. (II.i.61-63)

The critical comments include lines as follows: Travis Bogard's 'it is as if the world were an immense jungle, steaming and rotten with disease, haunted by the sudden unseen treacheries of man'<sup>12</sup>; F.L. Lucas's 'Such is Webster's atmosphere -- the individuality of the Renaissance, but also its despair; and with it the courage of despair'<sup>13</sup>; Rupert Brooke's 'Human

beings are writhing grubs in an immense night. And the night is without stars or moon'<sup>14</sup>; and T.S. Eliot's 'Webster was much possessed by death | And saw the skull <sup>beneath</sup> the skin'.<sup>15</sup> All these quotations serve to establish a certain viewpoint of life and the world: that the world, in which evil is dominant, is dark and hopeless, and that life is vain because human beings are destined to die after struggling with evil.

The programme's colour scheme of black and red serves to suggest what the director considered the atmosphere of the world of the play. For example, in one pair of the pages of quotations the background is black, and the passages from the play are printed in red; in the other pair the background is red, and all the quotations are printed in black. Red is also used for the background for the illustration of an old-fashioned prison. Another illustration, which provokes the image of <sup>a</sup>prison, consists of black bars crossing diagonally against a red background. The marked impression of the two colours, combined with the quotations and the illustrations of prisons, seems to imply the darkness and hopelessness of the world and its inhabitants' despair.

A poster included with the programme indicates the director's focus. The poster contains black-and-white photographs of the faces of the Cardinal, the Duchess and Ferdinand from left to right. The photographs are partly touched in red and gold, and the background is black. A passage from the play is printed under the photographs:

You never fix'd your eye on three fair medals,  
Cast in one figure, of so different temper. (I.ii.110-11)

The photographs and the passage make it clear that the blood ties of the three characters, already emphasized in the programme, was given prominence in the production. The programme and the poster established the director's

view of the play and the play's atmosphere, while giving necessary information about the play and its plot. Not only the content but the visual effect of the programme and the poster were combined to convey a unified interpretation.

The information about the costumes is limited due to the loss of the wardrobe plot.<sup>16</sup> The remaining records about them are eight colour slides, which cover scenes from Act I, scene ii, to Act III, scene iv,<sup>17</sup> and the production photographs, all of which are black-and-white. The slides and the photographs suggest that the costumes, though eclectic, were intended to convey the atmosphere of a hierarchical society. There were differences between the costumes for high-ranking characters and lower-ranking ones. The differences were evident in costumes both for male and female characters. Elegantly designed dresses were worn by high-ranking women like the Duchess and Julia. Their dresses had low necklines and high waistlines just under the bust. The sleeves and the bodices were close-fitting. The skirts with long trains fell long and straight. Dresses like these must have had flowing shapes when the women walked. The Duchess's dress was the most elaborate. The bodice and the skirt of her dress in the court scene were scarlet (see plate V). The sleeves and the underskirt were made of the same material: dark red lurex. The neckline was ornamented with golden chains. The Duchess's jewellery was also elegant; she wore a golden necklace and a <sup>l</sup>golden collar ornamented with pearl-like gems. Julia was less lavishly dressed. She wore a red dress on a white underdress. The only jewellery that could be seen was a collar around her neck, which was less elaborate than the Duchess's. The Duchess's ladies-in-waiting wore much plainer dresses, which were ornamented with no

jewellery. The ladies wore headdresses designed probably to indicate their status, and they were dressed in darker colours like brown, dark blue and black. Some of their dresses were without long trains. One of the ladies even dressed herself as if she were a puritan; she had a large white collar and white cuffs; a white underdress was seen under her dark blue skirt, which was rather short. Low-ranking women like the Old Lady wore homely dress. She had a plain dark-coloured headdress, which almost looked like a scarf; and a knit shawl on her shoulders. Over her white underdress she wore a loose gown with a low waistline, short sleeves and a gathered bodice. There was no elegance in the Old Lady's costume.

Costumes for the male characters also reflected the difference of social status of those who wore them. As a member of the house of Aragon, Ferdinand's costume was the most elaborate. In the court scene Ferdinand wore a black jacket on a lurex shirt; what looked like a collar around his neck; a golden chain; black gloves edged with red gems, and a black belt (see plate V). The noblemen wore plainer costumes. Some of them had a black jacket or a waistcoat on their dark-coloured shirts. The only exception among the noblemen's costumes was Castruchio's, which indicated his status: 'a lawyer'.<sup>18</sup> In Act II, scene i, Castruchio wore a long cloak under a long overcoat edged with fur, and a cap. This costuming was made probably to emphasize his stupidity in spite of his profession. Lower-ranking men like Antonio and the Duchess's officers were all dressed in black. They wore high-collared black jackets on white shirts and trousers made of black cloth, not of lurex as in the Ferdinand's and the noblemen's. The plainest costume was worn by Bosola. In most scenes he wore a dark-coloured multi-belted jacket, a pair of trousers also of a dark colour, and short boots. He wore them even when he visited the Aragonian siblings.

The costume suggested Bosola's status as a commoner. Only in the apricot scene in Act II, scene i, did Bosola dress better; he wore a bolero-like jacket on a white shirt with elaborate cuffs, sash belt around his waist, and a cap. But even this costume looked plain compared to others'.

In most cases dark colours were dominant in the costumes. Apart from the Cardinal's cassock, red was used mainly by characters of the highest ranks, such as Julia, Ferdinand and the Duchess. There was a limited use of gold, for example, for their jewellery. The choice of textile for their costumes also reflected their rank. The costumes were mainly made of ordinary cloth and lurex, and the latter was used for high-ranking characters. There were some cases, however, in which red and gold were used in unusual manners. One was the Cardinal's cassock in Act II, scene iv, and scene v (see plate VII). In most scenes the Cardinal wore an ordinary cardinal's robe: a skull cap, a cape and a cassock which was made of velvet. The white sleeves had small patterns in relief. A golden cross and chain was seen from beneath the cape. But in Act II, scene iv, and scene v, he wore a robe with unusual colouring and textile. The cape and the sleeves were golden and shiny, with leaf-like patterns on them. The scarlet cassock, also shiny, had a distinct swirling pattern on it. This robe was worn in the scenes in which the Cardinal met Julia and plotted against the Duchess along with Ferdinand; it was in these scenes that he revealed to the audience his lust and the inclination towards intrigue for the first time. It can be argued that the Cardinal's gaudy robe was designed to emphasize his much worldly nature. The other case was the Cardinal's ~~COSTUME~~ after the investiture (see plate VIII). A red plume and an underdress, which had red and gold horizontal stripes of shiny fabric, were used probably to contribute to the scene's pompous and ceremonious

atmosphere.

The change of the costumes of the significant characters reflected that of their situation or psychological state. For example, in Act IV, the imprisoned Duchess wore a plain dark-coloured dress. The only thing she had with her was a cross and chain. Deprived of her duchy and power, and <sup>apart</sup> from her husband, the costume served to suggest her decline in status and dejection. Another example was Ferdinand's costume in Act V, scene ii: a torn luteen suit under a loose gown. The disorder in the costume reflected his madness.

Not only the costumes but the setting was eclectic. It was designed to suggest a certain image to the audience rather than to look realistic. The setting was made of grilles and walls, which formed a U-like shape, with the back wall squared and the front spreading towards the audience. The walls were 'high, dark, grated',<sup>19</sup> looking like 'massive stone slabs'.<sup>20</sup> The grilles, which looked like trellis-work screens, made up part of each side wall. At the end of the side walls, there were other walls, which were slightly thrust towards centrestage and which must have given the impression of enclosure. The floor was black, partly spangled with gold. The overall structure of the setting must have given the impression that the characters were confined in a dark place. The association of the setting with a prison would have been easy for the audience; the programme had already shown an illustration of a prison. The lighting, on the other hand, emphasized the darkness; in most of the important scenes follow-spots were used to pick out the characters from the surrounding gloom. The setting was a permanent one, which represented all the locations of the play. Sometimes designs were projected on the backwall to suggest the change of locations.<sup>21</sup> It was clear from the

setting that the director aimed to suggest symbolically that the world of the play was a prison.

Two devices made it clear that it was an aristocratic society which was expressed as a prison. The first device was on the back wall. There was a small door on each side of the back wall. The doors were painted gold and looked like trellis-work screens. They were usually used for entrances and exits. When they were kept open the audience's view was disturbed by a pair of partitions, which were also painted gold and looked like trelliswork screens (see plate VIII). They were angled in the middle and placed behind the doors. The device suggested that there was no exit from the world of the play even though there seemed to be one, and that the characters were bound by the house of Aragon, the power and authority of which were implied by the gold colour. Another device, which was more conspicuous, was a pair of large golden partitions, each of which was placed beside each side wall. Each partition was angled near one of the edges. One side, which looked like a trellis-work screen, made up part of each side wall. The other side, latticed, was much longer. They were presented to the audience in some of the crucial scenes, in which the partitions were moved centrestage, slightly directed towards the audience. In these scenes the partitions represented the border between two different worlds; for example, they served as the gate of the shrine in Act III, scene iv, and as prison bars at the beginning of Act IV, scene i.

The partitions had another function. In some scenes they were moved to 'cut off an interior scene'.<sup>22</sup> For example, in the wooing scene, it is certain that they were used instead of 'the arras' in the original text (I.ii.280 s.d.). The prompt-book indicates that Cariola is 'upstage', while the partitions were moved downstage with some space between them.



The device might have had a theatrical effect; the Duchess knew that Cariola was behind the partitions, while Antonio did not; the audience knew that, and while the Duchess wooed Antonio, the latticed partition<sup>S</sup> might have enabled the audience to see Cariola watching them. The partitions hid another thing in the same scene; one of the production photographs shows that a bed was placed upstage, though this is not recorded in the prompt-book (see plate VI). The bed suggested to the audience the Duchess's desire to consummate her marriage, before she said, 'I would have you lead your fortune by the hand, | Unto your marriage bed' (I.ii.408-09). It must have been effective; when it was supposed that Antonio did not notice the bed, the audience was able to see it, and to notice the Duchess's desire and her private self as a woman, which was not revealed to Antonio until she confessed her affection for him.

The partitions were used in a similar manner in Act III, scene ii, when the Duchess falsely accused Antonio in front of her officers. The Duchess, Antonio, the officers and Cariola were in front of the partitions, which hid the bed. Here again the audience was able to see the bed through the partitions. During the accusation the Duchess played her role as a duchess, showing her public self to the officers, who were not able to imagine that Antonio and the Duchess were married. The audience, on the other hand, had seen Antonio and the Duchess as husband and wife at the beginning of the scene. In the scene of the false accusation it became clear to the audience that the partitions hid not only the bed but the Duchess's private self, symbolized by the bed, from members of the public world, for example, the officers. In these scenes the partitions worked effectively for complex theatricality.

The furniture was in harmony with the costumes and the setting in

most cases; most pieces were dark-coloured and were designed to express the users' social status. For example, the desk and the chairs used by the Duchess and Antonio in the wooing scene were elegant and elaborate. The desk was covered with a dark green material, which was fixed with gold rivets on the edges. It was supported by a pair of two semi-circular legs, which were also ornamented with gold rivets. Each of the chairs was made of two pairs of semi-circular pieces of wood. Each pair, symmetrically joined at the centre, was used to make up one side of the chair, and the two sides were fixed by horizontal bars. The chair was also ornamented with gold rivets. These rivets, glittering in the dark background, emphasized elegance. The bench in the apricots scene, on the other hand, was made of scarcely planed wooden planks, and suggested that it was used by common people.

The furniture had another affinity with the costumes in that some pieces had extraordinary colouring or shapes. For example, the Duchess's bed, used in the wooing scene and the bedroom scene, was red. As I have suggested, the bed was designed to symbolize the Duchess's private self, especially her love and passion for Antonio. The colour of the bed seems to have emphasized this aspect. Another example was the Cardinal's throne, which was all golden, with the exception of red armrests (see plate VII). Two stools attached to the throne were also golden. The throne was Gothic in style, though rather exaggerated; its back was made of tall bars pointed at the top, which were supported by another bar, bent at the centre with its acute angle directed upwards. The throne was used along with the Cardinal's gaudy robe in Act II, scene iv, and scene v, the scenes of the Cardinal's rendezvous with Julia and the plot. The throne was seen again in Act V, scene ii, in which the Cardinal murdered Julia after having

revealed to her the murder of the Duchess. The golden and quasi-Gothic throne not only indicated the owner's high rank. With high artificiality and coldness conveyed by its geometric and metallic appearances, the throne contributed to presenting the Cardinal as a man who lacked warmth and who would plot anything and carry it out to preserve the family honour and his own honour. It seems that, as with the costumes, the extraordinariness of some of the pieces of furniture indicated factors which caused a tragic result in the play: the Duchess's intense passion for Antonio, and the Cardinal's politic and cold nature.

The setting, the furniture and the costumes contributed to the concept that the aristocratic world of the play was in fact a prison, however elegant and lavish it seemed, because it was under the influence of the house of Aragon, a family which had political power. The eclectic and symbolic nature of visual elements could be seen as the reflection of the director's interpretation of the play. In making the audience unable to identify the period in which these materials were modelled, the director seems to have aimed to make the audience perceive the play's essence, which he considered modern and which could be identified with existentialism.

The text used for the production was the New Mermaid edition.<sup>23</sup> The prompt-book is made of foolscap-sized loose leaves. Two pages of the printed scripts, cut out from two texts, are pasted on the right-hand side of each of the right pages, with the exceptions of pages 88, 94 and 100 of the prompt-book, on each of which only one page is pasted. Some simple directions for modes of entrances and exits are written in the script (e.g., 'U/R', which means 'upstage right', beside the original stage direction 'Exit'). There are detailed directions for the cues for doors,

grilles, trucks and lighting in the margin. All the stage business is written on the left-hand pages.

The performed text was 2,467 lines long as against 2,864 lines in the full play. Twenty of the deleted lines are marked unclearly.

There are some reattributions of speakers. Grisolan is removed from Act I, scene ii, so the laughter of Roderigo and Grisolan (line 42) is attributed to Roderigo alone. In Act IV, scene ii, some lines of the Mad Astrologer, the Mad Doctor and the Mad Priest were reattributed to the Mad Broker, the Mad Taylor and the Mad Farmer respectively. This might be explained in terms of dramatic impact; the impression of the Duchess's being surrounded by the madmen could have been stronger when more of them spoke. There is some confusion in the final scenes. Roderigo's name is crossed out on line 19 in Act V, scene iv; it seems as if he were removed from the scene and his lines were reattributed to Grisolan. But his line in Act V, scene v, is retained. The cast list resolves the problem by making it clear that Grisolan was eventually<sup>Y</sup> removed from the dramatis personae in this production. The confusion in Act I, scene ii, and Act V, scene iv, and scene v, suggests that the director decided at a later stage which of the minor characters, Roderigo or Grisolan, he would remove.

Some single words are changed for a variety of reasons. In Act III, scene i, when Antonio says that Ferdinand looks dangerous, Delio asks, 'Pray why?' (line 20). Then Antonio describes how Ferdinand behaves instead of answering the question. In this case 'why' is changed into 'how'. Emendations like this are made to clarify the text. It is sometimes difficult to see why a word is changed; both the original word and the new word make sense in the context. But in that case the new word was probably considered to be more comprehensible to the audience. In

Ferdinand's 'If thou do love him, cut out thine own tongue | Lest it bewray him' (III.ii.109-10), 'bewray' is changed into 'betray', which is more familiar. There is a case of a complete substitution of one word for another because of its obscurity: 'sound' in the Duchess's 'Shall I sound under thy fingers?' (II.i.129) was changed into 'swoon'.

The prime aim of the cuts seems to be to shorten the text, though in some cases it is possible to conjecture why specific lines were omitted. A typical abbreviation is the removal of the Cardinal's lines in which he narrates a fiction to the noblemen about the cause of Ferdinand's madness (V.ii.87-98). Other cuts seem to fall into different categories. A few lines, which describe stage business, are cut probably because they were considered unnecessary: for example, Bosola's 'Some of your help, false friend [i.e., his lantern]: oh, here it is' (II.iii.54), as he held out a lantern to pick up the paper which Antonio had dropped. More lines are cut in passages in which the characters have a long conversation over one subject but do not develop it. For example, at the beginning of Act I, scene ii, Castruchio advises that a ruler like Ferdinand should not go to a battlefield in his own person (lines 11-12). When Ferdinand asks the reason, Castruchio says:

It is fitting a soldier arise to be a prince, but not necessary a prince descend to be a captain! (lines 14-15)

No, my lord, he were far better do it by a deputy. (lines 17-18)

These lines are an expansion of what has been said a few lines before; Castruchio discusses the subject in detail, but does not give an answer until lines 22 and 23. Lines 14 to 21, which include the lines above and Ferdinand's replies to them, are removed. Lines are also removed in passages in which there is no change in the characters' action even when


the subject is developed. An example is found in Act V, scene ii, in which Julia asks the Cardinal to tell her what troubles his mind. When the Cardinal refuses to tell her for the second time, she begins to persuade him to do so, until he makes a compromise and says that he has 'committed | Some secret deeds' (lines 247-48). In this case out of sixteen lines which include the Cardinal's refusals and Julia's persuasion, thirteen lines (lines 234-46) are removed.

Some cuts are made for the convenience of modern audiences. Lines are omitted which refer to myths, medical or scientific knowledge and customs, which are now forgotten or unfamiliar. For example, the Duchess's 'I am | So troubled with the mother' (II.i.119-20); Bosola's reference to 'Pluto, the god of riches' (III.ii.243); and the Mad Astrologer's satire of making a woodcock, which was believed to be brainless,<sup>24</sup> a pattern for a crest. But some references of this sort are retained in scenes where they made an obvious dramatic impact; one example is one of the Danaë references (I.ii.168-69) when Bosola compares his reward to the golden rain and his task to thunderbolts; another is part of Paris's choice (III.ii.36-40) spoken in the domestic happiness of the bedroom scene.

Interpretative cuts are made as well. Some lines are removed which, in performance, might have reduced the tension of the scenes in which they were placed, or when they might have even provoked the audience's laughter. The best example is in Act V, scene v, when the Cardinal, threatened by Bosola, cries for help, but is ignored by the noblemen, who think that the Cardinal cries *in* jest as he has told them beforehand. All the lines of the noblemen during Bosola's assault upon the Cardinal are omitted. So are the Duchess's lines when she hastily plans to let Antonio escape from her palace after Ferdinand has detected her marriage:

our weak safety  
Runs upon ingenious wheels: short syllables  
Must stand for periods. (III.ii.176-78)

The lines might have been regarded as lengthy in this context.

Some interpretative cuts affect characterization. The presentation of Antonio is shaped by such cutting. Though he easily obtains the audience's sympathy in the first act, he is not always sympathetic in Act II and Act III. For instance, when he finds Bosola in  darkness just after the Duchess has given birth, he says in his aside, 'This mole does undermine me' (II.iii.14) and 'This fellow will undo me' (II.iii.29). He even abuses Bosola with rough language:

You are an impudent snake, sir,  
Are you scarce warm, and do you show your sting? (II.iii.38-39)

In Act III, scene ii, he appears from the room in which he has been hiding while Ferdinand has been with the Duchess. Finding the dagger handed by Ferdinand to her, Antonio says:

turn it towards him, and  
So fasten the keen edge in his rank gall. (III.ii.152-54)

When Antonio is absent, there are commentators whose references are not always consistent, even though some of them are his enemies. In Act V, scene ii, the Cardinal says that Antonio:

account[s] religion  
But a school-name, for fashion of the world. (V.ii.130-31)

The impression of Antonio is inconsistent; in some scenes his words and behaviour give the impression that he is a coward. The Cardinal's comment sounds groundless considering Antonio's attitude towards religion in Act III, scene v, in which he consoles the Duchess, referring to Heaven's hand which controls human beings (lines 59-63, 79-80). These lines that may make him look unsympathetic are removed.

The Duchess, the central figure, loses only twenty-four lines throughout the play. A new line, 'I counsel safely', is attributed to her when Antonio's 'You counsel safely' (III.v.58) is removed. Most of the cuts are made in Act III; eleven lines in scene ii, and ten lines in scene v. With a few exceptions, most of them seem simply to have been made to shorten the text, and are not lines which affect the course of events: for example, 'So shall you hold my favour. I pray let him' (III.ii.190), when the Duchess falsely accuses Antonio, trying to let him escape. Less explicable is the omission of the lines which include 'You had the trick, in audit time to be sick, | Till I had sign'd your Quietus' (III.ii.186-87); the word 'quietus', reminding the audience of the wooing scene in which the Duchess first uses the word, would have had dramatic effect. In Act III, scene v, she loses lines about her dream, which is emblematic and unfamiliar to modern audiences. In Act IV, scene i, she loses only one line, 'Puff! let me blow these vipers from me' (line 90), which may sound absurd in performance. In Act IV, scene ii, the climactic scene, she retains all her lines. The Duchess's lines are lost mainly for convenience. The director probably did not find it necessary to make interpretative cuts to her lines. Unlike Antonio, the impression of the Duchess is consistent; throughout the play she is described as a sympathetic woman who loves her husband and children even in her own adversity.

The most significant interpretative cut is made in Act III, scene iii. The following passage is removed:

FERDINAND: Write to the Duke of Malfi, my young nephew  
                   [the Duchess] had by her first husband, and acquaint him  
                   With's mother's honesty.

BOSOLA: I will. (68-70)



This is one of the most problematic passages in the original text; the reference to the existence of the Duchess's legitimate son produces some contradictions. One of them is Ferdinand's motive for the murder of the Duchess. He says that he has had her murdered because he would have gained 'An infinite mass of treasure by her death' (IV.ii.279). In fact it is impossible for him to do so; her legacy should go to her son by her first marriage. Ferdinand's motive not only fails to justify his fierce anger against the Duchess's second marriage and his torture; it fails to prove logical. Another contradiction is found at the end of the play, when Delio, introducing the eldest son of the Duchess and Antonio, says that the noblemen must make their efforts 'To establish this young hopeful gentleman | In's mother's right' (V.v.111-12). This passage inevitably raises the question of what the Duchess's legitimate son would do if Antonio's son was to inherit the duchy. The ending of the original play makes the audience wonder whether peace and restoration of order are suggested. The omission of the problematic passage indicates the director's effort<sup>5</sup> to make the play more straightforward.

Other significant omissions are made in Act IV, scene ii. From the Madmen's song the following lines are removed:

At last when as our quire wants breath,  
                   our bodies being blest,  
 We'll sing like swans, to welcome death.  
                   and die in love and rest. (lins 70-73)

And so are Bosola's lines from his dirge:

Much you had of land and rent,  
 Your length in clay's now competent.  
 A long war disturb'd your mind,  
 Here your perfect peace is sign'd. (lines 179-82)

Without these lines, which refer to the rest and peace of mind brought by death, the song merely suggests that life is dominated by disorder

symbolized by the howls of 'ravens, screech-owls, bulls and bears' (line 66); the dirge emphasizes the horror and solitude in dying, by means of the image of darkness and the implication that life is vain and that nothing awaits the Duchess after her death. The song and the dirge focus the audience's attention on the hopelessness of this world. But as a result of the cutting the Duchess becomes the only character that speaks about Heaven and believes that there is rest after death; for her heaven is the place for reunion with her husband and children, who she believes are dead. Thus the omission of the lines cited above emphasizes the contrast between what the song and the dirge suggest -- darkness and pessimism in the world of the play -- and the Duchess's calm and courage.

Some lines in which characters generalize or moralize are also cut. For example, the following lines are removed:

They that think long, small expedition win,  
For musing much o'th'end, cannot begin. (V.ii.117-18)

Bosola delivers these lines after he pretends to accept willingly the Cardinal's offer to employ him as a spy. The lines were probably regarded as ponderous. The omission of the following lines at the end of Act II, scene iv, may be more interpretative:

They pass through whirlpools, and deep woes do shun,  
Who the event weigh, ere the action's done. (lines 82-83)

These generalizing lines are uttered in uneasiness, when Delio hears about Ferdinand's anger and feels anxious about Antonio's safety.

In the following section I will describe the way the play was staged and examine how the director's interpretation was reflected in the acting. The proceedings are reconstructed from the prompt-book, the production records including the production photographs, and the reviews.

The performance began with a wordless prologue, which was the director's invention. The prompt-book's account, though not detailed, shows how the prologue was performed. After a fanfare all the characters who belonged to the aristocratic society -- the Duchess, the Aragonian brethren, the noblemen, Julia, the Duchess's ladies-in-waiting, her officers, Antonio, and Delio -- <sup>25</sup> appeared through downstage sidewalls.<sup>26</sup> After a short series of dance-like movements they made an exit. A more detailed description of the prologue is provided by Ann Leslie, who recognized its significance in the production:

The stage is a huge, black empty cavern. Suddenly, two thin-throated trumpets lift up their aching mouths to the black vault above and utter a despairing cry of magnificent, ragged beauty, a yelp of pride and pain. A window opens to reveal the Duchess flanked by her two brothers, like an icon glistening with red and black and gold, her face already waxen with doom. These are Webster's "three fair medals, cast one figure, of so different temper" whose ancient tragedy about to be celebrated, is a pagan parable of the forces of darkness overwhelming the forces of light.<sup>27</sup>

It is certain that two details of the prologue reminded the audience of the programme and the poster: the colour scheme of black, red and gold; and the positioning of the Duchess flanked by her brothers, which was the same as that of the photographs of the three in the poster. The consistent use of these two impressive details would have established the Aragonian brethren as the focus of the following action.

The play proper began with the conversation of Antonio and Delio, during which Bosola made his first appearance. He emerged from upstage and walked towards the left-hand side of the proscenium arch. He encountered the Cardinal, who appeared from the left-hand sidewall downstage and walked towards downstage centre. Bosola's 'dark workman's clothes',<sup>28</sup> made a sharp contrast to the Cardinal's scarlet cassock, indicating Bosola's rank in the aristocratic society of the play and the economic necessity which

compelled him to be a villain. Bosola had been suffering from the neglect of the Cardinal, for whom he did his service. He expressed his desperate longing for reward in kneeling to the Cardinal, as he exclaimed, 'Miserable age, where only the reward of doing well, is the doing of it!' (I.i.32-33); there was nothing ironical in his behaviour. The Cardinal responded to Bosola hypocritically and coldly; he made the sign of the cross to Bosola and went away. Here Bosola was presented as a victim of the Cardinal's ingratitude, who thus deserved the audience's sympathy. From the beginning it was clear that this Bosola challenged some of the audience, who had expected 'sinister excess'.<sup>29</sup> This interpretation of Bosola had the advantage of explaining away Antonio's contradictory comments on him before and after his plea for reward. Though Antonio called Bosola 'The only court-gall' (I.i.23) on his entrance, he admitted later that he had heard about Bosola's bravery (I.i.75-76). The change in Antonio's attitudes towards Bosola could be justified by the explanation that Bosola's desperate plea had drawn sympathy from Antonio.

As Castruchio, Silvio, Roderigo, and, a little later, Ferdinand entered from upstage at the beginning of Act I, scene ii, Antonio and Delio bowed to them and stood apart. Next to the noblemen two of the Duchess's officers began to collect jousting gear. The business suggested that the noblemen had just returned from a joust. It enabled the audience to anticipate the following conversation about the game. At the same time the jousting gear contributed to an aristocratic atmosphere. At this point another piece of business served to reinforce it: glasses of drink were served to the noblemen.

In this scene Ferdinand made his first appearance in the play proper and revealed much of his character. Ferdinand's influence on the

atmosphere of the court was also established. Ferdinand showed his arrogance when he threw a jewel to Silvio, bidding him to give it to Antonio as the reward for having won the game. The conversation between Ferdinand and the noblemen was accompanied by laughter from the latter. The noblemen were anxious to please Ferdinand, who was not only arrogant but whimsical. When Silvio delivered a bawdy joke, which made Roderigo laugh, Ferdinand, after a pause, rebuked Roderigo for the laughter, and claimed that the courtiers should laugh only when he laughed. The pause must have raised embarrassment among the noblemen, who recognized the sudden change of Ferdinand's mood. But they still made efforts to please Ferdinand; in spite of his warning, all of them laughed at his joke. Through the use of comedy the audience could feel the atmosphere of the court, in which the courtiers' first concern was to flatter the members of the house of Aragon, who ruled them.

All three members of the house of Aragon were present at the entrance of the Cardinal, and of the Duchess, who was accompanied by Cariola. The Duchess wore a black veil, which showed her status as a widow. Before Antonio delivered the line 'three fair medals, cast in one figure' (I.ii.110-11), the affinity of the three as siblings was suggested by their costumes (see plate V). The Cardinal wore a scarlet cassock; the Duchess used the same colour for her bodice and skirt; she wore lurex for the sleeves and underdress; Ferdinand also wore lurex for his shirt and tights. Antonio began to describe the nature of the siblings. The first subject was the Cardinal. As a result of the cutting of lines which describe the Cardinal as a corrupt churchman, prominence was given to his evil nature as an aristocrat inclined to jealousy and plots. Seeing Cariola turn to Ferdinand, Delio shifted his attention to him and abruptly asked about

Ferdinand. Antonio, after describing Ferdinand's character, turned back his subject to the Cardinal, who was Ferdinand's twin brother 'In quality' (I.ii.94). The Duchess's movement downstage gave a reason for Antonio to describe her before being asked. The audience, however, was led to look at all the siblings before it focused its attention on the Duchess. On Antonio's 'You never fix'd your eye on three fair medals' (I.ii.110), Ferdinand and the Cardinal, who had been next to the Duchess, walked away and left her near the right-hand side of the proscenium arch. Looking between the Duchess and Ferdinand, Antonio went on speaking. At the end of the line, the audience saw the Duchess and her brothers standing apart; when its attention was equally on the 'three fair medals', it was reminded again that the Duchess and her brothers belonged to the same family, however different she might be from them in nature.

Antonio ceased to be a mere narrator while describing the Duchess's nature. He suggested that he had an unrequited love for the Duchess, when he drifted upstage, speaking that her look would make one 'dote | On that sweet countenance' (I.ii.119-20). This manner of revealing his affection for her must have created a sympathetic impression.

After the Duchess, her attendants and the courtiers left the stage, Bosola reappeared to see the Cardinal and Ferdinand. The Cardinal left on finding Bosola and Ferdinand talked to him. When Bosola knew that Ferdinand wanted him to be a spy to watch the Duchess, the dilemma of a conflict between his poverty and his conscience was clearly indicated; he threw away the money offered by Ferdinand and made to leave. Ferdinand stopped him with an offer of a position at the Duchess's palace. Seeing him come back, Ferdinand picked up the money and gave it back to him. Bosola's recognition of financial necessity, which made him suppress his

conscience, made his line 'I would have you curse yourself now' (I.ii.192) sound bitter, as he received the money. The audience's sympathy with him must have been reinforced.

The Aragonian siblings reappeared after Bosola's exit. The Cardinal and Ferdinand warned the Duchess not to remarry without their consent. It was in this scene that Ferdinand revealed a touch of his obsession about the Duchess's remarriage. He gave prominence to the word 'widow' in 'You are a widow' (I.ii.214), which suggested his suspicion that the Duchess, who already knew 'what man [was]' (I.ii.215), might remarry just for pleasure. Ferdinand's strong objection to the mere idea of her remarriage surprised the Cardinal, who, on Ferdinand's 'Marry? they are most luxurious | Will wed twice' (I.ii.218-19), dropped the Duchess's hand, which he was about to kiss. The Duchess, after watching the Cardinal leave, turned back to Ferdinand and discovered that he had pointed a dagger at her. The gesture indicated Ferdinand's irrational objection to her remarriage. The attitude of her brothers, especially that of Ferdinand, however, resulted in confirming her resolution to remarry. But she was aware that the action which she would take was unusual and might be dangerous for a woman of her rank. Stopping Cariola, who was about to send for Antonio, the Duchess said:

wish me good speed

For I am going into a wilderness,  
Where I shall find no path, nor friendly clew  
To be my guide. (I.ii.277-80)

The production photographs show that the Duchess had unveiled her face before Antonio appeared, though the prompt-book has no evidence of this business. The action made it clear that the Duchess was determined to stop mourning her dead husband and to enter another married life, though she was

aware of the danger.

Antonio appeared. He was always conscious of his rank; he seated himself when directed by the Duchess to do so. Ignorant of her true intention, he took her words 'What's laid up for tomorrow' (I.ii.285) literally. When he stood up to fetch an account book at the Duchess's 'I look young for your sake. | You have tane my cares upon you' (I.ii.288-89), his uprightness as a steward made him look even comic. In spite of his love for her, when he began to realize that she wanted to marry him, his class-consciousness caused him embarrassment, which was expressed through pauses placed before 'You have made me stark blind' (I.ii.328) and 'There is a saucy and ambitious devil | Is dancing in this circle' (I.ii.329-30). The consciousness made him kneel to her as he fully recognized her intention. Now her proposal of marriage made him agonize. He sat down, with his head in his hands. His attitude towards the Duchess did not change until she knelt to him (see plate VI) and '[led] his nerveless hand to her bosom'.<sup>30</sup> The Duchess's business strongly suggested her eagerness to make him feel equal to her and her desire to be regarded as a woman, not as a duchess whom he served. This led Antonio finally to accept her proposal. But the expression of fear and anxiety was still seen in his face even when the two knelt down and vowed to marry, taking each other's hands. That must have left the audience in uneasiness before Cariola referred to the Duchess's 'fearful madness' (I.ii.419).

During Act II, scene iv, and scene v, in which the audience's uneasiness was magnified, the director's emphasis was on the Cardinal, who represented the house of Aragon, the honour of which was stained by the Duchess's childbirth. Act II, scene iv, opened with the rendezvous of the Cardinal and Julia. She appeared a little later and stood stage right,



barefoot. Told to sit down by the Cardinal, she seated herself on his lap, indicating their intimacy. But it was rendered doubtful as the Cardinal implied that he did not trust women in general. Unable to bear to listen to him, Julia stood up and turned away. He also rose and stood next to her to stop her. Julia's protest against his arrogant attitude delayed the Cardinal's notice of a servant, who had entered a few moments before to inform him that Delio had arrived. Hearing that, the Cardinal made his exit. One of the production photographs shows<sup>s</sup> the Cardinal talking to Julia. Sitting on one of the stools attached to the throne and leaning towards Julia, who was seated on the throne, he fully expressed his lust both with his facial expression and gesture. Thus in Act II, scene iv, the Cardinal's lust and his cruelty towards women were established.

The exit of Delio, who felt anxious about Antonio's safety, was followed by the entrance of the Aragonian brethren, which opened Act II, scene v (see plate VII). Ferdinand appeared first and sat down on the left-hand side stool. The Cardinal, a moment later, entered. He sat down on the throne and asked Ferdinand what had enraged him. Ferdinand's loss of self-control was suggested in his restless and exaggerated movements while narrating the Duchess's childbirth. Condemning the Duchess's conduct, Ferdinand stood up, walked around the throne, and knelt to the Cardinal. Then Ferdinand sat down on the right-hand side stool to wipe his tears. He stood up again, walked behind the throne, and knelt down again to ask the Cardinal to say something to prevent him from being overwhelmed by his imagination. Ferdinand's rage reached its climax on the Cardinal's 'You fly beyond your reason' (line 47); he grabbed the Cardinal's arms and lifted him up, exclaiming, 'Go to, mistress!' (line 47), as if he saw the Duchess, instead of the Cardinal, in front of him. The Cardinal, unable to

endure Ferdinand's rage, turned to him and held him. The Cardinal persuaded Ferdinand to be rational, to which Ferdinand replied, shivering, 'Have not you | My palsy?' (lines 55-56). The Cardinal released Ferdinand and circled around the throne, continuing his persuasion. But it did not work. Ferdinand was still obsessed by his raving imagination; kneeling down, he suddenly referred to sin in his family, which Heaven would revenge. The Cardinal knelt down to stare at him, fearing that Ferdinand might be losing his sanity. Seeing Ferdinand still deep in his rage, the Cardinal gave up his persuasion and made to go; at this moment Ferdinand calmed down temporarily, saying, 'Nay, I have done' (line 74). At the end of Ferdinand's speech, the Cardinal took his hands as if to encourage him, and they left the stage separately.

The director gave prominence to the Cardinal through the use of his gaudy costume, which was used only in Act II, scene iv, and scene v. It must have attracted the audience's attention to him, even when Ferdinand's rage was highlighted in Act II, scene v. The costume enabled the audience to acknowledge the Cardinal's significance in this production. The visual effect emphasized many aspects of the Cardinal revealed through his lines and business: his lust, distrust of women, cruelty to them, calm and rationality even in his anger. Through this emphasis the director established the image of the Cardinal as a cold and politic aristocrat and the representative of a powerful and corrupt family.

Ferdinand reappeared in the Duchess's palace to witness her married life, which opened Act III, scene ii. The Duchess appeared, led by Cariola, who had a candlestick. Antonio accompanied them. They first entered the Duchess's chamber, which was furnished with a table and a chair; the two partitions, moved towards centrestage, served as walls

between the chamber and the bedroom. Antonio became playful in the relaxed atmosphere; he knelt down, kissed the Duchess's dress and asked her to allow him to sleep with her. The Duchess, being undressed by Cariola, replied to him with jokes. She was playful as well; at his joke of 'Labouring men' (line 18), the Duchess, understanding its sexual innuendo, went to the bedroom to kiss him. While Antonio asked for the second kiss, she went back to the chamber and kissed him through the wall. These pieces of business fully conveyed domesticity and their mutual affection. The bedroom scene was performed so movingly that Frank Marcus reported that '[he] [had] never seen so much humanity extracted from Webster'.<sup>31</sup>

While the Duchess, seated on the chair, talked to Antonio, who she supposed was near her, Ferdinand appeared upstage and walked slowly and noiselessly towards the Duchess. He held a dagger, probably the same one as he had used in Act I, scene ii. He could have shocked both the Duchess and the audience when he placed the dagger on the casket on the table. But his attitude to her after she noticed him mainly suggested that he was overwhelmed by the shock of his discovery, rather than that he turned violent. On 'Virtue, where art thou hid?' (line 72) right after he showed the dagger, he sank down and approached the right-hand side of the table on his knees. The Duchess stood up and came to his left. On 'Pursue thy wishes' (line 80) he managed to stand up, walked towards the left-hand side partition, and hung on it. The Duchess followed him to tell that she was married, to which he reacted pathetically; he crawled along the partition as he told the Duchess's unknown husband not to reveal his identity to him, then turned to the Duchess to rebuke her; a few moments later he knelt down behind her while accusing her of lechery. It seems that Ferdinand's pathetic attitude remained unchanged up to his exit; there is no indication

of violence in the prompt-book's account of him in the scene.

There was an interesting point in performing the scene. Throughout Act III, scene ii, the director used the chamber and the bedroom so that the audience would become aware of the encounter and intermingling of the public and the private. First the private life of the Duchess in her marriage was presented in the chamber, the place for her public life, instead of the bedroom. The Duchess's affectionate address to Antonio was also made in the chamber. It is as if the chamber was turned to an extension of the bedroom, in the domestic atmosphere at night, when the Duchess and Antonio were free from their public roles. The second case, the scene of the Duchess's false accusation, was more complicated. The accusation was made publicly, in the chamber and in the presence of the officers, who had assembled in front of the wall. The Duchess and Antonio assumed their public roles, a duchess and her steward. But they acknowledged their mutual affection under the guise of official exchange, through lines like the Duchess's 'For h'as done that, alas! you would not think of' (line 191), Antonio's 'I am all yours' (line 205), and <sup>his</sup> 'what 'tis to serve | A prince [a pause] with body and soul' (lines 207-08). All the while the officers were supposed not to be able to see the bedroom just behind the walls. They were also supposed not to be able to imagine the relationship between the Duchess and Antonio. The audience, however, was able to see both the bedroom and the chamber, while it appreciated the subtle exchange which implied their private relationship. Act III, scene ii, is the scene of the encounter of the private and the public; the Duchess's private life is threatened by the forces of the public world, represented by the Aragonian brethren, the rulers of the world of the play. It seems certain that the setting in the scene was intended to highlight

the encounter of the two worlds and to suggest the subsequent conflict caused by it.

There was an interval between Act III, scene iii, and scene iv. This positioning of the interval seems to suggest the director's emphasis on the conflict of the private and the public, which had been shown in Act III, scene ii. Act III, scene iv, can be considered as the turning point of the play. In Act III, scene iii, the Cardinal and Ferdinand are about to carry out their plot against the Duchess; the action which enables them to destroy the Duchess's married life is yet unrevealed. In the next scene the Duchess is banished as her secret marriage is made public by the Cardinal; the conflict is over and the power of the public destroys the private. The fact that the first part ended with Act III, scene iii, must have left the audience in a state of tension caused by the anticipation that it would see the Duchess destroyed by the house of Aragon.

Act III, scene iv, was performed in a solemn and ritualistic manner. It began with the appearance of two pilgrims. They genuflected in front of the partitions, which now served as the gate of the shrine of Our Lady of Loretto. The statue of the Virgin was placed in front of the centre stage door; the statue, which looked menacing rather than graceful, contributed to the creation of the solemn atmosphere. The pilgrims were impressed by the shrine's grandeur; one of them praised the shrine after looking at it for a while. They waited for the Cardinal to appear. The Cardinal appeared with his attendants, including the Dignitary of the state of Ancona. All the following stage business was made in a form of dumb show while a song was sung to celebrate the investiture. At the beginning of the song, the Duchess appeared, accompanied by Antonio, their two children, and Cariola with a baby in her arms. The monks took out the armour and


robed him. One of the monks placed a sword on the Cardinal's left shoulder when the investiture was almost finished except for the plumed helmet. The Cardinal, fully armed (see plate VIII), held a sword in his hand and covered his face with the visor of his helmet. The Duchess approached the Cardinal and knelt. The Cardinal held her left hand and snatched off her wedding ring. At this moment the Dignitary, who had been standing behind the Cardinal, raised his left hand, with a sceptre in his right hand. It was as if he gave official approval of the Cardinal's decision. After that the Cardinal and his attendants left the stage. The Duchess and her family were left inside the shrine.

Act III, scene iv, was a counterpart of the prologue of the first part, in that it was placed at the beginning of the second part, performed in silence for the most part, putting the emphasis on visual impact, including the setting and the business. Both of them had a symbolic meaning. This time, however, the scene established the nature of the religious world of the play and its relationship with the house of Aragon. They were suggested first by the setting; in addition to the large partitions centrestage, the small ones were placed behind the upstage doors. The small partitions, which had been seen in the court scenes in Act I, scene i, at the beginning of Act I, scene ii, and in Act III, scene i, conveyed the concept that the shrine, a religious place, was similar to the court in that it was another gilded prison. The presence and the stage business of the Dignitary suggested what made the religious place a prison, like the court: the influence of the house of Aragon through the Cardinal. The fact that he had been standing behind the Cardinal throughout the investiture indicated his powerlessness and his position merely as one of the Cardinal's attendants in spite of his title. Thus the director

succeeded in giving a new interpretation to the dumb show, the original meaning of which is lost and which tends to be removed in modern productions.<sup>32</sup>

In the performance of Act IV, in which the Duchess was imprisoned, the settings emphasized the image of prison. At the beginning of Act IV, scene i, the two large partitions were moved and closed centrestage. Behind the 'bars' the Duchess was seated on a stool stage left; Cariola was asleep on the floor of the prison; a guard watched them stage right. Ferdinand and Bosola appeared down stage, that is, outside the prison. Ferdinand told Bosola to carry out the plan to torture the Duchess. After his exit Bosola entered the prison through the opening between the partitions, which were being moved outwards. He allowed the Duchess to go outside the prison. Being told that Ferdinand wanted to visit her in darkness, the Duchess told the guard to remove the lights. Then she woke up Cariola, who left the prison, guarded by Bosola. At this moment there was a blackout; the audience was only able to hear the voices. The Duchess knelt, hearing Ferdinand's footsteps. Ferdinand came next to her when he knew where she was as she replied to his 'Where are you?' (line 29). In reply to the Duchess's plea for pardon he knelt to her and held out a dead man's hand, which the Duchess grasped, thinking that Antonio had held out his hand. When she wondered about the coldness of the hand, Ferdinand stood up, leaving it to her. Realizing that the hand was severed, the Duchess dropped it in fright. Ferdinand left after perceiving her reaction, and the stage was lit. Right after that the waxworks were presented.

At the beginning of the waxworks scene the original stage direction reads 'behind a traverse, the artificial figures of ANTONIO and his children; appearing as if they were dead' (IV.ii.55). In this production

it is not made clear in the prompt-book whether the figure of Antonio was shown alone or with the figures of the children. It is likely, however, that the figure of Antonio was presented alone; the only article that describes the scene in detail refers only to the the figure of Antonio: 'the [...] scene of her lovers [sic] apparition. . broken on the wheel and drenched in blood'.<sup>33</sup> In presenting the figure no 'traverse', or curtain, was used; the presentation was prepared in the darkness during Ferdinand's visit. The figure was placed in front of the upstage centre door. When the stage was lit, the audience was able to see the figure before Bosola, on reappearing, held and turned the Duchess to face upstage so that she could see it. It seems that the presentation of the figure of Antonio alone was made to prevent the following lines of the Duchess in the next scene from sounding contradictory:

I pray thee look thou giv'st my little boy  
Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl  
Say her prayers, ere she sleep. (IV.ii.200-02)

It is clear that Richard Pasco, who played Antonio, also played the figure, for his name is listed in the 'Production photocall' for the waxworks scene along with the names of Judi Dench as the Duchess, Geoffrey Hutchings as Bosola.<sup>34</sup>

The Duchess's stage business after seeing the waxwork conveys her anguish as she was made to believe that her husband was dead. On seeing the figure, she broke away from Bosola and staggered for a few moments. She abused and attacked a servant, who had just appeared and wished her a long life in his salutation. The Duchess's 'I'll go curse' (line 94) surprised Bosola, who held her arm. After delivering 'I could curse the stars' (line 95), she collapsed on the floor and was awkwardly supported by Bosola, but still continued her curse to the universe and her brothers.



Her agony, presented in this way, made a striking contrast to the dignity and courage she showed in the face of her executioners.

In Act IV, scene ii, the image of prison was reinforced by means of the grilles on the side walls and a square pattern projected on the upstage centre door. The partitions, which had divided the prison and the outside world in the previous scene, were not seen. Here the whole stage was presented as a prison. The contrast of light and darkness was brought to the maximum and 'the Duchess's prison [was] shaded by deep Rembrandt-like lighting tones'.<sup>35</sup> Though the prompt-book has no detailed accounts of the madmen scene, the production photographs give us a general idea of how it was performed. As a servant who controlled the madmen cracked a whip, they emerged from the upstage doors and sang 'in close harmony'.<sup>36</sup> Having finished the song and the conversation, the madmen surrounded and caught the Duchess and Cariola, who struggled to escape, and danced hand in hand in a circle (see plate IX). The photographs suggest that the production highlighted the unexpected liveliness of the scene rather than its horror. The madmen scene, in terms of dramatic impact, became 'merely a comparatively harmless mirror image of the world [the Duchess] [inhabited]'.<sup>37</sup>

The exit of the madmen was followed by the climactic scene: the death of the Duchess. After following the madmen upstage and watching them exit, the Duchess turned back and found Bosola in disguise seated on one of the stools stage right. He tried to prepare the Duchess for her death in impressing the vanity of human existence on her. The fact that the whole setting now indicated a prison must have drawn the audience's attention to the comparison of a human body to a prison. Then Bosola referred to the care which accompanied high rank. He intended to convince the Duchess not

only of the vanity of this world but of her identity as 'some great woman' (IV.ii.133) -- the identity which had been emphasized from the beginning. The Duchess replied to him 'with her intensely whispered "I am Duchess of Malfi -- still"' (IV.ii.139).<sup>38</sup> Critics offered a variety of response to the delivery of this line. Benedict Nightingale wrote:

Indeed, a strong white light is exactly what she seemed to radiate at times, so much so that she had no need to emphasise that traditional assertion of the character's emotional integrity, 'I am the Duchess of Malfi still', and could simply drop it into the conversation as an obvious fact, of which others should scarcely need reminding.<sup>39</sup>

For Nightingale the strength of the 'white light' suggested the Duchess's conviction of her identity. Peter Ansorge also asserted that the delivery reflected her strong conviction, but he regarded it as 'an appeal of help to her captors',<sup>40</sup> considering the situation in which the Duchess was placed. The intonation of the delivery led Ronald Bryden to offer a totally different interpretation that:

Judi Dench [gave] the play's most famous line a new, wondering reading, turning it almost into a question.<sup>41</sup>

This wide range of interpretations seems to suggest that the line was delivered not to indicate the Duchess's strong conviction of her identity; rather in order to allow the audience the interpretation that the Duchess became uncertain of her identity, at least at this moment, and that she attempted to preserve it desperately.

The executioners, who wore dark-coloured sack-like masks with eye holes, would have looked menacing as they moved downstage to strangle the Duchess. After taking Cariola away, they set the noose of a rope around the Duchess's neck. The executioners stood to her right and left, holding the ends of the rope, and started to pull it, encouraged by her 'Pull, and pull strongly' (IV.ii.226). But on her 'Yet stay' (IV.ii.228), they

stopped pulling the rope and released the Duchess, who knelt to be admitted to heaven. But her defiant expression shown in one of the production photographs seems to suggest not that she had learnt Christian humility, which Bosola intended to teach her, but that she wanted it to be known to her brothers that she had never lost her courage in spite of their torture on her. Her self-restraint was evident right to the end. As a result this presentation of the Duchess did not draw sympathy from all members of the audience. For example, B.A. Young sarcastically reported that '[he] [had] never seen a woman strangled with so little distress'.<sup>42</sup>

Ferdinand appeared on stage to face the Duchess's death. The director paid much attention to the moments before Ferdinand collapsed into madness; the accounts in the prompt-book are detailed during Ferdinand's self-analysis of his motives for the murder. He appeared upstage and, after a pause, asked Bosola, 'Is she dead?' (IV.ii.251). Hearing that she was dead, Ferdinand began to walk slowly to the Duchess's body, which was placed downstage. His attention was on her body alone; Bosola's reference to her children, who had also been murdered, did not stop Ferdinand. When he arrived next to the Duchess's body, Bosola told Ferdinand, 'Fix your eye here' (IV.ii.255), to remind him of the sin of murder. A pause before Ferdinand's reply, 'Constantly' (IV.ii.255), again suggested that his attention had been on the Duchess's dead body before Bosola told him so. His line, 'Cover her face. Mine eyes dazzle: she di'd young' (IV.ii.259), was delivered after a long pause, and 'as if it were newly-thought'<sup>43</sup>; it was as <sup>if</sup> he had realized that the Duchess was dead at this very moment. Then Ferdinand referred to the fact that he and the Duchess were twins for the first time. This fact had already been given prominence by the description in the cast list; here a pause after Bosola's line 'It seems she was born

first' (IV.ii.263) and the removal of his lines after the line drew the audience's attention to the fact. The prominence on the fact seemed to suggest that the blood ties between Ferdinand and the Duchess mattered to Ferdinand, but not in terms of the family honour. Ferdinand raised the Duchess so that her head rested on his lap, and he saw her face again. And then he began to analyse the reason why he had her murdered. Some marked pauses here indicate what he became aware of in the self-analysis; first he rebuked Bosola for not having pitied her and not having saved her 'innocence' (IV.ii.272) from his revenge; remembering that it was he who ordered Bosola to murder her, Ferdinand admitted that he had been 'distracted' (IV.ii.273); then he began to examine his motive for the murder and he concluded that '[the Duchess's] marriage' (IV.ii.280) was the ultimate cause. The business and the reading suggested that the director's emphasis was laid on the process in which Ferdinand became aware of his responsibility for the Duchess's death and of the true cause for the murder. The question of whether his obsession with the Duchess came from incestuous love for her was not explained.

Ferdinand was seen totally mad in Act V, scene ii. At the beginning of the scene the Doctor and Pescara appeared, talking about Ferdinand's disease. Ferdinand appeared upstage, accompanied by the Cardinal and followed by Malateste. His insanity was evident in his torn lured suit and his unkempt hair. He walked next to the left-hand side of the proscenium arch, emphasizing his inclination to solitariness. He also showed an aversion to being followed; he was startled by his own shadow following him. He ran around<sup>on</sup> the stage to catch it and even tried to roll it up. Pescara, who had been watching Ferdinand upstage, approached him and asked him to rise. Ferdinand, instead of doing so, lay flat on the floor to

watch an imaginary race of snails. The Cardinal, unable to endure to see him in this state, had Malateste and Pescara lift him up. The Doctor, then, approached his patient to give him treatment. He attempted to give 'mad tricks' (line 58) to him with a salamander's skin, which he presented to Ferdinand, but in vain; Ferdinand ran away towards the Cardinal's throne, crying, 'Hide me from him' (line 64). The Cardinal seized him to keep him quiet. The Doctor, in order to make Ferdinand obedient by frightening him, stood on the opposite side of the throne, faced him, holding a fly swatter, and  $\top$  spanked his patient.<sup>44</sup> Ferdinand, in his sudden change of mood, dived on the Doctor. Pushing the Doctor down on the floor, Ferdinand bit him in the face, as if he thought himself a wolf in a fit of lycanthropia. It is clear that the scene was performed so that the audience would find it funny rather than horrifying; the production photographs indicate the emphasis on the burlesque Doctor and on the comic presentation of Ferdinand's behaviour, especially in his attack on the Doctor. This scene is comic even in the original text, but it also conveys the seriousness in Ferdinand's insanity. In this production he was 'turned completely to ridicule'.<sup>45</sup>

After Ferdinand, the Doctor, and the noblemen left the stage, the Cardinal ordered Bosola to kill Antonio and left. Then came another scene which can be regarded as comic relief: Julia's wooing of Bosola. Julia approached him with a pistol in her hand. As soon as he understood that she was in love with him, Bosola took the pistol from her on 'Come, come, I'll disarm you' (V.ii.161), and kissed her in his embrace. His quick reaction must have provoked laughter from the audience. Julia returned his kiss and forced him next to the right-hand side of the proscenium arch so that no one would disturb their growing intimacy. Bosola, thinking of

becoming more intimate with her to draw information from her about the Cardinal, took her downstage right and laid her down to seduce her. His reference to the Cardinal at this moment must have drawn<sup>T</sup> more laughter from the audience. In the original text Julia's wooing is comic in her rashness and Bosola's response of self-interested purpose. But at the same time it reminds the audience of the Duchess's wooing and provides an opportunity to think about what makes the two wooing scenes different; Julia's self-definition as one of 'the great women of pleasure' (V.ii.189) makes the audience realize that Julia wants mere 'pleasure', lust, and that the Duchess wanted not only 'pleasure' but affection, which was more important to her. As a result of the removal of lines in which Julia describes herself, her wooing functioned genuinely as comic relief here. But the scene, performed in a comic manner, made a contrast to the following scene of the Cardinal's murder of Julia.

Seeing the Cardinal appear, Julia approached him and asked what troubled him. After her short persuasion the Cardinal, sitting down on the throne, said that he had 'committed | Some secret deed' (V.ii.247-48). Hearing the word 'committed' Julia knelt in anticipation of hearing what he had done, which might be dreadful; knowing that he would not tell her more, she became frustrated. She continued her persuasion. The Cardinal finally gave up; he stood up and held her from behind *On* 'No more; thou shalt know it' (V.ii.263). After revealing his secret, the Cardinal brought a Bible, on which Julia placed her hand and swore. The Cardinal removed her hand and told her to kiss the Bible. Though embarrassed, she obeyed and was poisoned. While Julia was in her death throes the Cardinal watched her calmly. As Julia collapsed next to the throne and died, the Cardinal made the sign of the cross over her body.<sup>46</sup> The stage business epitomized the

Cardinal's callousness, confirming the impression of Julia as 'the most genteel whore, cooing like a dove in a cage of hawks'.<sup>47</sup>

Act V, scene v, opened with the Cardinal's monologue, which echoed the prick of conscience which he had suggested in the previous scene. Entering through the right sidewall downstage, the Cardinal delivered the monologue while walking downstage. He met Bosola and the Friend of Antonio, who entered through the left proscenium. Bosola, on seeing the Cardinal, walked toward him, while the Friend stood aside. The Cardinal watched Bosola in silence and noticed 'some great determination' (line 9) in his ghastly look. Bosola showed a dagger to the Cardinal and declared that he would kill him. Seeing the Friend attempt to ask for help, Bosola killed him before stabbing the Cardinal. The prompt-book here reads 'Bosola SHOOT' him. This enabled Bosola to kill him while holding the Cardinal. Then Bosola stabbed the Cardinal, who collapsed downstage right. Hearing the Cardinal's cry, Ferdinand appeared upstage, with a sword in each hand. In his insanity Ferdinand took his brother for his enemy and wounded him; then he stabbed Bosola. After that he advanced downstage, knelt down, and triumphantly held up one of his swords with the blade downwards, as he delivered his speech. During the speech Bosola stole up to Ferdinand and stabbed him from behind. Hearing the noise, Roderigo, Malateste and Pescara appeared. When <sup>they</sup> asked what had happened, the Cardinal, in his dying moments, crawled centrestage towards Ferdinand's body and embraced it, saying, 'Look to my brother' (line 86). The two brothers, 'bathed in red as if physically deliquescing in their own blood and their victim's blood',<sup>48</sup> symbolically indicated the bond between them: their blood ties and evil in them, which had made them shed other's blood and now their own. After the Cardinal and Bosola had died, Delio appeared upstage with the

eldest son of the Duchess and Antonio. The two advanced downstage, looking at the corpses in front of them (see plate X). Delio asked the noblemen for assistance to let the son inherit the duchy, which was to be promised because (in this production) the Duchess did not have any children by her former husband. There was, however, no indication of hope in the future in the society of the play; the emphasis on the image of prison in the ending as in the beginning suggested that the society would remain prison-like.

Visually the production was successful; Farrah's set and costumes were highly praised. Criticism of the directorial skills concentrated on two points. The first was the pace, which was ponderous in the second part. In his review entitled 'Vintage tedium', David Isaacs argued that Williams's miscalculation of the pace was the most damaging to the whole production, which became, in his words, 'the theatrical bore of the year'.<sup>49</sup> Gareth Lloyd Evans, in pointing out Williams's errors, commented on the pace that:

[One of his errors was] completely to have misjudged the pace of this difficult play. The second half [became] slower and slower when every nerve and sinew of its language and incident cried out for speed. This production [dropped] dead in a ruck, bored, I suppose by its own inactivity.<sup>50</sup>

The second point, which attracted more attention, was laughter from the audience in the scene of the successive murders. Harold Hobson reported that this scene was 'greeted by the audience with roars of unwanted laughter.'<sup>51</sup> Most critics who referred to this fact thought, like Harold Hobson, that Williams had unnecessarily provoked much laughter. Only one reviewer argued that Williams succeeded in cutting giggling to a minimum.<sup>52</sup> Each reviewer who criticized the laughter attempted to analyse why this scene of the murders evoked laughter instead of horror. Some argued that



it was because people were so used to scenes of violence and murder on television and in films that such scenes looked stupid to them.<sup>53</sup> Others argued that the director was responsible for the laughter. For example, Harold Hobson attributed it to the director's emphasis on humour in the earlier scenes, which was successful but which made the audience unable to appreciate the seriousness and horror suggested by the director in the later scenes:

[Williams caused] the audience to find much of the early dialogue legitimately amusing. But in the end his search for humour [defeated] him. It [gathered] such momentum that when he [wished] to be serious, and even tragic, the play [had] already passed the boundaries of burlesque.<sup>54</sup>

More reviewers, however, argued that it was in the second part that the director made a mistake. They pointed out his lack of care in blending horror and humour in dealing not only with the final scene but with the madmen scene and the Doctor scene in Act V, scene ii. Gareth Lloyd Evans argued that

[Williams's other mistake was] to have been insensitive to the grotesqueries of Jacobean horror and bloodshed -- we may laugh at its excesses but our laughter should be chilled.<sup>55</sup>

What the performance of these scenes suggested was, however, the director's deliberate playing down of horror rather than exploration of humour or the failure to bring out horror.

The director's attitude towards the aspect of horror affected the evaluation of the whole production. Those who thought of the play in terms of obsession and madness, which generate horror, were dissatisfied with the production. A typical example of this sort of reaction was John Barber's review entitled 'This Sane Duchess of Malfi won't Do'. After praising the production for being 'clear and forthright' and for '[u]sing no quirkish directorial tricks' in unfolding the story, Barber criticized that:

the company [did] not [recognise] the central difficulty of Webster [....] Webster's strength lies in his poetic obsession with death, shrieking madmen and diabolical torturers [....]

Stratford [gave] us all the realistic detail [in the play....]

But Webster's realism is only half the man. He also freezes the blood. The actors need to be steeped in his frightening obsession with evil.

Barber concluded that Williams's production was 'a sane production of a mad play'.<sup>56</sup> For critics like him the production was a failure.

The aspect of horror itself was not what the director intended to focus on. As the setting and the ritualistic movements in some scenes suggest, he intended to emphasize what generates this aspect -- the blood ties in a powerful family, which affect not only the politics but the members of the family. In paying attention to the symbolism in the setting and some ritualistic scenes like the prologue, only a few critics noticed the emphasis on the familial and political aspects. For example, Frank Marcus understood that the 'cage-like settings'<sup>57</sup> contributed to the presentation of the Aragonian brethren, who live in a elegant but closed world and who are the subjects of people's attention. The prologue made Gordon Parsons realize that the emphasis was on the blood code of the Aragonian siblings.<sup>58</sup>

The fact that the director did not emphasize horror was not the only reason for the reviewers' general dissatisfaction. Some disagreed with the director's interpretation of the play, thinking that it led him to neglect the significance of the aspect of horror and to avoid emphasizing it. For example, Ronald Bryden mentioned two possible interpretations of the play:

Either you believe 'The Duchess' a profound and truthful statement about the human condition, that evil reigns inexorably and inexplicably at the heart of things. Or else you consider that it can be given a human explanation, traceable through the tangle of ordinary men's mixed motives [....]

He thought that Williams had chosen the second interpretation and then

discussed how the director's interpretation of the play had affected that of the scenes of horror:

It [was] good to see an attempt [...] to account for its motorway pile-up of corpses and dismembered limbs in terms of character, as a result of analysable human emotions and errors. The first step towards preventing a recurrence of Auschwitz [was] to recognise it as the work of man, not devils or metaphysical abstractions.<sup>59</sup>

Bryden, however, thought that the director had made a mistake in choosing this interpretation and that it was because evil in Webster's tragedy was inexplicable in human terms.<sup>60</sup>

The evaluation of the actors' performance was of secondary importance to most critics, who concentrated on Williams's attitude towards the aspect of horror; they tended to comment on the actors' performance only in passing. But even reviewers who were harsh on the directorial skill valued the acting highly. Criticism concentrated on characterization.

Judi Dench's Duchess was unanimously praised. She was most successful in the bedroom scene, in which she, along with Antonio, fully attracted the audience's sympathy in extracting to the maximum the warmth and the mutual affection between man and wife. The success of the scene seems to have proved Bryden's analysis that the director had intended to give 'human explanation' to the events of the play and to 'present [the characters] as people',<sup>61</sup> not as mere vehicles for the plot or the theme. But the director seems to have given a different characterization to the Duchess in the scene of her death, in which she 'kept [the audience] at a distance'<sup>62</sup> with her stoicism and defiance. Though this dignified Duchess still attracted the audience's attention, she also alienated the audience. It seems that the director interpreted the Duchess in this scene as an embodiment of 'the spirit of greatness' (I.ii.417), no longer an ordinary human being as she was in the bedroom scene. The director might have used

the delivery of 'I am Duchess of Malfi still' (IV.ii.139), which was indicative of the Duchess's uncertainty of her identity and which could have drawn the audience's sympathy, to bridge the gap of the two different images of the Duchess before and after the torture. The delivery of the line, however, did not have much influence on the reviewers' interpretation of the Duchess in the scene; her dignity and courage in her last scene became the main subject of the evaluation.

Richard Pasco's Antonio was well liked. The director's careful cutting of the lines in the original text for the character and Pasco's performance contributed to a 'strong, coherent [characterisation]'<sup>63</sup> for Antonio, who, in the original text, gives an inconsistent impression and who can appear to be unsympathetic in some scenes. Pasco's Antonio became sympathetic in every way; he was 'an infinitely touching portrait of a good, loving man whose virtue [had] nothing of the prig of it'.<sup>64</sup> But to other reviewers he appeared 'emptily pathetic'.<sup>65</sup>

The Cardinal, played by Emrys James, was generally praised. It seems, however, that the success was the result of the change in the director's approach to the figure, different from that to the Duchess and Antonio. This is proved by the prompt-book's accounts, in which the director did not give the figure original interpretation; the image of the Cardinal constructed from the accounts is a cold and politic aristocrat and a corrupt clergyman: expansion of the image in the original text. In other words, the director did not attempt to present the Cardinal as a human being who deserved the audience's sympathy. Bryden's comment seems to summarize the director's approach to the Cardinal: '[James's Cardinal succeeded] by making no attempt at explanation'<sup>66</sup> -- explanation to make him look human to the audience.

Michael Williams's Ferdinand was severely criticized by reviewers who chose to comment on him in detail. At the beginning this Ferdinand appeared to be successful with his 'tightly controlled face and somnambulant gait'<sup>67</sup> and a suggestion of the presence of evil through 'the drag and clank of the spurs [he] wore throughout, a chilling noise'.<sup>68</sup> But he proved to be disappointing, especially after the collapse into madness. A close examination of the accounts in the promptbook and the reviews suggests that the reviewers' disappointment was caused by the director's failure in the characterization; the director attempted to express quite overtly Ferdinand's obsession with the Duchess and his madness in the later scenes: for example, with the restless movement in Act II, scene v, while Ferdinand reported the Duchess's 'loose' (II.v.3) conduct, and with the indication of insanity -- shouting, diving on the Doctor, and 'lurking in the corridors carrying a dead rabbit'<sup>69</sup> -- caused by lycanthropia, which made him think himself to be a wolf. These pieces of business resulted in making Ferdinand look merely ridiculous. It was as if the director had emphasized Ferdinand's obsession and madness almost to the point of caricature in order to make the audience recognize them. The director failed to explore the importance of Ferdinand's obsession with the Duchess and his madness; they are important in that they make the aspect of horror emerge on stage in driving Ferdinand to inflict the mental torture of the madmen on the Duchess, and that they contribute to the tragic result of the play.

Critics' opinions were divided on the portrayal of Bosola, played by Geoffrey Hutchings, who presented the character as the victim of the Cardinal, and later, of Ferdinand; Hutchings's Bosola was a man who was virtuous by nature, but who was manipulated by the Aragonian brethren and

forced to do evil solely because of poverty. He was 'a bluff, crudely unimaginative opportunist'<sup>70</sup> to critics who had expected Hutchings to emphasize Bosola's 'cynical intelligence which leads him on to his own downfall'.<sup>71</sup> Those who approved of this Bosola, on the other hand, praised Hutchings for having avoided overacting. The reviewer for the Sunday Mercury was the only one who valued his performance in terms of characterization; this reviewer thought that the remarkable point of Hutchings' Bosola was that he was '[t]he most ordinary in [the] extraordinary people' at court and that he '[remained] always human'.<sup>72</sup> The director's attempt to present a new characterization for Bosola was thus successful to some extent. It seems, however, that this characterization was made at the expense of the exploration of Bosola's personal development in Act IV, scene ii. In the original text it is not until he is denied his reward for performing his task of murdering the Duchess that he becomes aware of his self-deception; he has believed that advancement at court will make up for repressing his conscience and being a wicked man's agent. The following lines, which were removed in this production, make it clear that Bosola begins to recognize the self-deception at this very moment:

I stand like one  
That long hath tane a sweet and golden dream.  
I am angry with myself, now that I wake. (IV.ii ll.317-319)

This removal suggests that Bosola had not been guilty of self-deception and that he had already been aware of the prick of conscience before Ferdinand's denial of the reward. The denial only prompted Bosola to behave according to the dictates of his conscience. As a result '[t]he war within him did not take place'.<sup>73</sup>

The reconstruction of the production suggests that the director's

existentialist interpretation led him to use two different approaches in staging the play. On the one hand, he made the visual elements symbolic and even unrealistic to indicate his approach. On the other hand, he decided to emphasize the true-to-life aspects of the main characters as much as possible in order to make their agony over the helplessness of the world look convincing to modern audiences. Even the Cardinal, who was treated as a symbol rather than as a human being, was given reality in his death throes, in which he made an expression of fear, agony and distress for the first time. The aim led to the emphasis on the blood ties of the Aragonian siblings and on the family honour as the cause of the tragedy, not on the exploration of the characters' psychology, which is not always life-like.

The director's attempts, however, did not fully involve his audience. While the symbolism of the setting stirred the audience's expectation and imagination, the director's attitude towards the acting was not successful to all the main characters. It made the Duchess, especially in Act III, and Antonio look convincing -- characters whose behaviour and emotions look natural and realistic to modern audiences. But for a character like Ferdinand, who is incredible and inexplicable in terms of reality, the approach proved failure. It resulted in a failure to explore the importance of the power of evil and madness; it is the description of evil and madness which suggests the extent of Webster's imagination and which stimulates the audience's imagination. It can be argued that the director, in attempting to make the play look straightforward and realistic and to avoid sensationalism, underestimated the audience's imagination.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. Taken from the title of a review by John Barber in Daily Telegraph, 16 July 1971.
2. Clifford Williams, born in 1926, began his career as a director in 1950 of the Mime Theatre Company. He had directed many plays for the RSC since he joined the company in 1961. He directed Oh! Calcutta! shortly before he directed The Duchess of Malfi.
3. Farrah (Abd 'Elkader) was born in 1926 in Algeria. He designed his first production in 1953. Since then he had designed more than 300 productions, some for the RSC, of which he was an associate artist.
4. Marc Wilkinson, born in 1929, had composed music for numerous productions since 1962, when he wrote incidental music for Richard III at Stratford-upon-Avon. He was director of music of the National Theatre until 1974.
5. Calculated from the performance timings. All the production records including this are held at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.
6. 'The Director who Plays for Success in Stages', interviewed by Judith Cook, Birmingham Post, 3 July 1971.
7. Ferdinand refers to the fact that 'She and [he] were twins' on line 261 in Act IV, scene ii. All references to the original text are from The Duchess of Malfi, ed. by Elizabeth M. Brennan, the New Mermaids (London: Ernest Benn, 1964).
8. Brennan, p. 3.
9. The production photographs were taken by Tom Holte and Nevis Cameron. They are included in the production records, and were consulted at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.
10. One of the pages of the prompt-book contains a direction of the entrance of the madmen, with which the names of eight actors playing the parts are recorded; and some of the Mad Priest's lines (IV.ii.110-11) are attributed to the Mad Farmer.
11. See note 7.
12. The Tragic Satire of John Webster (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959), p. 79.
13. The Complete Works of John Webster, edited by F.L. Lucas, 4 vols (London: Chatto & Windus, 1927), I, 39.
14. John Webster and the Elizabethan Drama (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1916), p. 158.



15. 'Whispers of Immortality', in Poems (Richmond: L. & V. Woolf, Hogarth Press, 1919), pp. 77-78 (p. 77).
16. Though the production records listed the wardrobe plot in 1975, the plot is currently missing.
17. The colour slides, taken by Tom Holte, were consulted at the Shakespeare Centre and the Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon.
18. Programme.
19. J.C. Trewin, 'The Duchess of Malfi', Birmingham Post, 16 July 1971. Hereafter referred to as 'Trewin'.
20. Don Chapman, 'Ponderous Production', Oxford Mail, 16 July 1971.
21. B.A. Young, 'The Duchess of Malfi', Financial Times, 16 July 1971. Hereafter referred to as 'Young'.
22. Ibid.
23. See note 7.
24. Brennan, p. 70.
25. Anne Dyson, who played the Old Lady in Act II, scene i, is listed in the prologue. But it is not clear whether she appeared in the prologue dressed as the Old Lady, who seemed not to belong to the aristocratic society.
26. The word 'assembly', used in the prompt-book and the production records, probably refers to the offstage space behind each sidewall. It seems that the actors arrived or left the space through the end of the sidewalls at directions like 'Exit (or Enter) PS (or OP) Assembly'.
27. 'Theatre', Punch, 28 July 1971. Hereafter referred to as 'Leslie'.
28. P. W., 'A Tidy Murder', Sunday Mercury, 18 July 1971. Hereafter referred to as 'P. W.'.
29. Felix Barker, 'The Duchess of Malfi', Evening News, 16 July 1971.
30. Ronald Bryden, 'Blood-Soaked Circus', Observer, 18 July 1971. Hereafter referred to as 'Bryden'.
31. 'Fruit Crumble', Sunday Telegraph, 18 July 1971. Hereafter referred to as 'Marcus'.
32. For example, in the RSC productions, the dumb show was omitted in the Donald McWhinnie production both at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and at the Aldwych Theatre in 1960 and 1961, and in the Bill Alexander production at the Pit Theatre in 1990 (the dumb show was performed at the Swan Theatre in 1989 and 1990).

33. W.T. S., 'Great Care Lavished by Comapny... But it Just didn't Succeed', Gloucester Citizen, 16 July 1971.
34. Included in the production records.
35. Peter Ansorge, 'The Duchess of Malfi', Plays and Players, 18, no. 12 (September 1971), 26-27, 62 (p. 26). Hereafter referred to as 'Ansorge'.
36. Young.
37. Marcus.
38. Sarah Eily-Wood, 'The Duchess of Malfi Fails to Take Fire', Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 23 July 1971.
39. 'RSC Ascendant', in Theatre 1972, ed. by Sheridan Morley (London: Hutchinson, 1972), pp. 63-75 (p. 66).
40. 'RSC Ascendant', p. 62.
41. 'Blood-Soaked Circus'.
42. 'The Duchess of Malfi'.
43. Trewin.
44. This stage business is recorded by Irving Wardle, in 'The Duchess of Malfi', The Times, 16 July 1971 (this article is referred to as 'Wardle' hereafter), and by Ann Leslie. The prompt-book has no account of the business and the reviews do not make clear whether the Doctor spanked Ferdinand with the fly swatter.
45. Wardle.
46. This stage business is recorded by P. W..
47. P. W..
48. Leslie.
49. 'Vintage Tedium', Coventry Evening Telegraph, 16 July 1971.
50. 'Duchess of Malfi', Guardian, 16 July 1971.
51. 'Theatre in Britain', Christian Science Monitor, 26 July 1971. This article is hereafter referred to as 'Hobson'.
52. Young.
53. For example, 'Milton Shulman at Stratford', Evening Standard, 16 July 1971: 'Perhaps the telly has made us sup so long and so often on tales of violence that these Elizabethan tragedies of blood are now more likely to raise a giggle than a shudder'.

54. 'Theatre in Britain'.
55. 'Duchess of Malfi'.
56. These quotations are from 'This Sane Duchess of Malfi won't Do'. See note 1 for reference.
57. 'Fruit Crumble'.
58. 'Linked by Blood Code', Morning Star, 19 July 1971.
59. These quotations are from 'Blood-Soaked Circus'.
60. Ibid. Bryden's interpretation of the play is shown clearly by the following passage: 'Webster's tragedy doesn't really understand evil. It only celebrates it, like the Chamber of Horrors at Tussaud's, as something to confront and bear with the Duchess, therapeutic only as nightmare'.
61. Ibid.
62. Charles Lewson, 'Sick Stallion', Listener, 22 July 1971. Hereafter referred to as 'Lewson'.
63. Bryden.
64. Leslie.
65. Wardle.
66. 'Blood-Soaked Circus'.
67. Lewson.
68. Nightingale, p. 66.
69. Wardle.
70. S.E.W., 'Stratford Malfi Ends in Bathos', Stage, 22 July 1971.
71. Ibid.
72. These quotations are from P. W..
73. Lewson.

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- V.           the Aragonian siblings
- VI.          the wooing scene
- VII.        the Cardinal and Ferdinand in Act V, scene ii
- VIII.       the Cardinal's investiture
- IX.         the madmen scene
- X.          the ending

PLATE V



PLATE VI





PLATE VII



PLATE VIII

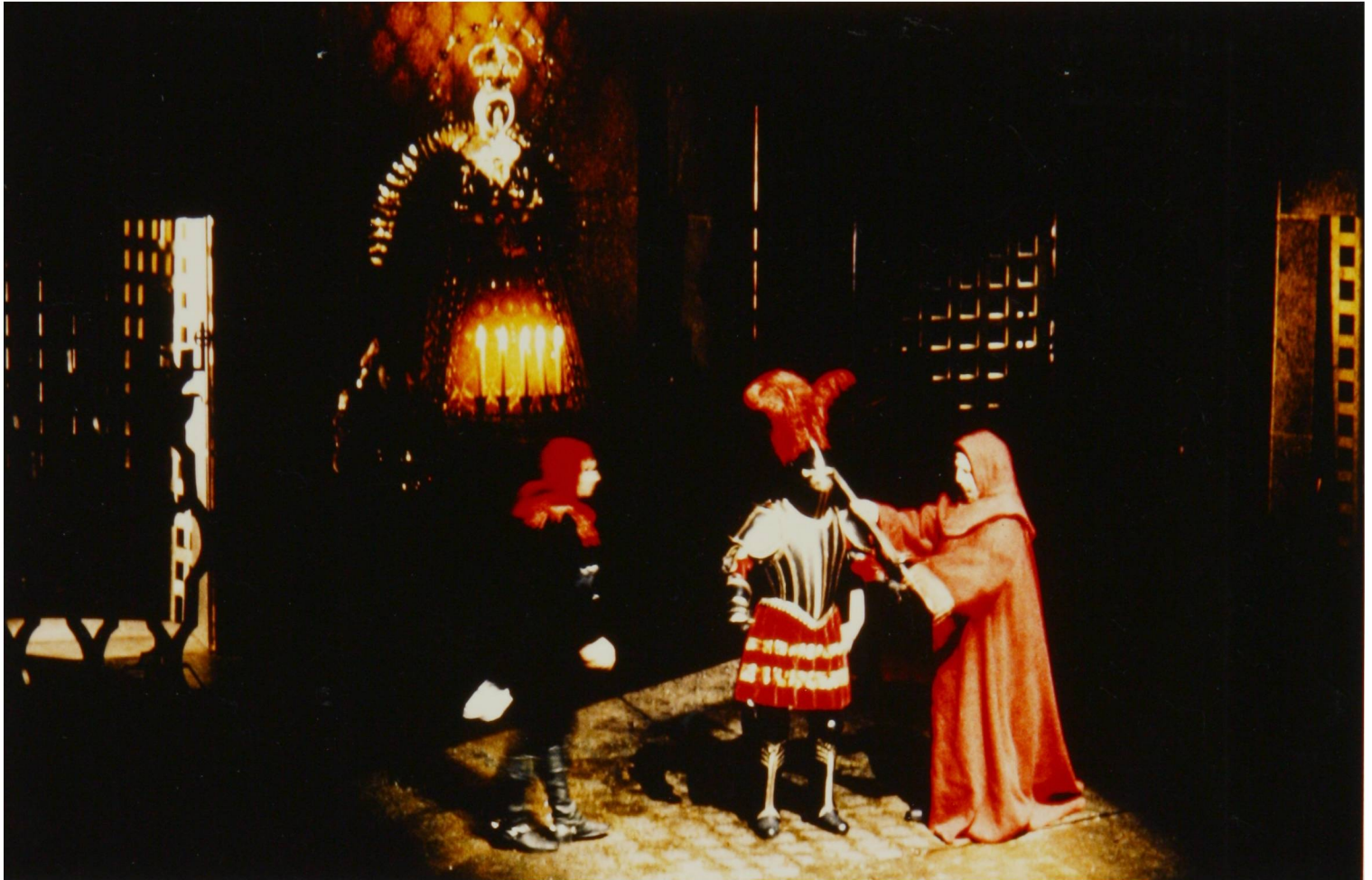




PLATE IX

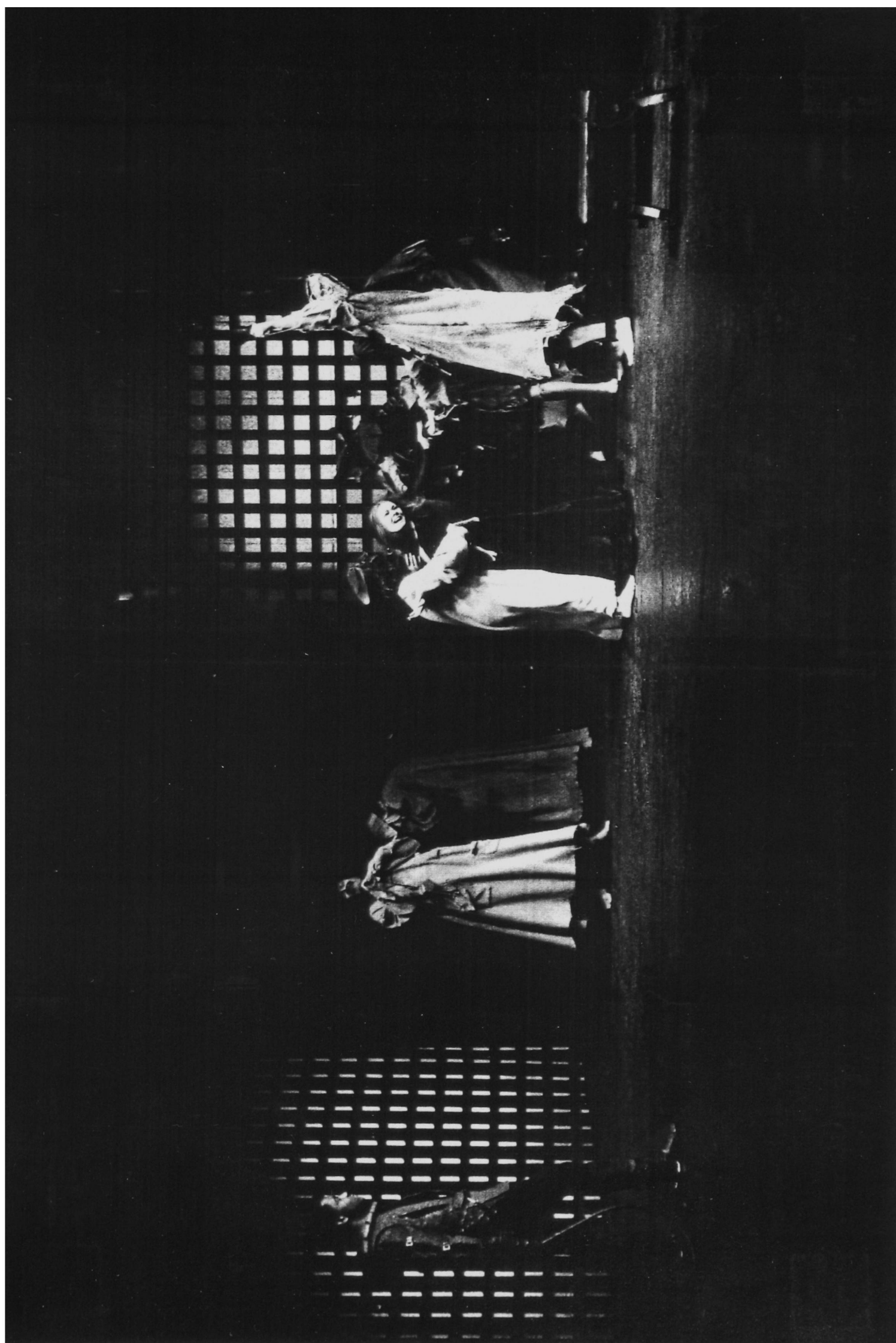
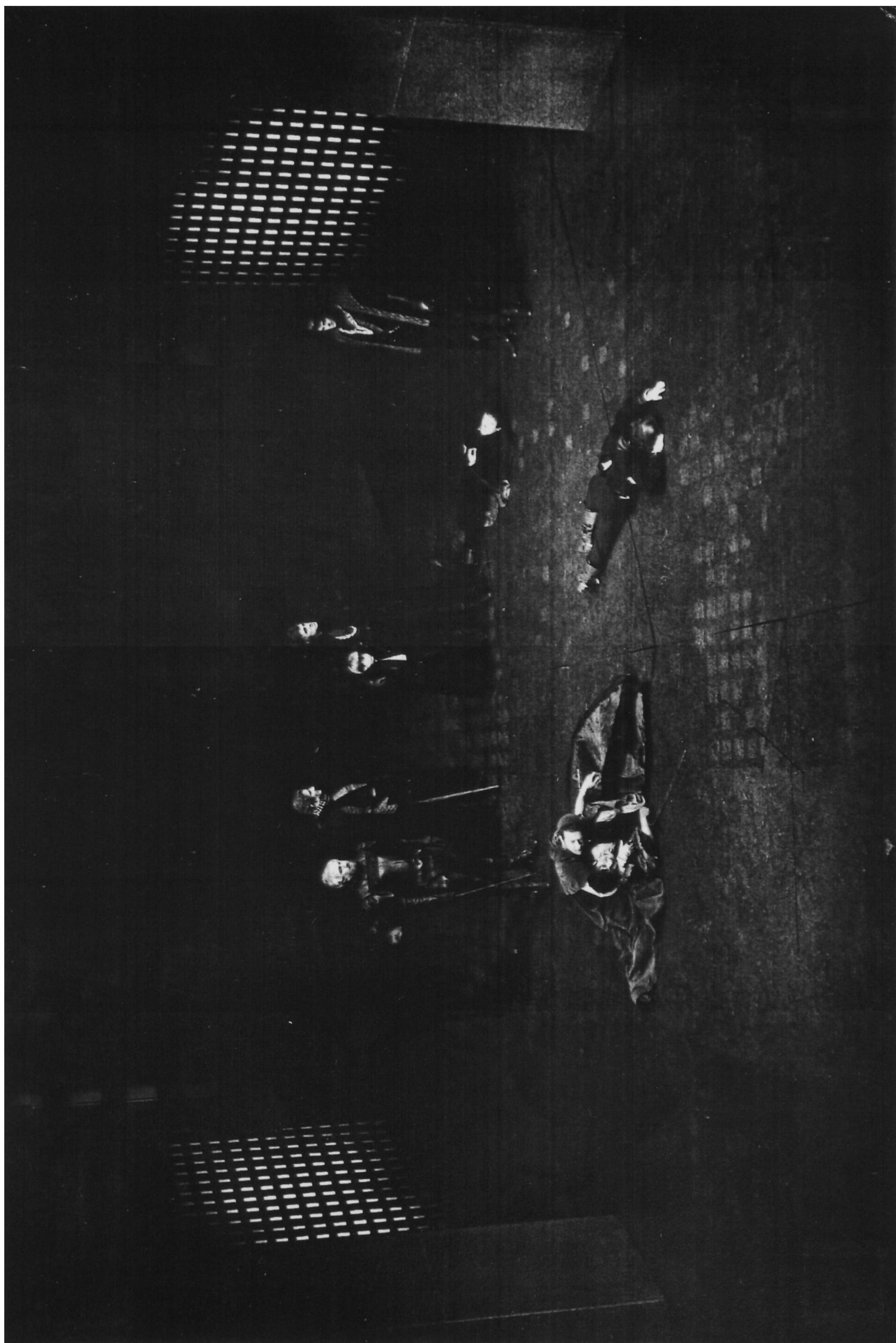


PLATE X



## CHAPTER 3

### 'Tableaux Talk'<sup>1</sup> (1989)

The Duchess of Malfi was staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company for the third time in 1989 after an interval of eighteen years. It was directed by Bill Alexander.<sup>2</sup> The production opened first at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, on 6 December 1989, and ran for thirty performances up to 26 January 1990. It transferred to the Newcastle Playhouse Theatre (hereafter referred to as the Playhouse), Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and then to the Pit in the Barbican Centre, London. At the Playhouse it opened on 13 February 1990 and ran for 15 performances up to 3 March 1990; at the Pit, it opened on 1 May 1990 and ran for forty-seven performances up to 1 September 1990. The music was composed by Guy Woolfenden,<sup>3</sup> and the settings and costumes were designed by Fotini Dimou.<sup>4</sup> In this chapter I will mainly discuss performances at the Swan and the Pit (I will refer to the playing time at the two theatres later).

Bill Alexander's view of the play was entirely different from those of the directors of the two previous RSC productions. Both Donald McWhinnie and Clifford Williams regarded The Duchess of Malfi as a modern play fit for twentieth-century audiences, especially those of the post-war period, in which scepticism and existentialism permeated the world. It is clear that, in their productions, the historical and social background of the period in which the play was composed was considered necessary only for helping the audience understand the plot of the play. The primary aim in staging the play was, for both directors, to make the audience appreciate their interpretations based on modern thoughts: how one can live in a world

where undeserved suffering is imposed on one and where there is nothing absolute to rely on.

Bill Alexander did not apply modern or existential interpretations to the play. My interview with him makes it clear that he explored the characterization of the main figures, whose behaviour was highly affected by their circumstances. In offering his interpretation of the play, he said as follows:

It is [an] atmospheric and very claustrophobic play. It talks about a very small, courtly world, in which everyone knows what everyone else is doing, and that's what adds [the] dramatic tension of how on earth can the Duchess think she can hide something as extraordinary as having a family from that closed world.<sup>5</sup>

The Duchess became the focus of attention, but it was not because of the manner in which she endured the ordeals imposed by her brothers, but because of the fact that her rank as a duchess made her a person most affected by the circumstances. The exploration of the main characters of the play, therefore, resulted in giving high prominence to the circumstances in which they were placed. As The Duchess of Malfi was based on historical facts and was influenced by the circumstances of the period in which it was composed, the circumstances of the play needed two examinations: examination of the Aragonian rule of Naples in the Renaissance era and that of the historical, cultural and social background of seventeenth-century England.

As a result of the decision to emphasize the circumstances of the play, Bill Alexander faced problems different from those faced by McWhinnie and Williams. References in a classical play to its social and cultural background always cause difficulties in modern audiences and directors, who make efforts to understand the significance of the references. It is especially difficult for them to imagine the atmosphere of an aristocratic

society. In the case of The Duchess of Malfi, the main characters are not only aristocrats but members of a royal family. To grasp the power and authority of the family at the top of the mundane world, though essential for full appreciation of the play, is more difficult. But the social background was inseparable from Bill Alexander's interpretation of the play. He needed to present the background to his audience, and at the same time, to make it clear that the emphasis on the circumstances was made for the exploration of the main figures, especially the Duchess.

In attempting to solve the problems, the director decided to use the programme in order to initiate his audience both into his interpretation of the play and into the situation in which its characters were placed. The former is suggested by the cover of the programme. It contains a picture of the Duchess's face, partly tinted by greyish red and green. The Duchess is shown looking outside from behind a curtain. The left half of her face is hidden by the curtain which she draws. Her expression suggests fear. Well-informed members of the audience, who knew the plot of the play, would have understood of what the Duchess was afraid: a fear of having her secret marriage to her steward revealed to the outside world. The choice of this picture for the cover of the programme suggests what the director intended to highlight: the Duchess's struggle against the restrictions imposed by her royal family and society, both of which do not allow her to marry for love or to have a purely private life.

An essay by Lisa Jardine, printed in the programme, provides the audience with pieces of knowledge of the house of Aragon and the period in which the play was written. The essay is divided into three sections: 'The House of Aragon', 'Marriage and English Protestantism', and 'Remarriage, Rank, and Social Mobility'. The first section deals with the Aragonian

rule of Naples, and with the significance of marriage alliance to the family. This section not only helps the audience understand the plot of the play but establishes the importance of the 'Aragonian imperialism' in the play. The second and the third section reveal that the play strongly reflects the religious and social circumstances in the seventeenth-century England. In the second section Jardine comments on the 'Englishness' of the Duchess's marriage to Antonio; for example, per verba de praesenti was then an acceptable form of marriage in England and the description of the Duchess's married life was based on the English protestants' marriage ideals. The third section refers to two phenomena, thought to indicate the existence of the 'disturbance of natural order'. One was the marriage of a low-ranking man to his master's wealthy widow, like that of Antonio to the Duchess. The other was the existence of men 'with no fixed [masters]: the masterless [men]',<sup>6</sup> like Bosola. The essay concentrates on introducing the audience to historical facts which had influence on the composition of the play. There is no reference in the essay to the literary aspect of the play, such as how Webster changed the source story in composing his play. It can be said that the essay established for the audience the director's intention: that he wanted the audience to see the play first and foremost in its historical context.

A significant feature of the production was that it was performed in playhouses smallest of all the theatres used for the play by the RSC. The Swan Theatre houses 430 people. It is a Jacobean-style playhouse with a thrust stage, surrounded by the auditorium which has two galleries. Not only the size but the structure of the Swan causes intimacy between the actors and the audience; one reviewer approved of this 'galleried intimacy'.<sup>7</sup> The Pit is much smaller; it houses approximately 200 people.



But this impression is produced by its structure as well as its actual size. Its structure reduces the distance between the actors and each member of the audience; there are no galleries due to the low ceiling; and both the acting area and the auditorium are on the same level. As a result the intimacy between the actors and each member of the audience becomes stronger than at the Swan.

Having seen performances both at the Swan and the Pit, I had an impression that this intimacy worked positively in staging The Duchess of Malfi. The impression was strengthened when I saw the Pit performances, which I found more successful than those at the Swan in terms of tension. The experience led me to think that the intimacy between the actors and the audience, which was intensified in smaller theatres, corresponded to the atmosphere of the play. The play is about an aristocratic world, in which the inhabitants are confined physically and mentally. Even those who try to escape from the society, like the Duchess, do not think of abandoning the way of life they have led. The action takes place indoors, in locations such as the Duchess's palace and the shrine at Loretto, or at night, or both. This is probably the reason why the adjective 'claustrophobic' is often used to describe the play. This word can also be applied to describe the atmosphere of theatres like the Pit.

When I asked Bill Alexander how the change of theatre affected the performances, he answered as follows:

[I]n my own view, this production worked better in the Pit than in the Swan. I think the Swan is a remarkable theatre, but it is quite [a] problem in getting focus in the Swan, because the sight line is sometimes not very good; you have a very, very high audience that you have to play to; it's a very deep thrust, which means a lot of [the] audience are some way behind the action. Even though the Pit is not a very attractive theatre, just to go in and look at; it is very well focused on the acting area, and I thought that it was a better theatre for that play.

He made this remark after defining the play as 'atmospheric and very claustrophobic'. These remarks suggest that he believed small theatres more suitable for performing the play because of its claustrophobic nature.

Among the actors and staff of the RSC involved in the production of the play, Bill Alexander was the second to notice that a small theatre corresponds well to the nature of the play. As far as I know the first was Peggy Ashcroft, who played the Duchess in 1960 and 1961. In an interview for Shakespeare Survey published in 1988, she compared the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre and the Aldwych Theatre with the Haymarket Theatre, in which she had first played the role in the George Rylands's production in 1945, and commented as follows:

[I]n the second production, where we played on a very open set, I missed that claustrophobic feeling<sup>8</sup> that we had in 1945 and that I think is so essential to the play.

She recognized more explicitly than Bill Alexander did the significance of claustrophobic atmosphere either in the size of theatre or setting in staging the play. It appears to me that this impression of hers was proved true in the Alexander production.

When the production transferred to the Pit, the upper level of the setting was lost. But in both the Swan and the Pit the function of the settings remained the same; they highlighted the action of watching. A pair of conspicuous devices gave prominence to the audience's observation of the characters of the play: on stage stood two gilded frames, the carving on which made them look like picture frames. The larger frame consisted of a pillar at each end of the central acting area and a lintel. The smaller one was used as the central archway (see plate XI). Each of the frames made the characters on stage look like portraits in picture frames. This effect was particularly evident when the characters held



their movements for a few moments, as in the court scene in Act I, scene ii. In such scenes the stage was transformed into 'a gallery of tableaux'.<sup>9</sup> The device served to emphasize a theatrical awareness through its non-naturalistic presentation of the characters.

The change of the size of theatre affected the impact of each of the frames on the audience. In the Swan the two pillars reached to the top of the second gallery, making the frame huge. In the Pit the pillars became lower and made the frame smaller, thus causing the frame to lose the impact which it had had at the Swan. The reduction in size of the settings, however, did not work completely negatively; the smaller 'picture', provided by the archway, concentrated the audience's attention and gave the impression that the world of the play was compressed.

Another device -- eye-shaped reliefs set in gilded ironwork -- reminded the audience that the action of watching was a significant part of the play; it is Bosola's spying upon the Duchess which makes the plot proceed. In the Swan the reliefs were set so that they would surround the stage: on each side and at the centre of the second gallery, on each side on the first gallery, and on the left-hand side pillar beneath it. The reliefs gave the impression that not only the Duchess but all the other characters on stage were stared at by the 'eyes'. In the Pit, in which the low ceiling allowed only one gallery, their strong impression was lost, as was the impact of the large frame. However, the emblematic effect of one of the reliefs compensated for this loss. It was set at the centre of the lintel of the archway upstage centre (other reliefs were set as in the Swan: on each side of the gallery and on the left-hand side pillar). In both theatres the reliefs symbolically emphasized one of the aspects of life in the closed courtly world; everyone watched everyone else, and would

detect others' 'darkest actions' (I.ii.235) and 'privat'st thoughts' (I.ii.235).<sup>10</sup> The reliefs, combined with the double frame structure, made the audience conscious of the fact that it watched some of the characters watch other characters.


The settings also had the function of conveying the elegance in the aristocratic society, as those in the previous productions had done. For example, the settings were painted in gold and black; the large frame, the ironwork and the archway were gold, and other parts of the settings black. The design was intricate in detail, though not lavish. The ironwork had a geometric and symmetrical pattern, and the inside of the side entrance at each side of the acting area was framed with metal bars. But elegance was not overemphasized and there was not much decoration in the settings. This was the same with the furniture. Props like chairs and tables were rather plain. When elegance was emphasized, it was connected with the corruption of this society, especially that of the Cardinal. This was suggested by a large jewelled crucifix hung from the ceiling, used to indicate the Cardinal's lodging in Act II, scene iv; and by a large carved lectern, which held a Bible with which the Cardinal poisoned Julia in Act V, scene ii.

The costumes were loosely Renaissance (see plate XI).<sup>11</sup> Male characters wore doublets, waistcoats and breeches. Female characters' costumes were dresses with boned bodices. Accessories, jewellery and the design of the costumes were used to indicate the difference in rank of the characters. For example, in the court scene, Ferdinand was the only character to wear a long and jewelled waistcoat over his doublet. The noblemen and servants were distinguished by red embroideries in the noblemen's costumes, while the servants wore plain black doublets. In the

court scene the Duchess wore a dress which was ornamented with pearls, and which had embroidery on the shoulders and the stomacher. She also wore long gloves without fingers and a long pearl necklace. Cariola's dress was grey and she wore no jewellery. But as in the settings, the display of elegance in the costumes was restrained. Grey and black were the dominant colours, and other colours were used only partly and temporarily; apart from the Cardinal's robe, red was used in embroideries in the costumes of the noblemen and of the Duchess's ladies-in-waiting; the Duchess wore a conspicuous russet dress only in the court scene. It seems that both the settings and the costumes were designed not to attract the audience's attention too much, while they fulfilled the function of conveying the aristocratic atmosphere.

— There are two prompt-books for the production.<sup>12</sup> The one was used both for the Swan and the Playhouse, as suggested by its title on the cover: 'Duchess of Malfi / D.S.M. -- / Stratford + / Newcastle / Prompt Copy'. But it is made clear by a video tape which records one of the performances at the Swan,<sup>13</sup> that the prompt-book presents the director's later editing of the text for the Playhouse; and that he made further deletions and emendations to the script after the performances at the Swan. The video tape reveals that cuts and emendations for the Swan comprised a small part of those marked in the prompt-book.<sup>14</sup> Therefore my later discussion on cuts and emendations for the Swan is based on the text recorded in the video tape, not in the prompt-book. The other prompt-book was used only for the Pit. As no performance at the Pit was recorded, this prompt-book is the only material that provides the information on the cuts and emendations for the theatre. Hereafter the prompt-book for the Swan and the Playhouse will be referred to as the first prompt-book, and that

for the Pit as the second prompt-book.

Both prompt-books are made of A4 sheets. The scripts of the text are not pasted on the sheets but photocopied. The text used for the production was the New Mermaid edition.<sup>15</sup> There are several differences in structure between the two prompt-books. The first prompt-book's spine is on the right-hand side of the title page. One page of enlarged photocopied script makes up each left-hand side page. On a wide margin on its left-hand side, there are cues for lighting, music, sound effect, and furniture. Several pieces of stage business are also written in the margin and within the text. Most of the stage business is written on the right-hand side pages, and the characters' positions and movements are indicated in two diagrams photocopied on the right-hand side on each of the pages. Cues, stage business and directions for the Swan remained even after the considerable additional deletions were made for the Playhouse.  Act and scene divisions are indicated by tabs.

The second prompt-book has its spine on the left-hand side of the title page. One page of enlarged photocopied script comes on the right-hand side. Only simple markings are made in the right-hand side pages. Each left-hand side page is divided vertically into three sections. The section on the right-hand side is for cues for lighting, music and sound effect. The small section in the middle contains directions for personal props, cues for the opening and closing of the curtains, and the description of the lighting and the sound effect. The largest section on the left-hand side is for stage business. Two diagrams of the stage are also photocopied in this section.

In the following section I will discuss cuts and emendations for the Swan and for the Pit; and what led the director to make further changes for

the latter. Due to the lack of a recording of the performed text at the Pit, comparisons will be made between the text recorded in the video tape and the text in the second prompt-book.

Out of the 2,864 lines of the original text only 49 lines are cut in the performed text on the video tape.<sup>16</sup> In most cases one line consisting of a few words is deleted. There are eleven cases of cuts of more than one line. As a result of these small deletions the edited text for the Swan gave the impression of being intact. These cuts seem to have been made for a variety of reasons. Some deleted lines refer to topical allusions and the customs in those days, which are difficult for modern audiences, such as Julia's reference to broths made from gold coins for medicinal use (II.iv.65-66); a servant's description of a farmer, who became mad because he failed to gain a fortune with his harvest (IV.ii.56-57), and Bosola's reference to leeches used for blood-letting (V.ii.310-12).

Other lines are deleted to increase the tension of the scene: for example, Delio's remark that he will take Antonio's son to the Cardinal (V.iii.50-53), which is made right before Antonio parts with Delio to visit the Cardinal for reconciliation; and Pescara's remark that Delio has brought Antonio's eldest son (V.v.105-07), which is made between Bosola's death and Delio's arrival for concluding the play.

A few deletions were necessitated by the external conditions of the theatre, such as the settings and legal constraints upon the hours children can work.<sup>17</sup> For example, 'i'th'rushes' (V.i.88) referring to the place in which Bosola has hurt the Cardinal and Ferdinand is cut; in this production Bosola stabbed them on the bare stage. Delio's 'this young hopeful gentleman' (V.i.111) is changed into 'Antonio's young son and heir', because the child who played the son was not able to appear on stage at the

Swan at the end of the approximately three and a half hours performance.

The director also made changes of single words and insertions of words. The former can be classified in several categories: changes into their modern forms, for example, 'chirurgeons' (I.ii.32) into 'surgeons'; and changes to make the context clearer to modern audiences, for example, 'sound' in the Duchess's 'Shall I sound under thy fingers?' (II.i.119) into 'swoon', and 'cultures' in Ferdinand's '[the Duchess's] guilt treads on | Hot burning cultures' (III.i.56-57) into 'coulters'. There are two cases of insertions of words. One is Delio's 'I know [Bosola] seven years in the galleys' (I.i.69), which is changed, with a deletion, into 'This fellow spent seven years in the galleys'. The other is Delio's 'I knew him [i.e., Bosola] in Padua' (III.iii.40), to which 'of' is inserted after 'knew'. These emendations seem to have been made to help the audience understand the text.

There are two cases of transposition of lines. Antonio's 'More earthquakes?' (III.ii.155) is transferred after the Duchess's lines (III.ii.155-57), in which she laments the insecurity of her life. A knocking off-stage is added between the Duchess's lines and the transposed lines. The transposition emphasized Antonio's fright, which made him unable to speak much, and increased the tension. The other is the Duchess's line: 'I should learn somewhat, I am sure' (IV.ii.23), which is changed to 'I am sure I should learn somewhat'. This transposition was made probably to make the sentence less confusing; 'somewhat' is the antecedent of 'I never shall know here' (IV.ii.24) at the beginning of the next line.

There is one case of reattribution of speakers. The Mad Lawyer's 'Hast?' (IV.ii.88), in reply to the Mad Astrologer's 'I have skills in

heraldry' (IV.ii.87), is spoken by the Duchess. In performance, the Mad Astrologer spoke his line, turning to the Duchess, who replied to him while making efforts to stay calm. The Duchess's involvement in the madmen's lines emphasized the contrast of the Duchess's sanity and the madmen's insanity.

In the second prompt-book 242 lines are deleted. The deletions include almost all deletions in the performed text in the video tape.<sup>18</sup> There are more deletions consisting of more than one line than in the video tape. Some of them are large, such as the deletion of one whole scene (Act III, scene iv). I was able to discuss these changes in an interview with Bill Alexander.

The first reason he mentioned was the time limit imposed on the performances at the Pit:

There is a [bit more] of time limit in the Pit, purely because in London an audience would tend to have to go and catch public transport, and in Stratford most people who see a play stay for the night. So my experience is that I['ve] often had to cut the play when it's moved to London. And the second point is that it was also a slight change.... It wasn't a change of interpretation exactly.<sup>19</sup>  
[Alexander's emphasis]

These words suggest that the director made deletions mainly to shorten the text and not for interpretative reasons. Some deletions seem to have been made purely for this purpose, such as that of the Cardinal's explanation of Ferdinand's madness (V.ii.87-99). But many of the other deleted lines have certain characteristics; they are difficult for modern audiences to appreciate. It seems that the audience's reaction to the performances at the Swan led the director to cut such lines. In fact the director, referring to the deletion of lines about Antonio's citadel, said, 'I felt the audience didn't follow that scene'.

Many lines which refer to myths, historical figures and customs now

forgotten or lost are deleted: for example, Bosola's references to Danae (II.ii.18-20) and Pluto (III.ii.243-47), Antonio's reference to metamorphoses in the Greek myth (III.ii.25-32), the Duchess's reference to Portia (IV.i.73-75). Some of the expressions which would have been familiar or proverbial in the seventeenth century are also deleted: for example, Bosola's lines that the death of the Duchess is 'direful to my soul as is the sword | Unto a wretch hath slain his father' (IV.ii.360-62) and his 'Security some men call the suburbs of hell, | Only a dead wall between' (V.ii.332-33).

Bill Alexander cut some lines which had been of significance in the previous RSC productions. The first case is the deletion of Bosola's attack on man's vanity, out of which man decorates himself in spite of the fate of dying and rotting (II.i.47-63). In the second case the director cut lines which refer to the confiscation of Antonio's citadel by the Aragonian brethren, to Delio's unsuccessful plea to the Marquis of Pescara for the citadel, and to Julia's success in obtaining it (V.i.5-13, 15-59). It is true that these passages are particularly difficult for modern audiences; the first refers to a way of thinking which is now extinct, and the citadel episode to the possession system which allowed a steward to own something of political or military value. But these passages are significant. The first passage reveals some of Bosola's character as one who attacks man's vanity, as well as a sarcastic man. At the same time the passage establishes scepticism about the superiority of man -- one of the themes of the play. The passages about the citadel reveal the corruption of the court; knowing that the Aragonian brethren have confiscated the citadel illegally after they banished Antonio, Pescara willingly gives it to Julia as soon as he reads the Cardinal's letter for her. It appears



that the director reduced the complexity of the play in cutting these lines.

To shorten the playing time was not the only purpose of the cuts. When I asked what was the reason for cutting Act III, scene iv, in which the Cardinal's investiture is presented in the form of dumb show, the director replied:

I wanted to change the rhythm of the second half. I wanted the second half to move at a quicker pace, and I therefore decided to abandon the whole kind of choreographic and the statuesque nature of that scene. I also believe it would seem probably meant much more to the Jacobean audience, who [was] used to conventions of masques, conventions of that kind of symbolist way of telling a story than a modern audience. I did it, however, with some hesitation, because I think that it is in a way quite a remarkable scene and quite a remarkable theatrical device. It's very much the turning point of the play; but I just felt that I hadn't made it work in the original production, that I could not think of a way to improve it, but I could think of a way by removing it, to actually make the second half more fluid.  
[Alexander's emphasis]

These words suggest that the reconsideration of the rhythm of the performance, which led to the deletion of Act III, scene iv, was another result of the audience's reaction to the performances at the Swan. The director's remark that he cut the scene 'with some hesitation' and another remark of his that he considered the original text a 'brilliantly constructed play, with a natural flow to it' imply that he decided to draw a better reaction from his audience at the Pit in spite of his respect for the rhythm of the original text.

After referring to the deletion of Act III, scene iv, the director made an additional remark that he made more cuts and emendations to change the rhythm of the second half of the play in performance: '[A] lot of work I did in the second half was to make it move quicker, the second half of the play which I think had been over-long in Stratford'. Though he did not specify other cuts or emendations made for the purpose, the examination of

the second prompt-book reveals additional cuts. It seems that the deleted lines include, for example, part of the Cardinal's persuasion of Julia not to ask him what has happened (V.ii.254-62); and generalizing sententiae such as Bosola's 'We value not desert, nor Christian breath, | When we know black deeds must be cur'd with death' (V.iv.39-40), as he believes that Ferdinand wants to have him murdered in order to conceal the murder of the Duchess. The director seems to have been successful in changing the rhythm; the deletion of the Cardinal's lines emphasized the impression that Julia did not give him time to speak as she vigorously asked him to reveal his secret; the deletions of Bosola's sententiae contributed to maintaining tension.

Some deletions were made probably to remove remarks which can be judged ridiculous from scenes which should be genuinely tragic by modern standards. For example, the word 'again' in Bosola's 'Oh, she's gone again' (IV.ii.348) is cut. Bosola speaks this line as he witnesses the Duchess's death after her temporary *resuscitation*. Another case was the deletion of the dying Antonio's 'Their very names | Kindle a little fire in me' (V.iv.57-58). Antonio makes this remark as Bosola, after mistakenly stabbing him, refers to the Duchess and her children in order to prompt Antonio's inevitable death by revealing that they have been murdered. These deletions seem to have been justifiable; at the Swan I heard members of the audience giggle at Bosola's 'again' and at the contrast of Antonio's 'a little fire' of life and his family's death revealed by Bosola.

The director's consideration for the rhythm of the performances can be discerned not only in the deletions but in one category of emendations: transpositions of lines. Two cases are found in the second prompt-book. One had been introduced at the Swan: the transposition of Antonio's 'More

earthquakes?' (III.ii.155) after the Duchess's lines (III.ii.155-57). The other is the transposition of the Cardinal's 'Where are you?' and his servants' 'Here' (V.ii.221) after Bosola's 'Tomorrow I'll expect th'intelligence [by Julia]' (V.ii.213). The transposed lines are spoken off-stage. The deletion of Julia's 'get you into my cabinet' (V.ii.214), already introduced at the Swan, and this transposition gave the implication that the Cardinal's voice prompted Julia's reply to Bosola, 'Tomorrow? ... You shall have it with you now' (V.ii.214-15).<sup>20</sup> As a result the action developed more speedily.

Other emendations such as changes of single words and phrases indicate the director's attempt to make the sentences clearer. In the second prompt-book the director cancelled several changes, such as 'audience' from 'conference' in the Duchess's 'private conference with [Ferdinand]' (III.i.46), and 'behind' from 'after' in Ferdinand's 'I'll crawl after' (V.ii.50). On the other hand some changed words are added; for example, 'Bermoothas' (III.ii.266) was changed into its modern form 'Bermudas', and 'bewray' (III.ii.110) into 'betray', which is more familiar. It seems that the director was careful in making the changes more appropriate, while trying not to make fussy changes.

There is one instance of an addition, which is less explicable than those already made at the Swan; in Ferdinand's parable of Reputation, Love and Death, 'oh my darling' is inserted after '"Do not forsake me [i.e., Reputation]"' (III.ii.132). As the original sentence is clear enough, this seems unnecessary.

In the following section I will describe how the production was performed at the Swan and the Pit. The reconstruction will be made from my

memory of the performances, the prompt-books, production records,<sup>21</sup> the video tape of a performance at the Swan, and reviews in newspapers and periodicals. Though the performances at the two theatres were essentially the same, there were several differences in the positioning of the characters and in the acting. Some differences were caused by the change of the size of theatre, and others by changes of the actors' or the director's interpretations of their roles. I will refer to the differences which I found notable or significant.

Before the performance began, the stage was dimly lit in pale blue light. In the middle of the stage on the black floor stood a black stool decorated with gold rivets. A jewel was placed on the stool. The atmosphere of the world of the play was immediately established; aristocratic, wealthy, elegant but closed; and it lacked warmth.

Suddenly the stage became dark, as a minor tune played on a clarinet was heard. A few seconds later, the characters appeared quietly. The Duchess stood under the archway, flanked by the Cardinal and Ferdinand. She was wrapped in a black cloth. Next to each pillar of the archway stood Antonio and Cariola, looking at the Aragonian siblings. The noblemen stood separately in front of the two side entrances. A ritualistic atmosphere was emphasized by the tableaux effect provided by the archway and the sound of cymbals. As one of the noblemen approached the Duchess and knelt in front of her, she held out her right hand, which the nobleman kissed. The ritualistic atmosphere reached its climax as the sound of cymbals became louder and the nobleman rose, clutched the Duchess's black cloth and removed it. The Duchess, now seen to be dressed in a jewelled gown, posed with her arms out-stretched. The tableau '[burst] into life',<sup>22</sup> as she was applauded by those around her.

The ritualistic removal of the black cloth implied that the Duchess had just finished mourning her dead husband, and that she was now to return to her normal life. The lavish dress not only indicated the Duchess's high rank; with its low neckline, the dress transformed the Duchess from an almost lifeless figure into 'a merry widow, a Titian haired temptress with a passionate need to love'.<sup>23</sup> Thus the opening served to present the Duchess's two identities, which was in conflict with each other in the course of events of the play: the identity of a high-ranking person, whose behaviour is watched by the public, and that of a woman who asserted her sexuality.

Blue light and music marked the beginning of the play proper. Quick strokes of percussion made the audience anticipate the underlying tension. The play began with Antonio standing alone upstage. A man's voice attracted Antonio's attention. He turned upstage right and recognized his friend Delio. Antonio expressed his delight and relief in seeing his old friend welcome him back from France. The two started to walk towards each other, while Delio continued to talk to Antonio. Their movements were interrupted for a moment on Delio's 'you return | A very formal Frenchman, in your habit' (I.i.3), when Grisolan, who had been walking downstage from upstage left, passed by Antonio, looking suspiciously at his French costume. This small piece of stage business emphasized one aspect of this society; it was closed to the outside world.

Seeing Bosola appear downstage left Antonio began to introduce members of the Aragonian court to Delio. This was done in a non-naturalistic manner; Bosola froze for a few moments as Antonio described his character walking around next to him. This 'non-naturalistic theatrical device'<sup>24</sup> introduced not only Delio but the audience to the unknown man living in the

aristocratic world.

After Antonio's speech Bosola walked downstage centre, as if he had come back to life from a waxwork model, and met the Cardinal, who appeared upstage right and walked downstage. This scene served to introduce Bosola directly to the audience. Bosola complained to the Cardinal, who had not rewarded Bosola's service for him. As the Cardinal made to leave on 'You enforce your merit too much' (I.i.34), Bosola grabbed his arm to stop him, exclaiming, 'Slighted thus?' (I.i.38). The Cardinal expressed annoyance at Bosola's complaint as well as contempt on 'Would you could become honest' (I.i.40), and made an exit, ignoring Bosola.

From the beginning the two Bosolas -- played by Nigel Terry at the Swan and Stephen Boxer at the Pit -- defined their different interpretation of the role. In the director's view, Terry's Bosola emphasized the character's soldierly aspect, while Boxer's Bosola was more scholastic.<sup>25</sup> Terry appeared with his hair plaited at the top of his head. As an indicator of Bosola's past as a slave in the galleys,<sup>26</sup> the plait served to stress the physical rather than mental suffering he had received. Robustness deriving from his past was reflected in Bosola's speech, which straightforwardly expressed the character's anger in being neglected. On the other hand Boxer was presented with a large scar on one of his hollow cheeks and a cynical facial expression, which suggested 'a deprived soul, plausibly soured by years in the galleys'.<sup>27</sup> This Bosola also stressed sarcasm in his acting; he spat out his last line about the positions at court and made an exit, thrusting aside the noblemen who were gathering under the archway.

As Ferdinand and the noblemen arrived, Antonio and Delio stood aside to observe them; Antonio downstage right, Delio downstage left. Hearing

that Antonio had won the joust, Ferdinand ordered a servant to give him a jewel. The servant picked up the cushion of the pre-set stool, and carried it towards Antonio, who bowed and received the jewel. The noblemen's applause followed it. This scene suggested their fondness of ceremony. The following stage business revealed that this inclination derived from their obsession with appearances. While Ferdinand was talking to some of the noblemen, the servant stood upstage, holding a large mirror, into which other noblemen glanced to check how they looked.

Ferdinand talked to the noblemen, who reacted to his words with sycophantic laughter. Ferdinand was cheerful at first; he laughed at his own bawdy joke about Castruccio's wife Julia. When Grisolan and Roderigo laughed at Castruccio's bawdy joke, however, he changed his mood and rebuked the two in a quiet but stiff voice. After he told the noblemen not to laugh unless he told them to, Castruccio's placating lines prompted the conversation. When Ferdinand delivered another joke, the noblemen showed embarrassment; they were unable to decide whether to laugh or not. Their embarrassment provoked the audience's laughter. This use of comedy effectively conveyed the atmosphere of the Aragonian court under a powerful but whimsical ruler Ferdinand.

Silvio's announcement of the arrival of the Cardinal and the Duchess was accompanied by solemn music, which emphasized the formality of the occasion. The Duchess appeared on the first gallery with the Midwife<sup>28</sup> and Cariola. The Cardinal appeared upstage centre and advanced downstage. Ferdinand, accompanied by Silvio, approached the Cardinal. Silvio knelt and kissed the Cardinal's ring. It was at this moment that the second tableau was presented. The Aragonian brethren and the noblemen stood still when Antonio advanced and began to walk among them, describing the

Aragonian siblings' nature for Delio. Antonio delivered his lines next to the Cardinal, who blessed Silvio in a low voice (see plate XII). It was as if the whole stage were transformed into a museum or a waxwork gallery, and Antonio were a museum guide.<sup>29</sup> The alienating effect of the device placed the audience in the position of Delio, a newcomer to the Aragonian court, who was being introduced to this unknown world.

As the Cardinal walked towards Ferdinand, Antonio approached Ferdinand and described his nature standing next to him. Then Antonio looked at the Cardinal, who approached Julia, and referred to him again. During all this Antonio's criticism of the Aragonian brethren's evil nature made his delivery vigorous. After describing the brothers' characters, Antonio looked up at the Duchess in the gallery. At this moment a hypnotizing piece of music was played on keyboard and a cello, as if to imply the Duchess's gracious nature. When Antonio began to describe her, she appeared at the centre of the gallery. As Antonio continued to speak, looking at her, his unrequited love for her made his voice increasingly rapturous, until Delio, who was amazed at Antonio's rapture, stopped him.

After Antonio and Delio left the stage, the Duchess was introduced directly to the audience. She descended the gallery and walked downstage through the archway. A piece of music, made lively with percussion, functioned as a flourish for the Duchess's return to court (it was also played at her exit). Her entrance was applauded by the noblemen. Silvio served as their representative in kneeling in front of her for a salutation (see plate XI). The Duchess's behaviour during her first appearance at court after her husband's death suggested her consciousness of her new position as a ruler. As Ferdinand approached her to submit a petition, she briefly replied, 'To me, sir?' (I.i.134), indicating in it her excitement



at dealing with a petition for the first time. She accepted the petition and decided to hire Bosola. She was excited, this time, at the fact that she was given the power to control household matters. The Duchess's efforts to behave like a ruler were evident also in her attitude towards the noblemen. Hearing that Silvio was to visit Milan, she clapped her hands and ordered coaches to be brought in a loud and dignified voice. She left, holding Silvio's arm to see him off.

The exit of the Duchess and the noblemen was followed by the encounter of Ferdinand and Bosola. The Cardinal, avoiding Bosola, made to ascend the gallery. Bosola, seeing him going, talked to Ferdinand instead. Ferdinand expressed his contempt of Bosola most clearly as he offered money to him; on 'There's gold' (I.ii.167), he emptied a small bag, letting gold coins drop on the floor. The sound of the dropping coins increased the disturbing effect of this stage business. Bosola responded to Ferdinand's arrogance with the sarcastic delivery of 'So: | What follows?' (I.ii.167-68). Ferdinand laughed at Bosola's 'Whose throat must I cut?' (I.ii.170) and told Bosola to spy on the Duchess, already implying his obsession with his sister with the emphasis on 'a young widow' (I.ii.176). Bosola rejected the offer contemptuously, looking down at the coins and kicking them, on 'Take your devils | Which hell calls angels' (I.ii.184-86). Though Bosola made to go, he was stopped by Ferdinand's offer of an office at the Duchess's palace. Bosola suggested that he accepted the offer by picking up the coins 'to avoid ingratitude' (I.i.194). But he continued to criticize Ferdinand's intention to corrupt him with money, as if to imply that it were the only resistance he had. The interview *established* Bosola's efforts to protect his dignity and moral integrity even though he was a low-life man and needed to accept working as a spy.

After Bosola left, the Aragonian siblings reappeared. The Duchess advanced centrestage, the Cardinal upstage right and Ferdinand upstage left. In forbidding the Duchess to remarry without their consent, the brothers made a distinctive contrast. The Cardinal moved little, and he delivered all his lines menacingly but calmly. Ferdinand became increasingly emotional and raised his voice. When the Cardinal tried to speak more after telling the Duchess never to marry a lower-ranking man, Ferdinand interrupted him with 'Marry? they are most luxurious, | Will wed twice' (I.ii.218-19), and indicated utmost disgust at the very idea of the Duchess's remarriage. The Cardinal's 'O fie!' (I.i.219), delivered as he frowned at Ferdinand, seemed to suggest that he could not bear to see Ferdinand's emotional attitude. Ferdinand followed the Duchess, as he became more excited. The Duchess protested at her brothers', especially Ferdinand's persistent warnings with 'This is terrible good counsel' (I.ii.232), indicating uncontrollable anger, not sarcasm. The brothers, however, ignored her and continued to warn her. Not only Ferdinand but the quiet Cardinal physically menaced the Duchess when he left. As the Duchess rose after kissing the Cardinal's hand, he grabbed her arm, pulled her towards him to give her his last warning: 'Wisdom begins at the end: remember it' (I.ii.247).

The Duchess, left alone with Ferdinand, expressed her defiance against her brothers by clapping her hands as if to applaud their speeches. Ferdinand made her turn to him with 'You are my sister' (I.ii.249); the next moment he drew a dagger to show it to her on 'This was my father's poniard' (I.ii.250). This stage business seemed to suggest that his concern with family honour made him object to the Duchess's marriage. But his attitude to her at his leave taking suggested more than that. He

embarrassed the Duchess by stepping back to avoid her kiss, though a moment later, he laughed and kissed her on the cheek. As he made to go he delivered a bawdy joke, which made the Duchess laugh, and then denied its bawdy meaning to embarrass her. With the stressed delivery of his last words, 'lusty widow' (I.ii.259), he maliciously suggested that the Duchess would not be able to resist sexual temptations at court. This manner of his leave taking suggested that Ferdinand's sexual obsession with the Duchess led him to object to her marriage.

Ferdinand's final words provoked the Duchess's defiance in delivering 'Shall this move me?' (I.ii.260), and confirmed her resolution to carry out the marriage proposal to Antonio. She pulled one of the curtains, as if to create a private space which was out of control of her 'royal kindred' (I.ii.260). But she was aware of what the intended marriage would endanger. After pulling the other curtain, she turned to Cariola, who had been attending her, and referred to 'More than [her] life, [her] fame' (I.ii.270) in a quavering voice. A pause after 'For I am going into a wilderness' (I.ii.278) emphasized her fear of doing what was forbidden to a woman of her rank.

Antonio appeared, hearing the bell which the Duchess rang before she had Cariola stand behind the curtains. His sight increased her nervousness; she touched the edge of one of the curtains, watching Antonio cross the stage and sit down. She delivered 'Are you ready?' (I.ii.281) after a long pause, causing embarrassment in Antonio. On the Duchess's enquiry about 'What's laid up for tomorrow' (I.i.286), Antonio rose to fetch an account book, but was stopped by the Duchess, who was delighted by his 'your beauteous excellence' (I.ii.287). Bowing to the Duchess's thanks to him, Antonio walked backwards until she stopped him again. As the

conversation went on, the two came to talk facing each other. But Antonio never forgot his position as a steward in spite of his increasing friendliness. Seeing this, the Duchess began to hint at her affection for him. On 'If I had a husband now, this care were quit' (I.ii.301), she looked at him meaningfully, then led him to refer to marriage. Antonio's affection for her intrigued him in the conversation; he spoke circling around her. His delivery of lines on the Duchess's marriage in prospect reflected the intensity of his love for her. The Duchess's laughter to his words suggested her excitement and nervousness in bringing the subject gradually to her proposal. Her reaction made Antonio enjoy the conversation and even find delight in teasing her. Asked by the Duchess how he thought of marriage, Antonio delivered a negative view of marriage, looking at her mischievously.

The disappointing view led the Duchess to suggest her intention more directly. She took off her wedding ring, ostensibly to cure Antonio's bloodshot eye. As he bowed and held out his hand, she put the ring on the palm, saying that she vowed to give the ring 'But to [her] second husband' (I.ii.326). Antonio was startled at her words and raised his head. His reaction provoked the audience's laughter. Antonio managed to return the ring to her. But the Duchess expressed her firm resolution to propose to him by putting the ring on his finger. The action made Antonio kneel. He resisted when the Duchess tried to raise him. He rose, rejecting her proposal. As the Duchess continued, he exclaimed in total embarrassment, 'O my unworthiness!' (I.i.347). Though irritated by the rejection, the Duchess tried to convince Antonio of his worth. Antonio stepped away from her and suggested his rejection, saying that he had never received wages from virtue. The Duchess, after delivering 'Now she pays it' (I.ii.356),

began to circle upstage, frustrated by the fact that her high rank prevented her from being wooed, and from expressing her passion directly. But her love for Antonio finally led her to ignore the restrictions imposed by her rank. She stepped upstage towards Antonio to confess her affection. Seeing him trembling, the Duchess approached him, took his hand and placed it under her collarbone, on 'This is flesh, and blood, sir' (I.ii.369). This action most clearly indicated the Duchess's assertion of her sexuality, and suggested that her affection for Antonio made sexual desire look natural and moving.

The Duchess's decisive action made Antonio accept the proposal. The Duchess expressed her flowing delight in a quavering 'I thank you, gentle love' (I.ii.377) while she ran towards him, spreading her arms. After kissing Antonio she asked him to kiss her. As Antonio tentatively held out his arm to embrace and kiss her, she became playful; she broke away right before the kiss to deliver 'I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus, | As fearful to devour them too soon' (I.ii.381-82). Even in the happiness Antonio, however, was concerned about the danger brought by the marriage. He broke away from the Duchess's embrace, referring to her brothers. His fear of having the marriage revealed was evident in his reaction to Cariola's appearance when he and the Duchess knelt; he rose and stepped back downstage right, exclaiming. After the exit of Antonio and the Duchess, whose exchange provoked the audience's sympathetic laughter, Cariola's lines echoed Antonio's uneasiness. She anxiously wondered, 'Whether the spirit of greatness, or of woman | Reign most in her' (I.ii.417-18). This remark made the audience anticipate the destruction of the Duchess as a result of her 'spirit of greatness' and 'of woman'.

In Act II, scene i, the next scene in which the Duchess appeared after

the marriage, 'the spirit of woman' was emphasized; she was presented as pregnant. She appeared after Antonio set a file on the lectern upstage. Though hidden by a loose dress, her pregnancy was evidently indicated to the audience as she was helped by Antonio to sit on the chair. She began to sign several pieces of paper held out by Antonio while talking to others. Annoyed by her necklace tangling her ruff, the Duchess told the Midwife to mend the ruff. Tetchiness which accompanied pregnancy made her impatient with the slowness of the Midwife's mending. The Duchess stopped signing and rebuked her. A moment later, the Duchess became apologetic, ashamed of her inability to control herself: 'I am | So troubled with the mother' (II.i.119-20). Another undignified consequence of the pregnancy was seen as Bosola offered a bowl of apricots to the Duchess. Her appetite for apricots was unusual; as soon as she received the bowl with great delight, she began to eat them 'greedily' (II.i.151), as Bosola expressed. She even sipped the juice left in the bowl after eating the apricots. Throughout her appearance in Act II, scene i, the Duchess's behaviour under the influence of pregnancy was exaggerated so as to provoke the audience's laughter. While suggesting the Duchess's unfitness for the position of a ruler, this served as another piece of comic relief after the conversation of Bosola and Castruccio, before the apricots brought on the Duchess's labour and the scene plunged into darkness.

After the Duchess's hasty exit, Antonio stood dismayed and frozen into inaction in the darkness. Encouraged by Delio, he managed to take action to prevent the officers from detecting the Duchess's delivery. He had them gather in a dark corridor, which was represented by an angled column of light cast on the floor. Antonio appeared and made a false report of a theft. As he told them to stay in their rooms, his efforts to conceal his

fear and to make them obey the order made him behave arrogantly. He stared at the officers and spoke forcibly. This was most evident on 'She is very sick' (II.ii.52). The officers' obedience led Antonio to appease them, in telling them that innocent ones would be approved in obeying the order. But this success did not relieve Antonio's fear. When Delio appeared and told Antonio to comfort the Duchess, Antonio broke away from him and shouted, 'How I do play the fool with mine own danger!' (II.i.62). After Delio left to watch the Aragonian brethren in Rome, Cariola's entrance with the new-born baby brought temporary relief in the scene. On noticing the baby, Antonio expressed the surprise and joy of becoming a father; smiling awkwardly, he held out his arms tentatively to embrace him. After returning his son to Cariola, he rushed to set a horoscope for him. Moments of delight, however, did not last long; when Antonio and Cariola left, a scream was heard, making the audience anticipate the sinister nature of the events to follow.

Bosola was the first to be drawn by the scream. The frightening noise did not prevent him from spying. Antonio appeared next, holding a horoscope and a pistol; his distraught look and cold sweat indicated his shock at the result of the horoscope and his fright at the scream. Antonio nervously addressed Bosola, who had hidden himself by standing outside the light. Seeing Bosola appear, <sup>Antonio</sup> he became suspicious about Bosola's behaviour and reproached him for ignoring the order to stay inside. Stirred by the fear that Bosola would detect all the secret, Antonio accused Bosola of poisoning the Duchess and of stealing the jewels. The fear robbed Antonio of self-control and made him behave violently; calling Bosola 'an impudent snake' (II.iii.38), he approached Bosola and caught him, unaware that he had dropped the horoscope. Shaking Bosola, he shouted at him, 'You libel

well, sir' (II.iii.39), until a nosebleed made Antonio let go of Bosola. Antonio's unawareness of the loss of the horoscope drew the first step of destruction; after Antonio's exit, Bosola picked up the horoscope and discovered that the Duchess had given birth.

As Bosola left, speaking the conclusion drawn from the discovery that lechery could not be concealed, Julia was seen to enter and stand under the archway. At the Pit, her entrance was made earlier, when Bosola was speaking the final lines of the scene. This manner of entrance suggested more explicitly that Bosola's words could be applied as description of Julia's behaviour. From the beginning she made a contrast to the Duchess, who movingly expressed her sexuality in confessing her affection to Antonio. The Cardinal placed a chair centrestage, and knelt, looking at Julia. Told to sit down, she walked centrestage lifting up her skirt, straddled the chair, and leant on its back. The Cardinal kissed Julia (see plate XIII), and talked to her placatingly, 'Thou art my best of wishes' (II.iv.1). The opening of Julia's rendezvous with the Cardinal shockingly revealed that she used her sexuality only to satisfy the Cardinal's physical desires and her own. The futility of their relationship became clearer after that. The Cardinal began to undo the back of Julia's dress while he revealed his distrust of women. As he began to caress Julia, she could not bear his brutality; she sobbed and tried to remove his hand. The Cardinal was unmoved by her tears; he removed Julia's hand and continued to abuse her physically and verbally. Julia expressed her anger by standing and throwing down the chair. She made to walk away upstage. But the Cardinal was convinced that Julia was under his control. He walked downstage, stopped her with 'You may thank me, lady' (II.iv.27), and reminded her that he satisfied her physical desires, which her husband



Castruccio could not. On his 'I pray kiss me' (II.iv.30), Julia ran back and kissed him. Seeing Julia's obedience, the Cardinal revealed his brutality again. He held Julia's arm and repeatedly forced her to thank him. His coercive attitude remained the same throughout the rendezvous. The scene thus made it clear that physical desire without love was futile and that, in a male-dominated society, it allowed men to be brutal to their women.

Act II, scene v, turned the subject to the Duchess's childbirth and showed the beginning of the threat to her by her brothers. Ferdinand appeared to report the Duchess's childbirth to the Cardinal. Referring to the shock at the report, Ferdinand raised his voice. The Cardinal's advice to '[s]peak lower' (II.v.4) worked to the contrary; Ferdinand turned to the Cardinal and shouted, 'Lower?' (II.v.4), stressing his inability to control himself. After walking around for a moment, Ferdinand sat down on the chair, groaning, 'Rhubarb, oh for rhubarb' (II.v.12). Agony rather than indignation was dominant in Ferdinand's reaction to the report, when he clutched his stomach in the chair and took out a handkerchief to wipe his tears while walking around. The Cardinal reacted differently to the report. Though he clearly expressed anger by crushing the letter and walking around, his anger was restrained; he referred to the Duchess's conduct in a low voice. As the two continued to talk, Ferdinand became increasingly pathetic. Tortured by the vision of the Duchess 'in the shameful act of sin' (II.v.41), he moved his legs idly while seated, suggesting that the Duchess mentally dominated him. The Cardinal made his efforts to encourage Ferdinand to control himself. Stage business such as putting his hand on Ferdinand's shoulder suggested the Cardinal's concern with him as an elder brother as well as the concern with the family honour,

which might be damaged by Ferdinand's uncontrolled behaviour. But the Cardinal's encouragement did not work. He expressed irritation with 'Chide yourself' (II.v.59) in a loud voice. At this advice, Ferdinand seemingly calmed down, as he began to speak quietly. But the calm proved false when Ferdinand referred to 'some sin in [the Aragonian brethren], Heaven doth revenge | By [the Duchess]' (II.v.66-67). Finding it impossible to make the 'schizophrenic'<sup>30</sup> Ferdinand gain self-control, the Cardinal made to leave. He expressed a remaining fragment of fraternal affection as he kissed Ferdinand's hand before leaving. Left alone, Ferdinand concluded the scene as he left the stage through the archway with 'I'll find scorpions to string my whips, | And fix her in a general eclipse' (II.v.79-80). It appeared as if he tried to shake off his obsession with the Duchess in driving himself to revenge. Throughout the scene Ferdinand suggested how he was affected by his subconscious sexual obsession with the Duchess.

Act III, scene ii, presented the happiness and harmony in the Duchess's marriage, which were symbolized by a toy horse on the floor (see plate XIV). The scene, however, began with the suggestion of the insecurity of the Duchess's married life even before Ferdinand's invasion. The closed curtains *suggested* the Duchess's bedroom, a private place. The music played at the beginning of the performance was heard again. The Duchess was having her hair combed by Cariola upstage left, while servants and maids placed a carpet centrestage. Suddenly children's laughter interrupted the music for a moment. Uneasiness was produced as the servants <sup>r</sup>*expressed* suspicion at the laughter. With the servants' exit the atmosphere changed, as the Duchess, Antonio and Cariola were able to relax and be playful. Antonio surprised the Duchess, as he sneaked behind her

and put his hands on her neck. After requesting the Duchess to allow him to sleep in her bedroom Antonio lay on the downstage side of the carpet, taking his jacket off, as if he was ready to sleep. Cariola took part in the playfulness, when she asked Antonio why he rose early after sleeping with the Duchess and was hit by the Duchess. At Antonio's joke on 'Labouring men' (III.ii.18), the Duchess walked towards him, knelt between his spread legs and kissed him. After another kiss, she lay next to Antonio. This relaxed atmosphere led Antonio to try to tease the Duchess, when she returned to the table and began to comb her hair, looking into a mirror. Antonio made Cariola leave the bedroom; he also left secretly after stroking the Duchess, who was concerned with the change of the colour of her hair.

Ferdinand appeared through the gap of the closed curtains and advanced a few steps unnoticed. Getting no reply from Antonio, the Duchess stopped talking and looked round, until she found Ferdinand standing behind her. Seeing Ferdinand draw his dagger, the Duchess tried to recover from her fright and to behave 'like a prince' (III.ii.71). Ferdinand accused the Duchess in alternating moments of quietness and violence, as he had reacted to her childbirth. He advanced to her and directed the handle of the dagger towards her on 'Die then, quickly' (III.ii.71). A moment later the threat dwindled as Ferdinand withdrew the dagger. But when the Duchess tried to speak, he intimidated her again by shouting, 'Do not speak' (III.ii.75), and pointing the dagger at her. The most violent fit seized Ferdinand when the Duchess confessed that she was married and suggested that he see her husband; after relieving the Duchess with his quiet consent, Ferdinand held her arm and forced her to kneel on the carpet with his arm around her neck. The stage business shockingly conveyed his

aversion at accepting what he regarded as the Duchess's sexual liberty. Ferdinand gradually became calm as he told the Duchess's unseen husband and her not to reveal the husband's identity to him. Finishing his warning Ferdinand knelt on all fours, as if to suggest that he had lost all his strength. The Duchess reacted to Ferdinand's pathetic behaviour gently. Allowing him to place his head in her lap and stroking him, she protested her right to marry face to face to Ferdinand, as if speaking to a child. The stage business suggested the original relationship of the two, in which the Duchess was dominant. The Duchess's attitude towards Ferdinand led him to show violent fits and childish display of fraternal affection at the same time. The Duchess's reference to her reputation invited Ferdinand's fit, which made him growl, 'Dost thou know what reputation is?' (III.ii.120). Then he took the Duchess's left hand and indicated with her fingers Reputation, Love and Death in his parable. Speaking the moral of the parable that reputation is irrecoverable once lost, he became enraged and made to go. The Duchess shouted her last protest why she must not marry, suggesting not only her desire to live as a woman but sorrow in being rejected by her brother with whom she had been close. Ferdinand ignored her and left through the curtains, repeating his vow that he would not see her again.

The threat to the Duchess's private world continued after Ferdinand's exit. Not recovering from the shock at Ferdinand's invasion, the Duchess, Antonio and Cariola were frightened by violent knocks, which announced the intrusion of the outside world. Knowing that Bosola visited her, the Duchess took action to avoid destruction. She brought in her officers and falsely accused Antonio to enable him to escape. In spite of the public nature of the accusation and the ostensibly contemptuous tone in the

Duchess's lines, she and Antonio managed to express their affection to each other. During their conversation they exchanged meaningful looks, taking care not to be noticed by the officers standing upstage. The secret exchange of affection was concluded by Antonio's stressed delivery of 'what 'tis to serve | A prince with body and soul' (III.ii.207-08) in reply to the Duchess's declaration to dismiss Antonio. During the false dismissal the Duchess and Antonio made their efforts to secure their private relationship in the face of the destructive force from the public world.

Act III, scene iv, is the turning point of the play in that it publicly confirms the destruction of the Duchess. The political significance of the house of Aragon necessitates the public display of the banishment of the Duchess, who rebels against the social code and who neglects her duty as a ruler and as a member of the family. The scene is intended to establish the public and political nature of the banishment by means of the ceremonial and non-naturalistic presentation: the dumb show, during which the Cardinal's investiture and the Duchess's banishment are performed. At the Swan the director emphasized the 'statuesque nature'<sup>31</sup> of the scene in combining the archway and tableau<sup>x</sup> provided by the actors. The location -- the shrine of Our Lady of Loretto -- was suggested by a statue of the Madonna placed above the archway. Sombre music made the audience anticipate the banishment. Two pilgrims appeared downstage right to observe the ceremony. The Cardinal entered through the archway and stopped in front of it. The archway transformed the investiture and the banishment into a series of tableaux, in which the Cardinal symbolized the authority and power of the house of Aragon. While monks sang in celebration, servants disrobed the Cardinal and placed his cap and cassock on one of the stands. Then they took pieces of armour from the other stand

and armed the Cardinal. The Duchess and her family appeared after the investiture was completed. As the Duchess advanced and knelt in front of the Cardinal, he snatched off her wedding ring and left the shrine through the archway. The Duchess and her family rose to follow the Cardinal, but stopped under the archway. They presented a tableau to symbolize the banishment. The Duchess and Antonio remained there to provide 'a compositional fugitive image'<sup>32</sup> at the beginning of Act III, scene v. Though the dumb show was entirely cut at the Pit, the archway retained its function of symbolizing the banishment; the Duchess and her family appeared under the archway, while sombre music was played.

The characters were back to life, as they appeared on stage at the beginning of Act III, scene v. The Duchess was accompanied by Antonio, her children,<sup>33</sup> Cariola, the Midwife, and two servants -- the 'poor remainder' (III.v.3) of her train. They rested, putting down two bundles, all that they possessed now. The Duchess sat on one of them centrestage, exhausted. As she began to sob, overwhelmed by the reversal of fortune, Antonio showed consideration as a husband by sitting next to her and embracing her. But the public world continued to interfere with the family. Seeing Bosola appear, the Duchess found enough strength to confront him. She snatched Ferdinand's letter offered by Bosola, and expressed her anger at the Aragonian brethren's intention to murder Antonio, by crushing the letter and throwing it down. Antonio reacted pathetically to the letter; he stood gazing upwards but at nothing. It was not until Bosola turned to Antonio that Antonio assumed strength; declaring that he would not see the Aragonian brethren, he picked up the letter and threw it at Bosola.

The familial bond of the Duchess's household was emphasized again, after Bosola's threat to Antonio led the Duchess to suggest that Antonio

escape with the eldest son to avoid ambush. Antonio embraced the Duchess on accepting her advice. Then she knelt in front of the son to bid farewell. The young son, who scarcely seemed to be able to understand what his mother told him, embraced her, and this sight stressed the cruelty of the situation. For a moment the Duchess displayed aristocratic pride, which made her forget the sorrow of parting; at Antonio's advice to bear all the hardship, she broke from him and the son, shouting, 'Must I like to a slave-born Russian, | Account it praise to suffer tyranny?' (III.v.73-74). But her pride was absorbed by the consciousness that the parting was Heaven's will; sorrow dominated the Duchess again. Antonio consoled the sobbing Duchess, taking her hands, and asked her to be a good mother to the remaining children. The Duchess's affection for Antonio made her stop him and kiss him, as Antonio made to go with the son. After parting with Antonio and the eldest son, the Duchess embraced her daughter and sat on the bundle with her, next to Cariola. On 'My laurel is all withered' (III.v.90), she collapsed and was comforted by Cariola.

The approach of armed men, however, changed the Duchess from a lamenting wife to a defiant figure. She rose, ready to welcome her ruin, and confronted Bosola, who wore a helmet with the visor down, with 'I am your adventure, am I not?' (III.v.95). The Duchess's defiance gave her strength to behave as a representative of her household; seeing Bosola approach the children, the Duchess held out her arms to protect them, as the remaining members of the household gathered behind her. But resignation began to emerge in the Duchess, when she realized her helplessness. Robbed of her duchy and authority, she had no power. Her only resistance to her brother's agent was verbal, 'Were I a man, | I'll'd beat that counterfeit face into thy other -- ' (III.v.116-17), but she was

ignored before finishing her intensely uttered lines. By the end of Act III, scene v, when she narrated the parable of a salmon and a dog-fish, seated on the bundle, the Duchess had totally resigned herself to her fate. There came an interval, which concentrated the audience's attention on how the Duchess faced the fall of her fortune and her death.

Act IV, scene i, began with the suggestion that the Duchess's palace became her prison; bars which had been behind the left-hand side entrance, were set under the archway. Blue light shining upstage cast a magnified shadow of the bars on the floor. Darkness accompanied the claustrophobic atmosphere. A lantern, placed by Cariola on the floor when she appeared with the Duchess, served to emphasize the surrounding darkness. The Duchess in a plain blue dress had no jewellery or accessory, suggesting the decline of her status. Both the Duchess and the audience were enclosed in darkness, as the stage was plunged into blackout as the Duchess asked Cariola to remove the lantern for Ferdinand's visit. His entrance was announced by the Duchess's 'he's come' (IV.i.29). His movement from downstage left towards upstage could be roughly detected by following his voice. The Duchess's breaths as Ferdinand approached to condemn her suggested her heightened tension and awe. Ferdinand's offer of reconciliation took her breath. The Duchess grasped a hand offered by Ferdinand with excitement, believing that Antonio had come. When the Duchess groaned with horror, Ferdinand left, ordering light to be brought. The audience knew what horrified the Duchess, when a lantern was brought in to reveal a severed hand thrown downstage. Having been placed in the same circumstance as the Duchess had been, the audience not only became horrified at the sight but sympathized with the Duchess in sharing her shock.



Also in the waxworks scene the audience was shocked and then became involved with the Duchess. As the curtains were opened with a loud crash of cymbals, the figures of Antonio and his eldest son were revealed on the first gallery. They appeared to be hanged from the ceiling. The audience was made to believe that they were corpses until Ferdinand revealed that they were in fact waxworks. Shock provoked by the presentation made the audience become involved with the Duchess's reaction to what she believed the bodies of her husband and son. What made the scene different from the dead hand scene, however, was the theatrical effect; the audience, who were aware that actors played what looked like corpses, were later informed that the actors played waxworks which appeared to be human bodies.

The impact of the waxworks made the Duchess unable to stand; falling on her knees and supported by Cariola, she groaned and sobbed. Then she ran upstage and tried to climb the bars, on 'If they would bind me to that lifeless trunk, | And let me freeze to death' (IV.i.68-69), only to be stopped by Cariola and Bosola. In an hysterical state, the Duchess ran downstage and wished for death. Detecting despair in the Duchess's lines, a startled Bosola held the Duchess's arms and reminded her that she was a Christian. The Duchess collapsed on the floor, losing strength. This sight evoked Bosola's further sympathy; he knelt next to her and tried to encourage her. But the Duchess hysterically hit Bosola, repeating 'Puff!' as if to blow 'vipers' (IV.i.90). Her response to the servant who greeted her with an invocation for her long life was to curse him with death. She went so far to curse nature and the universe; the profanity was emphasized when she stood, holding her arms upwards, as if to declare her curse to the world. She sobbed while wishing her brothers to be forgotten by churchmen and punished by Heaven, reminded that it was they who were directly

responsible for her misery. Her hatred of her brothers was mixed with despair, and it made her run away, on 'It is some mercy when men kill with speed' (IV.i.109).

Ferdinand and Bosola appeared after the exit of the Duchess and Cariola. In his harsh rejection of Bosola's suggestion that he stop torturing the Duchess and that he let her live a penitent life, Ferdinand revealed that the success in torturing the Duchess did not calm but stirred his desire to make the Duchess mad. He was increasingly excited as he narrated how the madmen should torture the Duchess. This suggested Ferdinand's latent madness, which became clear after the Duchess's death.

At the beginning of Act IV, scene ii, one of the madmen's cry off-stage made the audience anticipate Ferdinand's plan to release the madmen. The frightening cry did not upset the Duchess, who asked about the noise, while seated on a chair. Her apathy made a contrast to Cariola's anger as she looked through the closed curtains and reported the madmen's presence; paralyzed by the misery and the supposed murder of her husband, the Duchess was robbed of anger or defiance, and was reduced to tears. It seemed 'as if the sluices of life itself had been opened'.<sup>34</sup>

The metallic noise behind, however, startled the Duchess. Looking upstage, she saw a nurse open the bar<sup>s</sup> and stand in front of the curtains. The nurse, indifferent to the Duchess's misery and interested only in performing her task perfectly, explained what 'sport' (IV.ii.40) Ferdinand offered and described each madman in detail. As the Duchess gave a resigned consent, the nurse ushered in the madmen one by one, using her stick to admit their entrance. Six madmen advanced to surround the Duchess. They frightened not only the Duchess but the audience. Their pale complexions and ragged costumes made them look ghostlike. Some of

them carried props, which indicated their former occupations, but which also emphasized their madness. The Mad Priest held a Bible, which he continued to flick through when he did not sing or dance; the Mad Tailor had a framed embroidery, which he treasured, and entrusted to the Duchess while he danced. The madmen were, however, controlled by the nurse to behave in order. They sang, as the nurse clapped her hands and conducted with her stick. When one of them began to shout and sob and sank down, the nurse hit him to make him join in the chorus again. The madmen were allowed to display their madness for a while; indulged in their wild imagination, they talked nonsense and two of them fought. But order was imposed on them again when the nurse made them dance in a circle around the Duchess. At their exit the Mad Doctor was punished as he remained in front of the curtains, pointing at the Duchess; hit by the nurse, he ran away. The nurse's control over the madmen contributed to the audience's impression that they were entertaining as well as frightening. This treatment of the madmen lent detachment, enabling the audience to see the scene as a series of tableaux of madness, while not denying an involvement.

Bosola secretly entered during the madmen's dance. He wore glasses and a hooded overcoat to hide his identity. After the madmen and the nurse left, he attempted to persuade the Duchess to be prepared for death. For that purpose Bosola reduced her to 'some great woman' (IV.ii.133), whose features were white hair and wrinkles caused by the care which accompanied her rank. Stroking the Duchess's forehead and hair, he emphasized the physical effect of the care. The Duchess grabbed his arm on 'I am Duchess of Malfi [a pause] still' (IV.ii.139). Harriet Walter, who played the Duchess, delivered the line differently at the Swan and the Pit. At the former she delivered it in a quavering voice, 'as if trying to persuade

herself of who she [was]<sup>35</sup>; at the latter she made the line sound more defiant and suggested the Duchess's will to assert her princely identity. According to the director, the change in delivery of the line suggested the development in Harriet Walter's interpretation of how the Duchess saw herself, and of her growth during the ordeal. In my interview the director explained to me that the line basically indicated the Duchess's revelation of her identity:

It is as if at that point of her life she [was] reminded of the pride, of what [was] beyond her point of woman and mother, and actually [came] to her sense of herself, that [was] [a] both personal and public figure.

He also explained the difference in the interpretation of the line at the Swan and the Pit; at the former the Duchess 'was discovering' that she was a duchess, and at the Pit she spoke the line 'as if holding on something and being defiant'. It *seemed* to me that, at the Pit, the character's uncertainty of her identity was less emphasized, and that more stressed was her will to resist with defiance not only Bosola's crude description of her but all the ordeal<sup>s</sup> imposed on her.

The Duchess's defiance was tested when a coffin, brought downstage centre, made her realize that she was to be murdered; on the coffin were placed nooses, a shroud, a bowl of powder, a cross and chain, and a bell. The Duchess showed fear when she knelt facing the coffin and declared her obedience to the command of death. But she showed self-control when she hugged Cariola and calmed her. Further suggestion of the Duchess's imminent death was made by Bosola, who prepared the Duchess for burial, as instructed by a dirge which he narrated. He put the shroud around the Duchess's shoulders, sprinkled a pinch of powder over her hair, and put the cross and chain around her neck. Bosola's stage business suggested that

the society's obsession with ceremony permeated its inhabitants on all occasions. At the end of the dirge executioners appeared. The executioners shocked not only the Duchess but the audience; their white masks with slits for eyes and mouths, standing out in the semi-darkness, made the audience anticipate the ferocity of the execution. In the face of the executioners the Duchess was still able to control herself. Stopping the executioners from dragging away the sobbing and crying Cariola, she hugged her to bid farewell. The 'unbearable tenderness'<sup>36</sup> which the Duchess showed in asking Cariola to look after her children established her as an affectionate mother for the last time.

After Cariola was taken away, the Duchess struggled to conquer her fear of dying. When Bosola, sitting on the coffin, showed a noose to her and asked, 'methinks, [...] | This cord should terrify you?' (IV.ii.209, 211), the Duchess clearly indicated fear with a pause before her 'Not a whit' (IV.ii.211) and a stiff facial expression. But she managed to control the fear. The Duchess encouraged the executioners to pull the noose around her neck, with a loud and declarative voice. Even after kneeling with humility to be admitted to heaven, she intensely whispered lines, 'Come, violent death, | Serve ~~for~~ mandragora to make me sleep' (IV.ii.231), and her signal to the executioners to pull the rope suggested that defiance had become dominant in her. Her display of defiance was made more explicitly at the Pit, and this served to make the contrast sharper between the death of the Duchess and that of Cariola, who clutched onto life until strangulation robbed her of all power.<sup>37</sup> It seemed, however, that it was the process in which the Duchess struggled to conquer her fear of dying, which attracted the audience's sympathy with her up to her end. The Duchess's agony of death, realistically expressed by the flailing of her

arms, served to confirm the audience's sympathy.

After the strangulation Bosola suggested the prick of conscience, which had been suppressed until then, in staring at her body left on a chair and at her children's behind the curtains. When Ferdinand appeared Bosola tried to make him realize the cruelty of the murders. Seeing Ferdinand show no reaction to the children's bodies, Bosola held up the Duchess's head towards Ferdinand. After watching her face with her eyes open,<sup>†</sup> Ferdinand spoke 'Cover her face. Mine eyes [a pause] dazzle' (IV.ii.259), and indicated his agony at the sight of the Duchess's body, which suggested how cruelly she had been murdered. The rest of the line, 'she di'd young' (IV.ii.259), spoken as Bosola covered her face with the edge of the shroud, suggested that at this very moment Ferdinand realized that the Duchess was dead.

The sight of the Duchess's cruel death haunted Ferdinand; he had the shroud removed and stared at her face again. The Duchess's face led Ferdinand to examine what had caused him to have the Duchess murdered. Reaching the conclusion that her marriage was the cause, Ferdinand closed her eyes. The stage business suggested that he was able to be kind to her when he became conscious, though vaguely, that the Duchess's marriage had distorted his love for her. Then he attempted to convince himself that it was Bosola, not himself, who was responsible for the murder. Ferdinand's desperate efforts to deny his responsibility for the murder were evident when Bosola, angry at Ferdinand's denial of reward to him, reminded Ferdinand of his order to murder the Duchess. Trying to deny his own authority in the murder, Ferdinand claimed in shouts that the Duchess's death was not decreed by 'any ceremonial form of law' (IV.ii.294) or 'a complete jury' (IV.ii.295). Bosola continued to accuse Ferdinand in

pointing at the Duchess's body on 'who shall dare | To reveal this?' (IV.ii.302) and in warning that Ferdinand would be charged at the discovery of the murder. Ferdinand, however, ignored Bosola and made to go. Ferdinand's madness began to become evident when Bosola again accused him for denying the reward. Exclaiming 'O horror!' (IV.ii.308), he crouched on the floor, as if to hide himself from Bosola. After that Ferdinand ceased to react to what Bosola did or said. Ferdinand stood up on 'I'll go hunt the badger by owl-light' (IV.ii.328) and slowly left the stage through the archway on ''Tis a deed of darkness' (IV.ii.329), suggesting his complete plunge into madness.

Ferdinand's denial of the reward first caused anger in Bosola; he kicked Ferdinand who was crouched on the floor. After the explosion of anger, Bosola expressed disgust at the fact that he had blindly devoted himself to advancement at court, on 'I am angry at myself' (IV.ii.319). Ferdinand's rejection of him in madness evoked in Bosola the desire to be recognized; Bosola fiercely pulled him round and complained to him in vain. It was after going through a variety of emotions that Bosola became clearly conscious of the prick of conscience. Left alone, he clapped his hands, as if to wake himself up from 'a sweet and golden dream' (IV.ii.318) or a 'painted honour' (IV.ii.330). On seeing the Duchess stir and twitch, Bosola's decision to let his conscience rule him drove him to make efforts to revive the Duchess; he loosened the rope around her neck and gave her a kiss of life. When the Duchess opened her eyes, he knelt in front of her. He embraced her, reporting that Antonio was alive, as if to cling to the celestial guide 'To help [him] up to mercy' (IV.ii.343). The Duchess smiled at the news; a moment later, she leant on the chair and ceased to move. Her eyes, left open, suggested that she had died. On confirming her

death, Bosola buried his head into the Duchess's hair and sobbed. This display of sorrow convincingly presented Bosola as a man who had the possibility to become 'a strong moral centre'.<sup>38</sup>

Tension was sustained after the Duchess's death, by the prominence given to the consequences of the Duchess's murder to the main figures. In Act V, scene ii, the consequences to Ferdinand were presented. Ferdinand appeared through the closed curtains, watched by the Doctor, the Cardinal and the noblemen. Bells heard right before Ferdinand's entrance suggested the complete destruction of Ferdinand's personality. It was also indicated by Ferdinand's ghastly look. He showed an aversion to being followed. Seeing his shadow cast on the curtains, he jumped at it and fell on the floor. He also suggested his suppressed conscience. As he was forced to rise by the noblemen, who responded to the Cardinal's shout, 'Force him up' (V.ii.52), Ferdinand pleaded to the noblemen to 'Use [him] well' (V.ii.53) in a loud voice, claiming that he would not confess what he had done. After that Ferdinand's aversion to being followed developed into fear; running away from the Doctor, who attempted to play 'mad tricks' (IV.ii.58) to cure him, Ferdinand crouched on the floor. In an effort to hide himself, Ferdinand tried to pull the edge of his long nightshirt towards his head. The Doctor approached him, and made him dance in raising him and holding his arms. A moment later Ferdinand attacked the Doctor, plunging at him and hitting him. In the end Ferdinand left, staggering through the curtains. In spite of its potential for comedy, the scene was taken seriously by the audience, until Pescara evoked laughter when he told the Doctor that Ferdinand was not afraid of him.

Julia entered to woo Bosola, when he was left alone. This scene was played with some seriousness, though it could have been played purely as



comic relief, as in the previous RSC productions. Julia appeared through the curtains, pointing a pistol at him. She arrived next to him after circling around him, as if to examine how attractive he was. On understanding that she was in love with him, Bosola pulled her close to him and removed her pistol. During her ardent wooing of Bosola, which followed the embrace, Julia showed little playfulness. Kissing and holding Bosola, or staring at him, she was eager to know whether she would succeed in the wooing. Her attitude conveyed the seriousness of her desire to escape from her futile relationship with the Cardinal, while it also suggested how she was dominated by passion.

Julia succeeded in proving her love for Bosola when she persuaded the Cardinal to confess the murder of the Duchess. But this resulted in the Cardinal's decision to murder her to prevent the secret from being revealed. He made Julia kneel in front of the lectern which held the poisoned Bible.<sup>50</sup> After *caressing* and kissing her, the Cardinal made her kiss the Bible. He crossed himself while she kissed the Bible; this stage business suggested his conscience in carrying out the murder. As Julia raised her head, detecting the taste of poison, the Cardinal pushed her head down onto the Bible. Julia's cry stressed the brutality of the murder. Bosola appeared, hearing the cry. At the Swan, he showed kindness to Julia when he ran towards her, exclaiming, 'For pity-sake, hold' (V.ii.287). At the Pit it seemed that Bosola's function was to suggest that the Cardinal's brutality to Julia was a reflection of men's general attitude towards women in this society. Bosola appeared silently and walked slowly towards the Cardinal and Julia, after Julia's cry had informed him of the poisoning. To Julia in her death throes Bosola spoke 'Oh foolish woman' (V.ii.282) contemptuously. There was no warmth in

Bosola's attitude towards Julia. Julia's death, observed by men who had no sympathy for her, established her as a victim of this male-dominated society.

The suggestion of death and destruction continued in the following scenes; bells were heard again at the appearance of Antonio and Delio in the ruined fortifications, and at the appearance of the Cardinal and the noblemen in the Cardinal's lodging. The ominous sound made the audience anticipate the destructive forces which were prevalent in the world of the play. After the exit of the noblemen and then of the Cardinal, the stage became dark. Two diagonally crossing columns of light cast on the floor suggested the change of location: corridors. The ominous anticipation was realized when Bosola stabbed Antonio, mistaking him, in the darkness, for an assassin hired by the Cardinal to kill him. On recognizing Antonio as Antonio's servant brought in a lantern, Bosola painfully delivered 'We are merely the stars' tennis-balls, struck and banded | Which way please them' (V.iv.53-54), recognizing the irony that he had stabbed the very man whom he had wanted to save. The following exchange between Antonio and Bosola confirmed how powerless men were in the world of the play. The news of the murder of the Duchess and her children made Antonio realize the vanity of 'Pleasure of life' (V.iv.66). Antonio laughed at his efforts to reunite his family, which were rewarded by grief and death. After witnessing Antonio's death which was marked by despair, Bosola rose to kill the Cardinal. Bosola's words, 'I'll be mine own example' (V.iv.81), directed at Antonio's body, conveyed his isolation now that he had nobody with whom he could have a human relationship.

In the final scene, Act V, scene v, the archway was used to transform the whole scene into a series of emblematic tableaux. After thunder was

heard, the Cardinal, holding a book, appeared and stopped under the archway. After referring to a passage on the fire of hell in the book, he shut it to stop thinking about hell. But his conscience continued to haunt him; his gestures as he advanced centrestage conveyed his agony, which showed him the illusion of 'a thing arm'd with a rake' (V.v.6). Bosola and the servant, who carried Antonio's body, appeared through the archway. While the servant leant the body against the inside of the left-hand side pillar of the archway, Bosola advanced to declare to the Cardinal that he would murder him. When it was clear that the Cardinal's offer of wealth would not change Bosola's mind, the Cardinal sank down on the floor out of fear, crying for help.

The Cardinal's voice drew the attention of Pescara, Roderigo, Malateste and Grisolan. At the Swan they appeared on the first gallery. The positioning enabled the audience to see the noblemen's reaction to the Cardinal's cries and Bosola's threatening of the Cardinal at the same time. This was effective in emphasizing the irony that the noblemen, as they had been told beforehand, believed that the Cardinal cried in jest, while he did so in earnest. At the Pit the noblemen's appearance in the gangways at the top of the auditorium caused the scene to lose its ironic emphasis. But this positioning, which allowed the audience to hear the noblemen from their midst, served to emphasize the alienating effect.

After the noblemen's exit, the acting involved the audience in the scene and made the audience recognize the scene as tragic, though it clearly presented the anticlimactic and farcical nature of the scene, indicated in the original text. Seeing the servant make to leave to call for help, Bosola killed the servant, who fell to the inside of the right-hand side pillar of the archway. As Bosola approached, the Cardinal lost

all his dignity; he clung to Bosola to beg for mercy. Only when stabbed did the Cardinal resist death; he now clung to Bosola, making him fall to the floor. The resistance served only to emphasize how the fear of dying reduced the Cardinal to a powerless and pathetic man. Hearing the noise, Ferdinand appeared through the archway. Imagining himself in a battlefield, he wore a breastplate over his nightshirt. Ferdinand's appearances and his eagerness to take part in the imaginary fight made him look ridiculous. Stabbing the Cardinal and Bosola, Ferdinand rose triumphantly; and he spoke his nonsense, which he called 'philosophy' (V.v.61), confidently. Tragedy took the place of ridiculousness only when Bosola's stabbing stirred Ferdinand's sanity, and made Ferdinand realize that his sister was 'the cause' (V.v.70). The manner of Ferdinand's death was undignified; he died sitting, with his legs out-stretched and his head lolling forward.

The noblemen appeared upstage, laughing at Pescara, who descended to visit the Cardinal. The sight of the successive murders made them freeze for a moment, and then run to the Aragonian brethren. Pescara approached the Cardinal and asked what had happened. The Cardinal cried, 'Look to my brother' (V.v.86), as if to divert Pescara's attention from himself rather than to ask Pescara to take care of Ferdinand. The Cardinal's self-disgust was clear, when he asked Pescara to forget him after his death. The Cardinal was stripped of any dignity. He crawled across the stage, crossed himself and collapsed to lie next to Ferdinand's body. His death evoked little sympathy in the audience, though he showed his fraternal affection to Ferdinand for the last time in caressing his body. The miserable death of the Aragonian brethren served to convince the audience that their lack of integrity had invited the consequences. Bosola's death was marked by

despair. In spite of his loud and confident declaration of revenge at the noblemen's entrance, they refused to believe that Bosola had murdered the Aragonian brethren out of righteous motives; Bosola was fiercely addressed by Pescara as a 'wretched thing of blood' (V.v.91). Pescara's demand to know how Antonio had been murdered reminded Bosola of his powerlessness. This made him deliver his final speech in a pessimistic and sardonic tone. At the end of his speech, he died, murmuring, 'Mine is another voyage' (V.v.104) -- meaning that his death was different from that of those who had 'worthy minds' (V.v.102). The manner of his death suggested that Bosola was neither accepted nor understood by the society up to the end.

Bosola's death was directly followed by Delio's arrival. Shocked by the sight, Delio froze under the archway for a moment. Then he approached Antonio's body and suggested that the noblemen establish Antonio's eldest son as the Duchess's heir. At the Pit, Antonio's son, who had appeared with Antonio in Act V, scene i, appeared again and knelt next to Antonio's body. His presence indicated the continuation of not only the Duchess's but Antonio's blood, and affirmed a hope for the society's future, though there was no indication that order would be immediately re-established. Delio concluded the play with the couplet:

Integrity of life is fame's best friend,  
Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end. (V.v.119-20)

He indicated sorrow in acknowledging that those who had lived with 'integrity' were destroyed, even though they would be remembered and praised after their death. At this moment the archway served to symbolize destruction and the possibility of renewal. As the stage gradually became dark after Delio's conclusion, the audience heard the song which had been played at the beginning and in the bedroom scene. This time, the voice of

the Duchess's murdered son sang a requiem to the tune.<sup>40</sup> The voice, lingering for a few seconds in the darkness, confirmed the sorrow at the fact that integrity was not able to survive in the corrupt world. At the same time, however, the voice from another world convinced the audience that the Duchess and her family were given a place of rest after their death. The ending left the audience in a mixture of sorrow and relief, in offering the conclusion that the Duchess's conflict with her society would be resolved by her eldest son and that her integrity was finally rewarded, though painfully. The audience was convinced that at the end of the play, 'Instead of melodrama, [the audience] [got] tragedy'.<sup>41</sup>

It seems that the success of this production derived from the fact that the director understood the complexity of the original text. As he perceived, what makes the play difficult for modern audience is forgotten theatrical conventions, such as 'conventions of masques, conventions of [a] symbolist way of telling a story'.<sup>42</sup> The Cardinal's investiture is not the only example of this kind of convention. It has been pointed out that Antonio's description of the Aragonian brethren and scenes which can be judged as grotesque by modern standards, such as the madmen scene, were also designed for emblematic and symbolist effects.<sup>43</sup> Such scenes are juxtaposed with scenes which are realistic and psychologically plausible. It seems that it was to make the audience understand the juxtaposition that the director took non-realistic approaches both in the settings and the acting: the two golden frames which dominated the acting area and the tableaux produced by the actors in significant scenes. These features made the audience recognize the symbolic aspect of the play, and prevented the dead hand scene, the madmen scenes and the murders in the final scenes from being considered solely grotesque or risible. On the other hand, the

acting, supported by the director's understanding of the cultural and social background of Jacobean England, involved the audience in the psychology of the Duchess, the central figure, who was most affected by her society. The balance of symbolism and realism was maintained up to the end. It resulted in an imaginative production. It can be argued that Bill Alexander's respect for the original text in terms of its structure and of cultural context made it possible for the director to appeal to the audience without distorting the essence of the play.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Taken from the title of a review by Georgina Brown in Independent, 3 May 1990. This article is hereafter referred to as 'Brown'.
2. Bill Alexander, born in 1943, began his directing career as a trainee director at the Bristol Old Vic in 1971. After working at the Royal Court, he became a resident director for the RSC, for which he has directed plays including Factory Birds, Henry IV Parts I and II, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Cymbeline.
3. Guy Woolfenden was born in 1937. Since 1962 he has been Music Director for the RSC, for which he has composed more than 150 scores.
4. Fotini Dimou was trained at Ecole des Beaux Arts, Brussels and the Central School of Art and Design, London. She has worked extensively for five years as a costume and set designer in New York City and regional theatres in the USA.
5. The interview took place at the Barbican Centre, London, on 3 May 1990. Unless otherwise indicated, all the director's remarks are taken from this interview. Hereafter referred to as 'Alexander'.
6. All quotations in this paragraph are taken from Lisa Jardine's essay in the programme.
7. Jane Edwardes, Time Out, 13 December 1989. Quoted from London Theatre Record, 9 (1989), p. 1741, the title of the article is unknown. Hereafter referred to as 'Edwardes'.
8. Peggy Ashcroft, 'Playing Shakespeare', interviewed by Inga-Stina Ewbank, Shakespeare Survey, 40 (1988), 11-19 (p. 19).
9. Kate Kellaway, 'The Duchess of Malfi', Plays and Players, no. 44 (August 1990), 37. Hereafter referred to as 'Kellaway'.
10. These references are from The Duchess of Malfi, ed. by Elizabeth M. Brennan, the New Mermaids, second ed. (London: Ernest Benn, 1983 (first ed., 1964)). This edition was used for the Alexander production.
11. For example, Kellaway: 'Fotini Dimou's [...] design is, loosely, seventeenth-century'. And J[ill] P[earce] wrote in 'The Duchess of Malfi, director Bill Alexander, RSC, Barbican Pit, 16 May 1990, centre front', Cahiers Elisabethains, no. 38 (Octobre 1990), 94-95: 'the boned bodices of the Elizabethan dress [...]' (p. 94).
12. The prompt-books for the Alexander production were consulted at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.
13. The video tape records a performance at the Swan on 18 January 1990. It was consulted at the Shakespeare Centre.



14. In the first prompt-book 199 lines are deleted, while 40 are cut in the performed text of the video tape. Some deletions were made only at the Swan (See note 18 below).
15. See note 10.
16. A brief note, 'cut 13/12/89', beside the markings of deletion of V.ii.310-12, suggests that a small number of additional cuts may have been made during the performances at the Swan and the number of the deleted lines may have changed.
17. Alexander: '[Antonio's son] didn't appear in the Swan, because there was restriction about the hour to which we could keep children in the theatre.'
18. Some of the cuts and emendations in the performed text of the video tape are not recorded in either prompt-book. Many of them are deletions and changes of one or two words. The deletions of II.iii.54 and of Bosola's lines  $\uparrow$  (V.ii.83-84) are notable among them.
19. Alexander. The average recording time was, according to the stage manager's report, three hours and nine minutes at the Swan, and three hours and six minutes at the Pit.
20. The insertion of 'now' had been introduced at the Swan.
21. The production records were consulted at the Shakespeare Centre.
22. Brown.
23. Ibid,
24. Alexander.
25. Ibid.: 'I think the main difference between Stephen and Nigel was that Nigel was someone very much of a soldier and with Stephen, who was more a scholar.... So there was more of the sceptical scholastic quality in Stephen, and more of the brutal... more powerful man in Nigel'.
26. Michael Coveney, 'The Duchess of Malfi', Financial Times, 8 December 1989: '[Bosola's] time in the galleys is indicated by the ferocious triple plait into which his hair is wrenched'. This article is hereafter referred to as 'Coveney'.
27. Brown.
28. The Old Lady in the original text is retained in both prompt-books, but she was changed into the 'Midwife' in performance.
29. The director aimed to produce this impression. This device was, in the director's own words, 'effective to introduce the world of the court and the outsider'. He wanted the characters to 'appear like moving exhibits in a museum or in a waxwork gallery'. Among the

reviewers, Irving Wardle, in 'Descent into Bloody Madness', The Times, 8 December 1989, pointed out that The Duchess of Malfi had 'often been compared to a wax museum', and argued that the director had emphasized this image with the actors' tableaux and that 'Bill Alexander [extended] these effects [of the tableaux], particularly in the opening scenes, by changing character groups into dumb-show puppets for Antonio [...] to describe like a museum guide'. This article is hereafter referred to as 'Wardle'.

30. Brown.
31. Alexander.
32. Coveney.
33. At the Swan three children appeared in Act III, scene v, while two appeared at the Pit. The other child, a baby, was substituted by a dummy.
34. David Nathan, Jewish Chronicle, 15 December 1989. Quoted from London Theatre Record, 9 (1989), p. 1742, the title of the article is unknown.
35. Wardle.
36. Edwardes.
37. Cariola's death provoked sardonic laughter in the audience with her desperate efforts to survive. She resisted the executioners by scratching and biting them; even after a rope was set around her neck, she struggled to throw herself in front of Bosola and begged him to spare her on ground of pregnancy. After the executioners dragged her stage left to strangle her, Cariola continued to cry and resist by kicking her legs violently on the floor until her last moment.
38. Micheal Billington, 'The Duchess of Malfi', Guardian, 8 December 1989. Hereafter referred to as 'Billington'.
39. At the Swan, the lectern appeared from below when the Cardinal opened the trap door centrestage. The sound of cymbals at this moment made the audience anticipate the sinister nature of what happened next: the poisoning of Julia. At the Pit, where there is no provision for a trap door, the lectern had been placed stageleft at the beginning of Act V, scene i.
40. Alexander: 'The voice that you could actually hear at the end was intended to be the voice of the dead son rather than the Duchess herself. It was a small voice singing [a] requiem, and it wasn't intended to remind one of the Duchess, and had an effective requiem for her death, but [it was] also [intended] to speak of her continuance in a form of this other son, who we see in front of us'.
41. Billington.

42. Alexander.
43. Catherine Belsey, in 'Emblem and Antithesis in The Duchess of Malfi', Renaissance Drama, n.s. 11 (1980), 115-34, points out that in the court scene Antonio's description of the Aragonian siblings '[makes] no attempt to account in terms of motive or past experience for the qualities [it identifies], nor [is it] offered a basis for moral or psychological development'. About the madmen scene, Inga-Stina Ekeblad, in 'The "Impure Art" of John Webster', Review of English Studies, n.s. 9 (1958), 252-67, analyses how the the masque of the madmen was influenced by the tradition of the marriage masque.

The Duchess of Malfi

1989

- XI.        the court scene
- XII.      Antonio describing the Aragonian brethren
- XIII.     the Cardinal and Julia
- XIV.      the bedroom scene

PLATE XI



PLATE XII



PLATE XIII





PLATE XIV





## CONCLUSION

This survey of the three productions of The Duchess of Malfi by the Royal Shakespeare Company suggests that problems experienced by the three directors were essentially the same as those which had often been identified -- how to present the play's realistic aspect and the symbolic and metaphysical aspect and keep a balance between them; and how to prevent the audience from feeling the slackening of tension at the end of the performance.

The directors' efforts to display both the realistic aspect and the symbolic aspect were revealed by the settings of all the productions. While their primary function was to suggest the aristocratic atmosphere, some pieces of furniture were used metaphorically as well. In the McWhinnie production the furniture, props and costumes looked sumptuous and realistic. But the fountain, given prominence when Antonio compared a monarch's court to a fountain, symbolized peace and harmony at the Duchess's court. The Cardinal's throne and a chest stood for a monument and a tomb in Act V, scene iii, and resumed their primary function during the successive murders in Act V, scene iv, and scene v. The use of the props seemed to suggest that the house of Aragon's power led to the destruction of the characters. In the Williams production the setting, though eclectic, was realistic in that it established an aristocratic atmosphere, and suggested that the social code of the society was beyond outsiders' understanding. The eclectic design, however, had a symbolic dimension. The grilles and partitions, which looked like trellis-work screens and which evoked the image of a prison, suggested that the Aragonian brethren's power suppressed the inhabitants of the society. The

true nature of some of the significant characters was suggested by the unusual appearance of pieces of furniture associated with them; the Cardinal's cold nature was suggested by his geometric and metallic throne, and the Duchess's desire to live as a woman by her red bed.

In the settings of the Alexander production, the display of the elegance and wealth of the world of the play was restrained. The design suggested not only how the society looked but how the society affected the inhabitants' psychology. For example, the eye-shaped reliefs placed in each piece of ironwork in the galleries suggested that the closed society led the inhabitants to watch each other and make others unable to keep any secret. The claustrophobic atmosphere was emphasized also by the physical environment of the Swan and the Pit: by their small capacity and structure, which enabled every member of the audience to sit close to the actors, allowing close communication between them. The remarkable feature of the symbolism of the settings was that this function was fulfilled only when the settings were combined with the acting. The two golden frames transformed the action into a series of tableaux, especially when the actors froze in significant scenes.

The settings of the Alexander production thus revealed a change in acting approach: the idea that symbolism and realism could be combined not only in the setting but in the acting. For Donald McWhinnie and Clifford Williams the function of the performances was to make the audience appreciate the modernity which they perceived in the characters' thoughts and behaviour. For them convention was to be removed in the modern stage. The two directors attempted to make the characters' lines and action more understandable to modern audiences by cutting lines in the original text: lines such as those which refer to forgotten customs and ways of thinking,

and those which make the impression of the characters incoherent. The two directors aimed to involve the audience in the action of the play, especially in the Duchess's story. Bill Alexander's approach contrasted with theirs. He considered the juxtaposition of realism and symbolism in the dramatic action the most significant feature of the original text, and attempted to emphasize the juxtaposition with the acting. He retained a fairly full text, and made the actors freeze or move in a non-naturalistic manner in scenes of statuesque and choreographic nature. Tableaux provided by the actors at significant moments reflected the rhythm of the original text, enabling the audience to be at times involved, at times detached.

The treatment of another problem -- how to prevent the slackening of tension in Act V -- suggested that the mastery of directorial skills, not a change of approach, could solve the problem. Act V tends to be considered anticlimactic; members of the audience lose interest in the play after the death of the Duchess, who has naturally drawn the audience's attention. The slackening of tension, which was noticed in all three productions, seems to have been partly a result of the loss of interest. But it is also true that Act V is anticlimactic in structure; it has been pointed out that the successive murders in Act V, scene iv, and scene v, nowadays tend to look absurd in performance. The three directors made efforts to retain the tension and to convince the audience of the tragic nature of the final scenes. One of the solutions for Donald McWhinnie and Clifford Williams was to cut lines which may sound ridiculous in the scenes. The fact that both directors cut the noblemen's lines during Bosola's attack on the Cardinal suggests their fear that these lines would highlight the anticlimactic nature of the final scenes. The results of the two

productions were contrasting; the McWhinnie production was praised for not provoking audience's laughter, while the Williams production was criticized for causing unwanted laughter excessively. The results seemed to suggest that careful acting rather than the cutting of the 'ridiculous' lines was required to retain tension up to the end. But the significance of careful acting was fully acknowledged in the Alexander production, in which the director retained all lines during the successive murders. At first the difficulty imposed by the original text was evident in the audience's unstifled laughter. But the laughter became much less at the Pit, and suggested Bill Alexander's technical success in handling the final scenes.

It seems that the original text allowed the three directors only a fixed range of interpretation of the characters, in spite of the remarkable change in approaches to the play. But in the Alexander production it was suggested that the interpretation of the Duchess and Julia was widened. Probably this change was influenced by feminism, which contributed to a further exploration of the position of women in the society of the play.

In all three productions the Duchess was regarded as a woman who struggled to maintain her integrity in the corrupt world of the play. But a difference can be discerned in the interpretation of her righteousness between the first two productions and the Alexander production. Donald McWhinnie and Clifford Williams viewed the Duchess as a martyr-like figure, who was tormented and murdered because she refused to conform to the social code imposed by a corrupt society. Bill Alexander, however, found the Duchess not completely guiltless. His attention to her position as a ruler enabled him to discover complexity in the description of her; she has neglected her duty as a ruler, while attempting to retain her integrity in

living as a wife and mother in secret. Bill Alexander presented the complexity by having Harriet Walter emphasize the Duchess's identity as a ruler, in addition to what Donald McWhinnie and Clifford Williams had stressed -- her identity as a female member of a royal family, subject to her brothers' political activities, and a woman in love, who struggled to break the barrier of rank to marry a lower-ranking man. Harriet Walter suggested that the Duchess was aware of her position as a ruler when attempting to establish her dignity in the court scene; and she hinted at the Duchess's neglect of her duty with the perfunctory signing of papers in the apricots scene.

Bill Alexander's discovery of the complexity in the Duchess's character made him continue to present her as a mixture of different identities. In Act IV, scene ii, both Peggy Ashcroft and Judi Dench emphasized the Duchess's defiance against the tortures and the strangulation, making the character an embodiment of 'the spirit of greatness' (I.ii.417) at the end of the scene. But Harriet Walter suggested that this spirit, even though given prominence, was inseparable from the spirit 'of woman' (I.ii.417).<sup>1</sup> She emphasized the Duchess's struggle to conquer the fear of dying and to die with defiance and dignity. By doing so, she succeeded in drawing the audience's sympathy to the end.

It seems that the role of Ferdinand is one of the most difficult in the play, probably due to the characterization that violent passions which rule Ferdinand prevent him from becoming aware of what he really thinks and feels. Reviews of all three productions suggest that the portrayals of Ferdinand tended to appear disappointing to the audience, who expected the character to be ominous. The role became more difficult after his plunge into madness. Ferdinand began to draw the audience's laughter in Act V,

scene ii. It seems that the performance of Ferdinand requires more careful acting from the scene. It is true that Ferdinand's madness has a comic potential. But the mad scene in the Williams production suggested that to turn the mad Ferdinand into a ridiculous figure makes his behaviour in the final act look merely ludicrous and prevents the audience from realizing the tragic nature at the end of the play.

In spite of Ferdinand's inability to be aware of his thoughts, all three productions explored whether he has an incestuous affection for his sister. Some of the reviewers who seek an explanation for Ferdinand's obsession with the Duchess consider incestuous love satisfactory enough. But the discussion seems of little significance in performance. Ferdinand's emotional reaction to the Duchess's childbirth, his torture and murder of her, and his consequent madness derive from his inability to 'look at himself truthfully, to see what he is and [to] do something about it'.<sup>2</sup> It seems that the inability should be given more prominence than Ferdinand's subconscious affection for the Duchess.

The Cardinal, in contrast to Ferdinand, is clearly characterized as a Machiavellian and a corrupt churchman in the original text. The reviews of the performances of Max Adrian in 1960 and Emrys James in 1971 seemed to prove that the characterization made the Cardinal one of the easier roles in the play. The image of the Cardinal portrayed by both actors followed the clear characterization offered by the text. In the Alexander production, however, the role was more complex. Russell Dixon in the Alexander production suggested that the Cardinal 'wished [...] he could be left to get on his political ambitions and his sexual licence'.<sup>3</sup> His Cardinal was annoyed or irritated by what had nothing to do with his wishes: for example, by Bosola's appearance and plea for reward to him in

Act I, scene i; by Ferdinand's emotional and violent reaction to the Duchess's childbirth; and by his madness in Act V, scene ii. This interpretation gave the character a human aspect and was effective in making his dejected death appear more natural.

The portrayals of Bosola seems to have suggested that no actor could display all the aspects of the character, who is complex and ambiguous in the original text. An actor playing Bosola is forced to choose and emphasize only part of many aspects in him, especially before Bosola becomes aware of his conscience and determines to be righteous. Patrick Wymark in 1960 emphasized Bosola's experience as a soldier and his bluntness by means of the emphasis on his stout physique and his acting. Geoffrey Hutchings in 1971 played Bosola as a man whose conscience was in conflict with economical necessity; from the beginning he highlighted the potential in Bosola of becoming an agent of justice. Nigel Terry in 1989 at the Swan, by emphasizing Bosola's anger deriving from the Cardinal's neglect, portrayed Bosola as a man whose vigorous spirit was not destroyed by a severe experience as a galley slave. In 1990 at the Pit, Stephen Boxer's cynical facial expression established Bosola as a sarcastic man, who was embittered by his experience as a slave.

In addition to Ferdinand, Bosola is another character whom audiences tend to expect to be ominous. But the portrayals in the three productions seem to have suggested that the character deserves the audience's sympathy to some extent. His inclination to evil derives from the Cardinal's ingratitude and his experience as a slave; and in the final scenes Bosola's efforts to be righteous are in vain and he dies in despair. The moment at which Bosola becomes aware of his self-deception after the Duchess's death is crucial in involving the audience and the performance at this point

seems to affect the audience's impression of Bosola thereafter.

Efforts were made in the first two productions to strengthen the character of Antonio. The two directors cut lines which suggest Antonio's weakness and his fear of having his marriage to the Duchess revealed. Donald McWhinnie invented a piece of stage business to suggest the character's strength; Antonio returned the Duchess's wedding ring to her in the wooing scene. But these efforts did not change the general impression of Antonio that he was pathetic and dominated by the Duchess. In the Alexander production, Mick Ford's Antonio emphasized the gap between Antonio's image of an affectionate husband and father in his private married life and his image of a helpless man in public life. By juxtaposing the contradictory impressions, Mick Ford succeeded in establishing Antonio's innately good nature and suggesting that Antonio's fear derived from his acute consciousness of the house of Aragon's royal lineage and political significance. This interpretation of Antonio also contributed to suggesting how the power of the house of Aragon permeated the world of the play.

The change in the interpretation of Julia was one of the most significant. In the first two productions, especially in the McWhinnie production, she was regarded as a mere foil to the Duchess. The Duchess's love for Antonio and Julia's amoral passion, which drives her to be the Cardinal's mistress and to woo Bosola, was given a sharp contrast. Patricia Kerrigan in the Alexander production, however, displayed Julia's suffering in being subject to the Cardinal's brutal nature and suggested her desire to escape from the futile relationship with him. This approach prevented Julia's wooing of Bosola from becoming complete comic relief as in the earlier productions. The treatment of Julia's death also changed.



Sian Phillips's Julia in 1960 embarrassed the audience, who perceived a gap between her amorality and the dignity at her death. Lynn Dearth in 1971 succeeded in highlighting the Cardinal's merciless nature. Patricia Kerrigan's Julia was given a slightly different role. At the Swan she contributed to establishing the Cardinal's brutal nature. At the Pit, Julia was treated with no sympathy by Bosola as well as by the Cardinal and Julia was established as a victim of a male-dominated society. In the Alexander production the role of Julia served to indicate how women were treated brutally in the society of the play.

The three productions of The Duchess of Malfi seem to suggest how a classic play can be reanimated. An awareness of the play in context is essential. To apply a modern interpretation to the play, as Donald McWhinnie and Clifford Williams did, is to explore only part of the play. The change in interpretation of the characters also suggests that an understanding of the cultural and social background of the play is significant in exploring the characters and in making the audience appreciate the complexity of the play.

## NOTES TO CONCLUSION

1. These references are from The Duchess of Malfi, ed. by Elizabeth M. Brennan, the New Mermaids, second ed. (London: Ernest Benn, 1983 (first ed., 1964)).
2. My interview with Bill Alexander, which took place ~~at~~ the Barbican Centre, on 3 May 1991.
3. Ibid.

## APPENDIX A

### Accounts of the Performed Texts

1960-61 -- directed by Donald McWhinnie

1971 -- directed by Clifford Williams

1989-90 -- directed by Bill Alexander

1960-61 -- directed by Donald McWhinnie.

Edition used for prompt-book: Selected Plays, Everyman's Library.

Prompt-book consulted at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

First I will present how the director created new act and scene divisions out of the original text. Act and scene divisions and line references in the original text are standardized to the New Mermaid edition.

#### The original text

I.i.1 - I.ii.212  
 I.ii.213 - I.ii.419  
 II.i.1 - II.i.74 .. yields  
 II.i.74 .. And - II.ii.79  
 II.iii.1 - II.iii.76  
 II.iv.1 - II.v.80  
 III.i.1 - III.i.93  
 III.ii.1 - III.ii.329  
 III.iii.1 - III.iv.43  
 III.v.1 - III.v.143  
 IV.i.1 - IV.i.139  
 IV.ii.1 - IV.ii.369  
 V.i.1 - V.i.76  
 V.ii.1 - V.ii.343  
 V.iii.1 - V.iii.56  
 V.iv.1 - V.v.120

#### The prompt-book

I.1 The Fountain  
 I.2 The Ante-room  
 I.3 The Market  
 I.4 The Garden  
 I.5 The Chapel  
 I.6 The Plot  
 II.1 The Corridor  
 II.2 The Bedroom  
 II.3 The Fort-bridge  
 II.4 The Road  
 III.1 The Waxwork Scene  
 III.2 The Madmen Scene  
 III.3 Square at Milan  
 III.4 Julia's Death  
 III.5 The Fortifications  
 III.6 The Last Scene

Next I will present cuts and emendations in the prompt-book. Those with unclear markings are indicated by \*.

Act and scene divisions, line references, punctuations and spelling are standardized to the New Mermaid edition. Some of the lines and stage directions, seen only in Everyman's Library edition, are indicated.

- I.i 9 which .. - 10]  
 22 Insertion of I.ii.1 You .. - 5 .. shall to follow .. foresee  
 28 Enter CARDINAL and BOSOLA (Everyman's Library)] Enter  
     CARDINAL  
 32 Miserable .. - 33]  
 37 with .. - 38 mantle]  
 42 I .. - 44 them]  
 44 Exit CARDINAL]  
 52 Could .. - 54 .. me]  
 56 What - 58 .. pardon?]  
 71 he ..- 73 .. Naples]  
 76 for .. - 81]
- I.ii 1 You .. - 5 .. shall transposed to follow I.i 22 .. foresee  
 5 Enter FERDINAND, CASTRUCHIO, SILVIO, RODERIGO, GRISOLAN and  
     ATTENDANTS (Everyman's Library)] Omission of FERDINAND  
 5 Insertion of Enter FERDINAND after the previous s.d.  
 20 This .. - 21]  
 36 - 58]  
 82 where - 85 .. monsters]

96 will .. - 97]  
 99 Then - 108]  
 120 but .. - 122]  
 143 FERDINAND: You are for Milan? (Everyman's Library) spoken  
     by DUCHESS  
 147 - 148]  
 157 - 159]  
 196 Thus .. - 198 .. complementary]  
 209 Insertion of Exit to follow Away!  
 212 Re-enter DUCHESS, CARDINAL and CARIOLA (Everyman's  
     Library)] Addition of FERDINAND to follow .. CARIOLA  
 265 I have heard soldiers say so]  
 273 Thy .. - 274 .. hearty]  
 338 - 341]  
 366 You .. - 368 .. me]  
 388 - 389 .. flattery]  
 389 Kneel] Cariola!  
 392 per verba presenti (Everyman's Library)] Insertion of de to  
     follow .. verba]  
 401 - 404 .. wishes]

II.i      4 Insertion of Castruccio to follow .. see  
           6 to .. - 7 ..; and]  
           14 - 18 .. valiant]  
           27 ruts and fowl sloughs] furrows  
           32 - 35]  
           44 makes .. - 47 .. yourselves]  
           74 Addition of BOSOLA to follow Enter ANTONIO and DELIO  
           81 if .. - 82 .. being]  
           87 - 96]  
           100 a .. - 101 remov'd]  
           119 - 120]  
           163 Exit, on the other side, BOSOLA (Everyman's Library)]  
           164 - 177]

II.ii     18 If .. - 20 .. them]  
           34 - 35 .. knowledge!]  
           48 Yes spoken by RODERIGO  
           59 - 61]  
           70 the stumbling of a horse]

II.iii    33 There .. - 35 .. yourself]  
           39 - 41 .. to't]  
           46 for .. - 48 .. lying-in]  
           57 Anno .. - 58 .. night]\*  
           66 - 69]

II.iv     39 Who's that?]  
           39 Enter SERVANT]  
           41 Insertion of Enter SERVANT after .. to't

II.v      11 Is't .. - 16 .. out]

- III.i 29 and .. - 35 .. people]  
 37 The .. - 38 .. bed]  
 38 Enter DUCHESS, FERDINAND, and ATTENDANTS (Everyman's  
 Library)] Enter DUCHESS, FERDINAND  
 57 Enter BOSOLA]  
 66 Can .. - 77]
- III.ii 62 Enter Ferdinand behind] Enter Ferdinand\*  
 80 Pursue .. - 82]  
 96 I .. - 97 .. thee]  
 113 - 117 .. wildfire?]  
 143 Insertion of 150 He left this with me to follow Betray'd,  
transportation of 152 This .. - 154 to follow 150 He left this  
 with me and transportation of 143 how .. - 146 .. innocence  
 to follow 154  
 146 That .. - 149]  
 150 And .. - 152 .. much]  
 157 Away! - 158 .. misery]  
 160 Exit ANTONIO (Everyman's Library)]  
 161 The Duke]  
 161 Insertion of the lord Ferdinand after brother  
 171 this is cunning]  
 173 Re-enter ANTONIO (Everyman's Library)]  
 176 Our .. - 178 .. periods]  
 179 as]\*  
 179 Tasso .. - 181 .. honours]  
 186 - 188 .. doctor]  
 190 - 193 .. publish]  
 195]  
 196 but .. - 198 .. humour]  
 199 you .. - 203 .. down]  
 214]  
 219 - 220]  
 232 - 235 .. livery]  
 237 - 238 .. follow]  
 243 Pluto .. - 250 .. him]  
 251 a .. - 258 .. of't]  
 258 But] Yet  
 270 - 273]  
 283 - 286 .. merit]  
 288 Should .. - 290]  
 294 and .. - 298]  
 309 and .. - 311 .. you]
- III.iii 1 - 58]
- III.iv 1 -22]  
 26 They are banish'd spoken by 3RD PILGRIM  
 29 - 32 spoken by 3RD PILGRIM  
 33 But by what justice? spoken by 2ND PILGRIM  
 33 Sure .. - 34 spoken by 3RD PILGRIM  
 35 - 43]

- III.v 7 - 10]  
 17 i'the field]  
 30 - 39 .. it]  
 49 - 50]  
 53 fare you well]  
 57 - 58 .. bottom]  
 60 - 63 .. order]  
 66 For .. - 68 .. sorrow]  
 94 I .. - 95 .. sudden]  
 105 - 106]
- IV.i 16 - 17 .. heart]  
 17 Enter DUCHESS (Everyman's Library)]  
 29 Enter FERDINAND]\*  
 72 - 74 .. wife]  
 78 - 82 .. again]  
 85 - 86]  
 90]  
 96]  
 112 - 114 .. bodies]
- IV.ii 7 down] Cariola  
 28 - 31 .. easy]  
 31 Who] What  
 34 - 35 .. pitied]  
 36 - 37]  
 48 an .. - 51 .. mad]  
 55 Insertion of laugh after .. morning]  
 56 - 57]  
 70 - 73]\*  
 74 FIRST MADMAN (Everyman's Library)] FIRST MADMAN (ASTROLOGER)  
 74 yet]\*  
 74 draw .. - 75 .. or]  
 78 SECOND MADMAN (Everyman's Library)] SECOND MADMAN (LAWYER)  
 80]  
 81 THIRD MADMAN (Everyman's Library)] THIRD MADMAN (PRIEST)  
 83 FOURTH MADMAN (Everyman's Library)] FOURTH MADMAN (DOCTOR)  
 90 you .. - 91]  
 103 that .. - 104]  
 113 Here the dance consisting of 8. madmen, with music  
answerable thereunto, after which BOSOLA, like an old man,  
enters]\*  
 162 [Enter executioners with] a coffin, cords, and a bell]\*  
 165 Addition of Kneel on the margin  
 290 Addition of To Ferdinand after Ha?  
 294 - 295 .. not-being?]  
 297 - 298 .. hell?]  
 308 O .. - 310]  
 314 and your .. - 317 .. blood]  
 320 - 321 .. thee]\*  
 322 Sir, - 327]  
 330 - 332]  
 339 Who's .. - 341 .. destroy pity]  
 342 - 343 .. mercy]

346 the .. - 347 .. atonement]  
 348 she's gone again!]  
 357 My .. - 358 .. fear]  
 360 here .. - 362 .. father]  
 363]

V.i 13 You .. - 14]  
 47 - 49 .. me?]  
 55 - 56 .. beggars]  
 59 'Tis a noble old fellow]  
 68 for I'll go in mine own shape]  
 74 - 75]  
 76 Transposed to the end of Act V, scene iii

V.ii 27 Enter FERDINAND, CARDINAL, MALATESTI, and BOSOLA (Everyman's Library)] Enter FERDINAND, MALATESTI, CARDINAL and BOSOLA]  
 67]  
 74 I .. - 77 .. Hall]  
 83 - 84 .. Ferdinand!]  
 87]  
 117 - 118]  
 125 - 140 .. take]  
 156 - 159 .. kissing-comfits]  
 161 Come .. - 164]  
 174 - 177 .. sunbeams]  
 180 - 181]  
 182 Insertion of BOSOLA as the speaker  
 194 Insertion of Kiss, turn to him, after .. courted you  
 209 - 212 .. pillows]  
 214 cabinet] chamber  
 216 I am .. - 218 .. seal'd]  
 221 - 227 .. of]  
 258 I pray thee yet be satisfi'd]\*  
 259 - 260 .. them]  
 310 physicians .. -312 .. faster]  
 325 - 333 .. between]  
 341 there, there]

V.iii 45 Addition of Rise on the margin before Come  
 56 Transposition of V.i l.92 to follow .. own

V.iv 8 - 17]  
 34]\*  
 49 Transposition of Bosola? to follow 51 .. else  
 51 Insertion of 49 Bosola? to follow .. else  
 60 sad] glad  
 72 - 77 .. lodge]  
 79 O direful misprision!]  
 82 - 83]  
 83 Exeunt]

V.v 7 Enter BOSOLA and SERVANT bearing ANTONIO's body (Everyman's Library)]  
 17 I .. - 32]



32 Exeunt, above, MALATESTI, RODERIGO, and GRISOLAN (Everyman's  
Library]  
34 - 35]  
52 - 61]  
62 sink .. - 64]  
66 - 69].  
102 - 103]  
105 - 107]

1971 -- directed by Clifford Williams.

Edition used for prompt-copy: The New Mermaid edition.

Prompt-book consulted at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Cuts and emendations with unclear markings are indicated by \*.

- I.i            1 to your country]  
                  16 - 22 .. foresee]  
                  37 - 38 mantle]  
                  54 I .. - 58 .. pardon?]  
                  65 fare you well sir]  
                  76 for .. - 79 .. follow]
- I.ii           0 Enter CASTRUCHIO, SILVIO, RODERIGO and GRISOLAN] Enter  
                  CASTRUCHIO, SILVIO, RODERIGO  
                  3 The .. - 4]  
                  14 - 21]  
                  42 spoken by RODERIGO only  
                  82 he lays - 84 for]  
                  85 and a thousand such political monsters]  
                  86 but .. - 90 .. him]  
                  103 - 104]  
                  114 and .. - 116 .. her]\*  
                  130]  
                  147 - 148]  
                  158 which .. - 159]  
                  160 For .. - 167 .. you]  
                  194 oh .. - 198 .. complemental]  
                  304 begin] begun
- II.i            14 - 18 .. valiant]  
                  73 I .. - 74 .. yields]  
                  81 if .. - 83 .. wisdom]  
                  110 Enter DUCHESS, OLD LADY, LADIES] Enter DUCHESS, OLD LADY,  
                  LADIES and CARIOLA  
                  119 sound] swoon  
                  119 I am - 120]  
                  163 Lights, there, lights!] Lights, lights, there!  
                  166 prepar'd - 167 .. and]  
                  177 I am lost in amazement]
- II.ii           18 If .. - 20 .. them]  
                  33 gentleman o'th'court Repeated\*  
                  70 the .. - 71 .. cricket]
- II.iii          1 list, ha?]  
                  6 List again]\*  
                  11 face nor body] body nor face\*  
                  14 This mole does undermine me]  
                  28 - 29]  
                  36]\*  
                  37 - 41 .. to't]

- 46 for .. - 48 .. in]  
 48 this] that  
 54]
- II.iv      67 Insertion of Madam before Your ..  
 82 - 83]
- II.v      31 Curs'd .. - 38 .. it]  
 52 this .. - 55 .. imperfection]  
 60 - 62 .. themselves]
- III.i      12 - 16 .. hasten]  
 20 why] how  
 30 For .. - 35 .. people]  
 38 Is going to bed]  
 72 Do .. - 77]
- III.ii     0 Enter DUCHESS, ANTONIO and CARIOLA] Enter CARIOLA, DUCHESS,  
 ANTONIO  
 40 'Twas .. - 42]  
 92 (For I am sure thou hear'st me)]  
 151 His .. - 154]  
 154 Knocking]\*  
 158 - 159]  
 176 our .. - 178 .. periods]  
 186 - 188 .. doctor]  
 190]  
 194 - 198 .. humour]\*  
 209 - 211]  
 233 thought .. - 235 .. livery]  
 237 - 240]  
 243 Pluto .. - 247]  
 255 - 258]  
 273 accomplished] accompanied  
 291 - 296 .. princes]
- III.iii    5 - 6]  
 17 - 33]  
 43 He .. - 45 .. shoing-horn]  
 68 - 70 .. will ]
- III.iv     6 They come]  
 15 - 16 Repeated\*  
 38 Antonio]
- III.v      2 Is .. - 11]  
 26 A letter]  
 42 which I present you]  
 56 your] our  
 57 - 58]  
 58 Insertion of DUCHESS: I counsel safely  
 98 - 101]  
 132 Dog-ship] Dog-fish  
 140]

- IV.i 2 I'll describe her]\*  
 41 Could you] You could  
 90]  
 112 -113 .. Lauriola]
- IV.ii 56 - 57]  
 70 - 73]  
 89 - 90 .. on't]  
 101 spoken by MAD BROKER  
 110 spoken by MAD FARMER  
 110 - 111]\*  
 113 it was my masterpiece] spoken by MAD TAILOR  
 179 - 182]  
 199 her] you  
 234 Some others] You  
 264 - 266 .. strangers]  
 295 did .. - 298 .. hell?]\*  
 309 - 310]  
 314 and your .. - 319]  
 348 Oh, she's gone again]  
 364 that's .. - 366 .. women]
- V.i 59 'Tis a noble old fellow]
- V.ii 16 only .. - 19 .. try]  
 26 - 26 .. leave]  
 67]  
 70 Transposition of Can you fetch a frisk, sir? to follow 73 ..  
 dormouse  
 73 Insertion of 70 Can you fetch a frisk, sir? to follow ..  
 dormouse  
 76 - 77 Barber-Chirurgion's] Barber-Churgeon's  
 87 - 98 .. worse, and]  
 98 Insertion of CARDINAL: No  
 105 For .. - 107 .. Ferdinand]  
 117 - 118]  
 128 Set .. - 132 .. else]  
 139 brought] bought  
 158 Sure .. - 161 .. longing]  
 179 Insertion of Kiss after .. you  
 181 Insertion of Kiss after .. familiar  
 186 - 192 .. together]  
 203 if .. - 206]  
 208 - 212 .. pillows]  
 221 upon your lives]  
 234 or .. - 246]  
 259 'tis .. - 260 them]  
 272 Insertion of JULIA: ! after .. it  
 280 - 281 .. it]  
 282 Insertion of Why before Couldst  
 308 - 314]  
 318 Castruchio]  
 335 from .. - 337 .. already

- V.iii 25]  
30 - 31 .. for't]
- V.iv 4 - 5 .. him]  
19 RODERIGO omitted  
34]  
46 Oh, I am gone]  
48 .. only have ..] .. have only ..  
70 Break, heart!]  
82 - 83]
- V.v 7 Now? Art thou come?]  
18 to .. - 19 But]  
19 Listen - 25]  
26 You .. - 35]  
52 Oh .. - 54]\*  
67 - 69]  
79 Insertion of My lord! after .. lord?  
79 O sad disaster!]  
97 Fare .. - 99 .. quarrel]  
116 I .. - 118]

1989-90 -- directed by Bill Alexander

There are a number of records which indicate the change of cuts and emendations of the original text during the performances at the Swan, the Playhouse and the Pit: a video tape, one of the RSC Archive Recording, which records a performance at the Swan on 18 January 1990; and two prompt-books, the one used for the Swan and the Playhouse, the other for the Pit. Hereafter the former will be referred to as the first prompt-book, and the latter the second prompt-book.

Edition used for the performed text of the video tape and the prompt-books: the New Mermaid edition.

Video tape and prompt-books consulted at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

First I will present cuts and emendations in the performed text of the video tape. Some of them are unclear due to the actors' inarticulate delivery, and they are indicated by \*.

- I.i            9 which .. - 10]  
               69 I knew]  
               69 Insertion of spent to follow .. fellow
- I.ii           32 surgeons'] surgeons'  
               61 horseman] rider  
               103-04]  
               268 Cariola]  
               336 please] must  
               404 build] bind
- II.i            117 lady] woman  
               119 sound] swoon
- II.iii          53-54]
- II.iv.          30 well] good  
               75 Sir]  
               65 though .. - 66 .. cullises]
- II.v            21 honour's] honour  
               25 mean] way
- III.i           30 For .. - 35 .. people]  
               46 conference] audience  
               57 cultures] coulter  
               91 farewell]
- III.ii          40 'Twas .. - 42]  
               57 softly Cariola]  
               145 shall] may  
               155 ANTONIO: More earthquakes? transposed to follow 157 .. up  
               157 Insertion of 155 ANTONIO: More earthquakes? to follow .. up  
               173 Call] Bring

- III.iii      8 This] The  
               14 leaguer] camp  
               40 Insertion of of to follow .. knew
- III.iv        6 They come] He comes  
               11 I] We  
               13-14]  
               17-22]
- III.v        50 that] which  
               58 safely] safety\*  
               103 Shall] Must
- IV.ii        23 I should learn somewhat, I am sure] I am sure I should learn  
                   somewhat  
               56-57]  
               88 Spoken by the Duchess
- V.i          23 take] ask  
               62]
- V.ii        50 after] behind  
               74 your frisks] a frisk  
               76-77 Chirurgeons'] Surgeons'  
               83 - 84 .. Ferdinand!]  
               150 Insertion of to me to follow .. confess  
               214 get you into my cabinet]  
               215 Insertion of now to follow .. you  
               284 hither]  
               310 physicians .. - 312 .. faster]  
               333 Well] Now\*
- V.iii        50 - 53 .. However]
- V.v          30 with engines]  
               88 i'th'rushes]  
               105-107]  
               111 this young hopeful gentlemen] Antonio's young son and heir

Next I will present cuts and emendations in the two prompt-books. Many of them are found in both prompt-books, and they are presented with no indications. Cuts and emendations found only in either of the prompt-books are given comments in parentheses.

Cuts and emendations with unclear markings are indicated by \*.

- I.i          9 which .. - 10]  
               22 Enter BOSOLA] (only in the first prompt-book)  
               56 What .. - 58 .. pardon?]  
               69 I knew]  
               69 Insertion of spent to follow .. fellow
- I.ii        32 chirurgeons] surgeons  
               86 should] could

- 103 - 104]  
404 build] bind
- II.i 6 to .. - 7 .. and] (in the first prompt-book)  
6 learn .. - 7 .. and] (in the second prompt-book)  
9 memory] senses (only in the first prompt-book)  
44 makes] enables  
44 Insertion of to to follow .. him (only in the second prompt-book)  
47 Observe .. - 63]  
117 lady] woman (only in the first prompt-book)  
119 sound] swoon  
116 good] fair (only in the first prompt-book)
- II.ii 14 The .. - 24 .. centre]  
41 buttons] jacket (only in the first prompt-book)
- II.iii 0 Enter BOSOLA with a dark lantern] Enter BOSOLA  
9 Enter ANTONIO with a candle, his sword drawn] Enter ANTONIO + Birth Chart (only in the first prompt-book)  
33 stol'n] missing\* (only in the first prompt-book)  
54]
- II.iv 65 though .. - 66 .. cullises]
- II.v 21 honour's] honour (only in the first prompt-book)  
25 mean] means and way are indicated here (only in the first prompt-book)
- III.i 1 beloved] trusty (only in the first prompt-book)  
12 law] prison  
13 Nor in prison]  
44 I will marry] it shall be (only in the first prompt-book)  
46 conference] audience (only in the first prompt-book)  
57 cultures] coulter
- III.ii 25 - 33 .. but]  
40 'Twas .. - 42]  
57 softly Cariola]  
63 take] catch (only in the first prompt-book)  
110 bewray] betray  
131 Insertion of on my darting to follow .. me  
134 found] seen (only in the first prompt-book)  
155 ANTONIO: More earthquakes? tranposed to follow 157 .. up  
157 Insertion of 155 ANTONIO: More Earthquakes? to follow .. up  
157 Insertion of Knocking to follow .. earthquakes?  
160 part] fly (only in the first prompt-book)  
171 Insertion of now to follow And  
179 as .. - 180 .. mensogna]  
181 Insertion of noise as s.d.  
186 sick] ill (only in the first prompt-book)  
195 year] winter (only in the first prompt-book)  
204 Towards] Against\* (only in the first prompt-book)  
239 Flatterers .. - 240] (only in the second prompt-book)



- 243 Pluto .. - 247]  
 266 Bermoothas] Bermudas  
 284 deed] act\* (only in the second prompt-book)
- III.iii 8 This] The (only in the second prompt-book)  
 14 leaguer] camp  
 40 Insertion of of to follow .. knew  
 66 You .. - 67 .. ceremony]
- III.iv The whole scene is deleted in both prompt-books
- IV.i 52 travel] journey  
 72 - 74 .. wife]
- IV.ii 56 - 57]  
 88 Spoken by the Duchess  
 259 di'd] died (only in the first prompt-book)  
 314 and your .. - 317 .. blood]  
 348 again]  
 360 here .. - 361 .. father]
- V.i 5 The .. - 13 .. living]  
 15 - 59]  
 62]
- V.ii 50 after] behind (only in the first prompt-book)  
 74 your] a\* (only in the first prompt-book)  
 76-77 Chirurgeons'] surgeons'  
 87 - 99]  
 117 - 118]  
 135 to know - 140 .. take]  
 181]  
 192 had .. - 194 .. courted you]  
 213 Insertion of 221 CARDINAL: Where are you? SERVANTS: Here  
to follow .. th'intelligence  
 214 get you into my cabinet]  
 215 Insertion of now to follow .. you  
 215 do .. - 216 .. you]  
 221 CARDINAL: Where are you? SERVANTS: Here transposed to  
follow 213 .. th'intelligence  
 254 I'll .. - 262]  
 277 For pity-sake, hold]  
 310 physicians .. - 312 .. faster]  
 319 to take .. - 321 .. done]  
 329 they .. - 333 Well]  
 333 Insertion of Now before good (only in the first prompt-  
 book)
- V.iii 12 court] space (only in the first prompt-book)  
 50 - 53 .. However]
- V.iv 39 - 40]  
 57 Their .. - 58 .. me]

V.v            30 with engines]  
                 88 i'th'rushes]  
                 105 - 107]

## APPENDIX B

### Production Cast Lists

1960 -- The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre

1960-61 -- The Aldwych Theatre

1971 -- The Royal Shakespeare Theatre

1989-90 -- The Swan Theatre

1990 -- The Pit

1960 -- The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre

FROM NOVEMBER 30th TO DECEMBER 7th  
the governors of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre  
present the

STRATFORD  
-ON-AVON COMPANY

**THE DUCHESS OF MALFI**  
by John Webster

Characters in order of Appearance

ANTONIO BOLOGNA	DEREK GODFREY
steward of the household of the Duchess	
DELIO Antonio's friend	PETER JEFFREY
DANIEL DE BOSOLA	PATRICK WYMARK
gentleman of the horse to the Duchess	
CARDINAL	MAX ADRIAN
FERDINAND	ERIC PORTER
Duke of Calabria the Cardinal's brother	
SILVIO	CLIFFORD ROSE
CASTRUCCIO	DONALD LAYNE-SMITH
RODERIGO	DAVID SUMNER
GRISOLAN	DONALD DOUGLAS
THE DUCHESS OF MALFI	PEGGY ASHCROFT
CARIOLA her woman	STEPHANIE BIDMEAD
OLD WOMAN	MAVIS EDWARDS
JULIA	SIAN PHILLIPS
Castruccio's wife and the Cardinal's mistress	
ANTONIO'S SON	ROBERT LANGLEY
MARQUIS OF PESCARA	JAMES BREE
DOCTOR	TONY CHURCH
COUNT MALATESTI	IAN RICHARDSON

Ladies, Officers, Attendants, Peasants, Madmen and Executioners

MAROUSSIA FRANK WENDY GIFFORD DIANA RIGG JULIAN BATTERSBY  
DAVID BUCK CHRISTOPHER CRUISE ROY DOTRICE JAMES KERRY CLIVE SWIFT  
DAVE THOMAS STEPHEN THORNE PHILIP VOSS WILLIAM WALLIS

THE ACTION OF THIS PLAY TAKES PLACE IN MALFI, ROME AND MILAN

Directed by DONALD McWHINNIE  
Setting and Costumes by LESLIE HURRY  
Music by HUMPHREY SEARLE Lighting by JOHN WYCKHAM

Music Adviser RAYMOND LEPPARD  
The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre Wind Band:  
Leader ALEC WHITTAKER  
Music Director BRIAN PRIESTMAN

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES AND TO-NIGHT'S PERFORMANCE WILL  
END AT APPROXIMATELY 10:30

Consultant designer on the new stage: Henry Bardon

1960-61 -- The Aldwych Theatre

**THE DUCHESS OF MALFI**  
by John Webster

Characters in the order of their appearance

ANTONIO BOLOGNA	DEREK GODFREY
steward of the household to the Duchess	
DELIO Antonio's friend	PETER JEFFEREY
DANIEL DE BOSOLA	PATRICK WYMARK
gentleman of the horse to the Duchess	
CARDINAL	MAX ADRIAN
FERDINAND	ERIC PORTER
Duke of Calabria the Cardinal's brother	
SILVIO	CLIFFORD ROSE
CASTRUCCIO	DONALD LAYNE-SMITH
RODERIGO	DAVID SUMNER
GRISOLAN	DONALD DOUGLAS
DUCHESS OF MALFI	PEGGY ASHCROFT
CARIOLA her woman	STEPHANIE BIDMEAD
OLD WOMAN	MAVIS EDWARDS
JULIA	SIAN PHILLIPS
Castruccio's wife and the Cardinal's mistress	
OFFICER	PHILIP VOSS
ANTONIO'S SON	ROBERT LANGLEY
MARQUIUS OF PESCARA	JAMES BREE
DOCTOR	TONY CHURCH
COUNT MALATESTI	IAN RICHARDSON

Ladies, Officers, Attendants, Peasants, Madmen and Executioners

MAROUSSIA FRANK WENDY GIFFORD DIANA RIGG JULIAN BATTERSBY  
DAVID BUCK CHRISTOPHER CRUISE ROY DOTRICE JAMES KERRY  
CLIVE SWIFT DAVE THOMAS STEPHEN THORNE WILLIAM WALLIS

THE ACTION OF THE PLAY TAKES PLACE IN MALFI, ROME AND MILAN

Directed by DONALD McWHINNIE  
Setting and Costumes by LESLIE HURRY  
Music by HUMPHREY SEARLE Lighting by JOHN WYCKHAM

Music Adviser RAYMOND LEPPARD  
The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre Wind Band:  
Leader ALEC WHITTAKER  
Music Director BRIAN PRIESTMAN  
Choreographer PAULINE GRANT

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES

The version of the National Anthem played tonight has been orchestrated and arranged by Raymond Leppard from the earliest known source of the melody, c. 1740

Consultant designer on the new stage and Proscenium Arch: Henry Bardon

Lighting Adviser: John Wyckham

The Change of the cast for the Duchess of Malfi

The list was among the production records for the McWhinnie production. It became effective from 2 February 1961.

<u>New Casting</u>		<u>Present Casting</u>	
Mr. Roy Dotrice	Doctor	Mr. Church	
Mr. Stephen Thorne	Grisolan Executioner	}	Mr. Douglas
Mr. John Cater	Malatesti 1st Madman		Mr. Richardson Mr. Buck
Mr. Patrick Stephens	Silvio 3rd Madman	}	Mr. Rose
Mr. Edward Argent	1st Executioner Ferd. Servant		Mr. Battersby Mr. Buck
Mr. William Austin	Cardinal Servant Madman	}	Mr. Wallis
Mr. Alan Downer	Madman Cardinal Servant Peasant		Mr. Richardson Mr. Battersby
Mr. Stuart Hoyle	Duchess Officer		Mr. Thorne
Mr. James Keen	Duchess Officer Fruit Seller	}	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Peter Russell	Ferdinand Servant Executioner Antonio Servant		Mr. Kerry



1971 -- The Royal Shakespeare Theatre

RSC in John Webster's  
**The Duchess of Malfi**

**THE HOUSE OF ARAGON**

**The Cardinal** brother of  
**Ferdinand** Duke of Calabria } twins  
**The Duchess of Malfi** }

Emrys James  
Michael Williams  
Judi Dench

**THE HOUSEHOLD OF THE DUCHESS**

**Antonio Bologna** Steward  
**Daniel de Bosola** appointed Provisor of Horse

Richard Pasco

**Cariola** Companion to the Duchess

Geoffrey Hutchings  
Janet Whiteside

**COURTIERS TO THE HOUSE OF ARAGON**

**Delio** Antonio's intimate  
**Silvio**  
**Castruchio** a lawyer  
**Julia** his wife and the Cardinal's mistress  
**Roderigo**  
**Count Malateste**  
**The Marquis of Pescara**

Bernard Lloyd  
Richard Mayes  
Sydney Bromley  
Lynn Dearth  
Michael Shannon  
Peter Geddis  
Denis Holmes

**ATTENDANTS ON THE HOUSE OF ARAGON**

**Ladies-in-Waiting** to the Duchess  
**Officers** at the Court of Malfi

Lisa Harrow Marion Lines

**Monk** servant to the Cardinal  
**Monk** at the shrine of Our Lady of Loretto  
**Dignitary** of the State of Ancona  
**Soldiers** of Ferdinand and the Cardinal

Robert Ashby David Calder Roger Rees Matthew Roberton  
Ted Valentine  
Roger Rees  
David Calder

**Soldier** guarding the Duchess  
**Executioners**

Robert Ashby Matthew Roberton Ted Valentine  
Alton Kumalo  
Malcolm Blackmoor Jeremy Sinden

**IN THE PROFESSIONS**

**Old Lady** midwife  
**Pilgrims**  
**Astrologer**  
**Laywer**  
**Priest**  
**Doctor**  
**English Tailor**  
**Gentleman Usher**  
**Broker**

Anne Dyson  
Gordon Reid Morgan Sheppard

madmen

Robert Ashby David Calder Roger Rees  
Gordon Reid Matthew Roberton  
Michael Shannon Morgan Sheppard

**Doctor** in Milan  
**Friend of Antonio** in Milan

Richard Mayes  
Matthew Roberton

**THE DUCHESS'S CHILDREN**

Anthony Boddington or Richard Kingston  
Tina Howkins or Dawn Kingston

Musicians                                      Gordon Bennett   Edward Joory   Robert Pritchard

Directed by **Clifford Williams**

Designed by **Farrah**

Music by **Marc Wilkinson**

Lighting by **Michael J White**

Act One is about 1 hour 20 minutes. Act Two is about 1 hour 25 minutes.

There is one interval of 15 minutes

Please do not smoke in the auditorium nor use cameras or tape recorders

1989-90 -- The Swan Theatre

**THE DUCHESS OF MALFI**  
BY JOHN WEBSTER

Delio	Jerome Flynn
Antonio Bologna, steward of the Duchess's household	Mick Ford
Daniel de Bosola	Nigel Terry
The Cardinal, brother to the Duchess	Russell Dixon
Duke Ferdinand, also brother to the Duchess	Bruce Alexander
Silvio	Simon D'Arcy
Castruccio	Dennis Clinton
Roderigo	Ian Driver
Grisolan	Andrew Hesker
The Duchess of Malfi	Harriet Walter
Cariola, her woman	Sally Edwards
Lady	Judith Brydon
Midwife	Helen Blatch
Servants	Simon D'Arcy, Craig Pinder
Julia	Patricia Kerrigan
Cardinal's Servant	Maxwell Hutcheon
Officers	Simon D'Arcy, Craig Pinder, Ian Driver, Andrew Hesker
Count Malateste	Maxwell Hutcheon
Pescara	Peter Theedom
Pilgrims	Ian Driver, Andrew Hesker
Children	Mark Wilkinson, Zoe Levings, Anthony Budford / Jack Fitzgerald, Katie Holmes, Richard Holmes
Servant	Andrew Hesker
Nurse to Madmen	Judith Brydon
Mad Lawyer	Simon D'Arcy
Mad Priest	Ian Driver
Mad Astrologer	Andrew Hesker
Mad Doctor	Peter Theedom
Other Madmen	Craig Pinder, Maxwell Hutcheon
Executioners	Simon D'Arcy, Ian Driver
Doctor	Andrew Hesker, Craig Pinder
Antonio's Servant	Crain Pinder Simon D'Arcy

Attendants, servants, guards played by members of the cast.

Directed by	Bill Alexander
Designed by	Fotini Dimou
Lighting by	Wayne Dowdeswell
Music by	Guy Woolfenden

Movement by	Lesley Hutchison
Fight Director	Malcolm Ranson
Sound by	Andrea Cox
Music Director	Roger Hellyer
Assistant Director	Ruth Garnault
Assistant Designer	Anna Georgiades
Company Voice Work by	Cicely Berry and Andrew Wade
Stage Manager	Maggie MacKay
Deputy Stage Manager	Ian Barber
Assistant Stage Manager	Ashley Pickles

## MUSICIANS

Clarinet	Edward Watson
Cello	Alan Carus-Wilson
Percussion	Clifford Pick
Keyboards	Roger Hellyer

The performance is approximately 3½ hours in length,  
including one interval of 15 minutes.

First performance of this production:  
Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 29 November 1989.

1990 -- The Pit

**THE DUCHESS OF MALFI**  
BY JOHN WEBSTER

Delio	Jerome Flynn
Antonio Bologna	Mick Ford
steward of the Duchess's household	
Daniel de Bosola	Stephen Boxer
The Cardinal,	Russell Dixon
brother to the Duchess	
Duke Ferdinand,	Bruce Alexander
also brother to the Duchess	
Silvio	Simon D'Arcy
Castruccio	Dennis Clinton
Roderigo	Ian Driver
Grisolan	Andrew Hesker
The Duchess of Malfi	Harriet Walter
Cariola, her woman	Sally Edwards
Lady	Judith Brydon
Midwife	Helen Blatch
Servants	Simon D'Arcy, Craig Pinder
Julia	Patricia Kerrigan
Cardinal's Servant	Maxwell Hutcheon
Officers	Simon D'Arcy, Craig Pinder,
	Ian Driver, Andrew Hesker
Count Malateste	Maxwell Hutcheon
Pescara	Peter Theedom
Pilgrims	Ian Driver, Andrew Hesker
Children	Benjamin Mudford,
	Nicholas Mudford
Servant	Andrew Hesker
Nurse to Madmen	Judith Brydon
Mad Lawyer	Simon D'Arcy
Mad Priest	Ian Driver
Mad Astrologer	Andrew Hesker
Mad Doctor	Peter Theedom
Other Madmen	Craig Pinder,
	Maxwell Hutcheon
Excutioners	Simon D'Arcy, Ian Driver,
	Andrew Hesker, Craig Pinder
Doctor	Craig Pinder
Antonio's Servant	Simon D'Arcy

Attendants, servants, guards played by members of the cast.

Directed by	Bill Alexander
Designed by	Fotini Dimou
Lighting by	Wayne Dowdeswell
Music by	Guy Woolfenden
Movement by	Lesley Hutchison
Fight Director	Malcolm Ranson
Sound by	Andrea J. Cox
Music Director	Richard Brown

Assistant Director  
 Assistant Designer  
 Company voice work by

Ruth Garnault  
 Anna Georgiades  
 Cicely Berry and  
 Andrew Wade

Stage Manager  
 Deputy Stage Manager  
 Assistant Stage Manager

Jonathan Caldicot  
 Sheonagh Darby  
 Ashley Pickles

#### MUSICIANS

Clarinet / Soprano Saxophone  
 Cello  
 Percussion  
 Keyboards

Victor Slaymark  
 Julia Vohralik  
 Tony McVey  
 Richard Brown

The performance is approximately 3¼ hours in length,  
 including one interval of 15 minutes.

First performance of this production:  
 Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, 29 November 1989.

First London performance:  
 The Pit, 25 April 1990.

## APPENDIX C

### Details of Plays Produced at Stratford-upon-Avon and London Concurrent with the Productions of The Duchess of Malfi

1960 -- The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre

1960-61 -- The Aldwych Theatre

1971 -- The Royal Shakespeare Theatre

1989-90 -- The Swan Theatre

1990 -- The Pit

Plays composed by playwrights other than William Shakespeare are indicated with their names.

R indicates a revival or transferred production from Stratford-upon-Avon, and TGR indicates a Theatregoround production.

Productions	Director	Designer(s)
1960 -- the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre		
NIL	-----	-----
1960-61 -- the Aldwych Theatre		
<u>Twelfth Night</u> (R)	Peter Hall	Lila de Nobili
<u>Ondine</u> by Jean Giraudoux	Peter Hall	Tanya Moiseiwitsch
<u>The Devils</u> by John Whiting	Peter Wood	Sean Kenny
1971 -- the Royal Shakespeare Theatre		
<u>Richard II</u> (TGR)	John Barton	Ann Curtis
<u>The Merchant of Venice</u>	Terry Hands	Timothy O'Brien, Tazeena Firth
<u>Twelfth Night</u>	John Barton	Christopher Morley
<u>Henry V</u> (TGR)	John Barton	Ann Curtis
<u>Much Ado about Nothing</u>	Ronald Eyre	Voytek
<u>Othello</u>	John Barton	Julia Trevelyan Oman
1989-90 -- the Swan Theatre		
<u>Pericles</u>	David Thacker	Fran Thompson
<u>Singer</u> by Peter Flannery	Terry Hands	Sanja Jurca
1990 -- the Pit		
<u>Singer</u> (R)	Terry Hands	Sanja Jurca Avci
<u>Pericles</u> (R)	David Thacker	Fran Thompson
<u>Earwig</u> by Paula Milne	Ron Daniels	Ralph Koltai, Sue Formston
<u>A Dream of People</u> by Michael Hastings	Janet Suzman	Johan Engels



## APPENDIX D

### Interview with Bill Alexander

This interview took place on 3 May 1991 at the Barbican Centre. Bill Alexander answered to the questions in a questionnaire I had sent to him.

References to the original text are from The Duchess of Malfi, ed. by Elizabeth M. Brennan, the New Mermaids, second ed. (London: Ernest Benn, 1983 (first ed., 1964)).

In transcribing the interview, I have corrected grammatical mistakes and added words to make the sentences clearer.

(The Duchess of Malfi, directed by Bill Alexander, was performed at the Swan, Stratford-upon-Avon, and the Pit in London. The significant difference between the two theatres is that of the size. The capacity of the Swan is 430, while that of the Pit is approximately 200. Seeing performances at both theatres, I felt that the small size and the structure of the Pit produced closer communication between the actors and the audience, and that this made performances more successful than at the Swan. At the same time, I had the impression that the success at the Pit partly derived from the claustrophobic nature of The Duchess of Malfi; many of the events take place indoors, or at night, or both. I asked the director how the change of the size of theatre affected the performances.)

First of all you are right it is [an] atmospheric and very claustrophobic play. It talks about a very small, courtly world, in which everyone knows what everyone else is doing, and that's what adds [the] dramatic tension of how on earth can the Duchess think she can hide something as extraordinary as having a family from that closed world. The answer is, of course, she cannot. And I, in my own view, this production

worked better in the Pit than in the Swan. I think the Swan is a remarkable theatre, but it is quite a problem in getting focus in the Swan, because the sight line is sometimes not very good; you have a very, very, high audience that you have to play to; it's a very deep thrust, which means a lot of [the] audience are some way behind the action. Even though the Pit is not a very attractive theatre, just to go in and look at; it is very well focused on the acting area, and I thought that it was a better theatre for that play.

(The text of The Duchess of Malfi was virtually intact at the Swan, while many lines were cut at the Pit. The most notable deletion was that of Act III, scene iv, which includes the Cardinal's investiture and the banishment of the Duchess, proceeded in the form of dumb show. I asked the director (1) for what purposes he made the deletions, (2) how the deletion of Act III, scene iv, the turning point of the play, affected the performances at the Pit and (3) whether the deletions caused any difference in rhythm of the performances between the two theatres.)

Yes, I did cut it quite a lot for the Pit.... There is a [bit more] of time limit in the Pit, purely because in London an audience would tend to have to go and catch public transport, and in Stratford most people who see a play stay for the night. So my experience is that I['ve] often had to cut the play when it's moved to London. And the second point is that it was also a slight change.... It wasn't a change of interpretation exactly. I wanted to change the rhythm of the second half. I wanted the second half to move at a quicker pace, and I therefore decided to abandon the whole kind of choreographic and the statuesque nature of that scene [i.e., Act III, scene iv]. I also believe it would seem probably meant much more to the Jacobean audience, who [was] used to conventions of masques,

conventions of that kind of symbolist way of telling a story than a modern audience. I did it, however, with some hesitation, because I think that it is in a way quite a remarkable scene and quite <sup>[a]</sup>remarkable theatrical device. It's very much the turning point of the play; but I just felt that I hadn't made it work in the original production, that I could not think of a way to improve it, but I could think of a way by removing it, to actually make the second half more fluid. (The director read the third question) Yes, it did cause a difference in the rhythm. I did it to improve the rhythm of the second half. I think it maybe... it was a shame in a way, but I think overall it tightened up the second half. But I mean a lot of work I did in the second half was to make it move quicker, the second half of the play which I think had been over-long in Stratford. And I'd feel that the audience was losing tension in the second half.

(I asked whether the director felt that the performed text for the Pit was different from the almost intact text for the Swan.)

Yes, it was very different.

(I asked how he thought of the original text -- for example, in terms of rhythm.)

No, I think on the whole it was [a] brilliantly constructed play, with a wonderful natural flow to it. What is difficult is that... because it was the convention of the time, more time is spent on... verbal intricacies... than we are used to. And it's very difficult to know what to do about that, because (a) you have to make the audience understand them, which is difficult enough, but (b) the taste of the modern audience isn't the same as the Jacobean audience's.... The Jacobean audience would have relished it for what it was. I actually did not cut the play that much... really, when it came to London; a little bit of some of Bosola, and


a little bit of the cut, and a little scene about... with Julia's asking for the tower [i.e., Antonio's citadel], that bit. Because I felt the audience didn't follow that scene. I don't think Webster was [a] perfect structural dramatist, and I actually think the cuts I made probably to improve it; slightly I mean to improve the play as well as the performance. But I mean it was exactly very little compared to what you might have to do with a <sup>[lessen]</sup> Jacobean dramatist.

(The performance began with a prelude in which the Duchess had a black cloth disrobed and revealed her elegant dress. The opening seemed to me to suggest (1) that the play began when the Duchess had just finished mourning her first husband, which was a widow's duty, (2) that she was determined to return to society, (3) and that she was aware both of her sexuality and of her high rank as a duchess. I had the impression that the function of the opening was to make the audience anticipate the Duchess's fight against the social code to preserve her identity as a woman. I asked the director how he saw the prelude. He agreed to the first and second interpretations of the prelude.)

However, I don't regard... I didn't see the play as [a play about] a woman who fights against the social code. I don't think the Duchess of Malfi, as a person, is a fighter on behalf of change. I think she's a woman who's following her own instincts and I think that she is, in a sense, defending her right to have her own emotions. But I don't think that comes from any a priori sense of this is what the society should be; it simply comes from the sort of person she is, that she is incapable as an individual of not following the dictation of her own heart. We in the twentieth century can look back objectively and say that it's a play about a woman who tries to take control of her own destiny, but what one must

remember is that Webster is adapting his play from a source story, that is a moral about not doing that sort of thing if you were a duchess.

Webster's genius is the balance out of the elements and actually [he] [shows] both sides of the case, to make us sympathize with the Duchess, but also to [make us] worry about whether it is the way what the Duchess should behave in... whether she would be better to accept the fact that a prince is in an exceptional position of her responsibility and [that princes] should deny themselves personal lives. After all the society depended on the authority of that figure.

(I said that the Duchess tried to seek  a better life in her own way.)

Yes, for herself, but you could argue that it was selfish. I mean she's clearly neglected the affairs of state, while leading that life.

(It is generally thought that the Duchess's death long before the end of the play causes a problem in performances. The Duchess naturally attracts the audience's attention up to her death; after her death members of the audience find slackening of tension. I thought that the Duchess's voice in the echo scene had been aimed partly to retain the audience's attention to the play by reminding the audience of the Duchess's influence on the other characters. I asked how the director saw the play after the Duchess's death.)

It is difficult to handle the play after that. However, Webster's point is about consequences, the consequences of actions. He's not only examining what happens to that woman when she follows her instincts; he's also looking at what happens to people who do a terrible thing to someone, from motives of jealousy and vindictiveness and warped passion, which I think is the way that one is described in Ferdinand's behaviour. So I

think that it is of intense interest, what happens to Ferdinand, what happens to the Cardinal; and I didn't actually find any difficulty with that area of the play, because I think the scene of Ferdinand's madness, the scene where Bosola revisits the Cardinal, are brilliant scenes. I think the problem comes later with Julia, with the death of Julia and her courting of Bosola, that is the scene in which it is difficult to maintain the tension, because the audience has not built up much interest in the character of Julia. They were very interested in the Cardinal, and [in] Ferdinand, and [in] what happens to them, and [in] how Bosola's story is concluded, but not much in what happens to Julia. I suspect if I were to do the play again, I might cut that scene very substantially; not entirely, but quite a lot. Because although it is a wonderful scene, in its own right, it is a little difficult for the audience to regasp its relevance, and I think you're absolutely right to say the echo scene is to remind the audience to make the point [of] the person's influences that lingers after her death. And I think that it is absolutely right that it is one of the difficult areas of the play, that and the final scene. Really, the scene of Julia and Bosola, and the scene at the end are the most difficult scenes to handle, one because you feel the tension slackening and the other because of the problem of bad laughs.

(The final scenes, i.e., Act V, scene iv, and scene v, are notorious for provoking the audience's laughter in spite of their tragic nature. In this production I noticed the audience's laughter at scenes like Antonio's death, at which his 'little fire' (V.iv.58) of life was extinguished by the news of the murder of his family; the appearance of Ferdinand, who wore an armour on his nightshirt; and the death of the Cardinal, who collapsed on the floor, embracing Ferdinand's body. I also noticed, however, that the

laughter was much smaller at the Pit. Referring to some scholars' view of the final scenes that Webster intended to undercut their tragic nature by inserting farce, I asked how the director saw the scenes.)

I felt I controlled [the audience's reaction] better at the end [at the Pit], and I think that's largely to do with the fact that we were able to do <sup>as</sup> a bit more work on it. (Reading my reference to the laughter at Antonio's death) And in fact, I wanted to cut that and I never did; but I should have done. (To the view that Webster undercut tragedy with farce) I couldn't say absolutely whether I think it was Webster's intention, that the tragedy of bloodiness should be undercut by laughter, I don't know. But I do know that the Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences had a far different reaction to violence than we do. Because they lived with violence, much more as part of their lives; because on their way on morning they passed the heads on poles; because they would see public executions; because that they would see people disembow<sup>l</sup>led in front of the crowd of thousands; because they would go to bear-baiting, in [an] arena to see [a] poor bear torn to pieces by dogs. They had a sense of the ridiculous in violence that was part of their culture. They would find nothing wrong with the laughing at the torment of the bear, or mocking at someone who was going to be hanged. There I think they would probably gasp with disgust and laugh at sequences of the death of the Cardinal, and Bosola. That was the fundamental difference between the kind of audience they were and the kind of audience we are. That's why it is difficult to handle the scene like this in the twentieth century.

(After Delio concluded the play, a small voice sang what sounded like a requiem. It lingered for a few seconds after the blackout. This ending seemed to have suggested that the Duchess's integrity would survive in the



world 'beyond death' (V.v.120), and that the other world was now near this world. I asked what the ending was aimed to imply and why Antonio's eldest son did not appear at the Swan.)

[Antonio's eldest son] didn't appear in the Swan, because there was restriction about the hour to which we could keep children in the theatre. [...] So that was [a] purely technical reason. The voice that you could actually hear at the end was intended to be the voice of the dead son rather than the Duchess herself. It was a small voice singing [a] requiem, and it wasn't intended to remind one of the Duchess, and had an effective requiem for her death, but [it was] also [intended] to speak of her continuance in a form of this other son, who we see in front of us.

(Harriet Walter presented the Duchess as an ordinary woman who happened to be a duchess. She convinced the audience that the character's sexual desire for Antonio was natural, and she expressed the fear of dying before being strangled. Harriet Walter's emphasis on the Duchess's ordinariness was effective in retaining the audience's sympathy for the character. I asked how the director viewed the Duchess.)

I think that in many ways that the Duchess is an ordinary woman and that is precisely her problem. Because she does not have a built-in sense of being a leader and having a national responsibility for a society, she is like an aristocrat, a leader, of whom much is expected but who is essentially a very motherly, housely, wifely kind of individual; and that is precisely what Harriet and I worked trying to achieve and her interpretation of the role. Although an ordinary woman capable of great grandeur, emotional grandeur, and in extreme situation, which I think Webster is saying that it is not only princes who can go to the death, something about ordinary people also capable that sort of courage as well.

All you can say, but although she is in many ways an ordinary person, it is her innate princeliness that makes her behave in such a courageous way. In fact she says, 'I am Duchess of Malfi still' (IV.ii.139); it is as if at that point of her life, she is reminded of the pride, of what is beyond her point of a woman and mother, and actually comes to her sense of herself, that is [a] both personal and public figure. So I think she is a strange blend of ordinariness and princeliness. She is not one or the other, or maybe she discovers more of her own aristocracy the nearer her end she comes.

(I asked about the difference in the delivery of 'I am Duchess of Malfi still' at the Swan and the Pit.)

At the Swan she said, (feebly) 'I am Duchess of Malfi still', and was discovering it, and at the Pit, (with some strength) 'I am Duchess of Malfi -- still', as if holding on something and being defiant, and I think probably because Harriet had grown in her part and discovered more about the strength of the character.

(Mick Ford seems to have emphasized the inconsistency in Antonio's character. In scenes like Act I, scene ii, and Act III, scene ii, his Antonio raised the audience's sympathy, presenting the character as an attractive lover and a husband. But Mick Ford also stressed the character's fear of having the secret marriage revealed and his powerlessness in his public life. I asked how the director interpreted the gap of Antonio's impression.)

I think that Antonio is a character, you must remember, to begin with.... Antonio is terrified of the offer the Duchess makes to him. He sees all the dangers inherent in that offer. He says, 'he's a fool | That, being a-cold, would thrust his hands i'th'fire | To warm them' (I.ii.343-

45). And he looks at the ring and says, 'There is a saucy and ambitious devil | Is dancing in this circle' (I.ii.329-30). So I think he is a frightened man most of the play, and I think that a frightened man can't be a good steward, and particularly a man who is conceiving a secret as he is, is permanently bound on edge by the situation, and therefore I mean he doesn't handle his stuff very well. But when he's in security on the Duchess's world, all he feels is that he loves his wife, he loves the children they are having, and he has the life together. Although I tried to get the sense that he is nevertheless quite troubled sometimes then as well... but I think that he also is rather an ordinary person, that is into something too big for him, that he can't really control, but if left to himself, he would lead a perfectly normal life. And it is really his tragedy that the Duchess should love him. I think he would have been contented to love the Duchess from a distance.... But the extraordinary offer of her actually happens. I think it's something he can never believe and he can't really deal with. But he himself, at the end, finally finds strength and courage, and it's because he's innately [a] good man. They find a courage because they're good people. If they were bad people they would not be able to die with the dignity that they do.

(Bosola is a complex character. He is presented first as a villain, but is intelligent and has an insight into evil and hypocrisy. In one scene it is revealed that he once was a scholar. At the Swan Nigel Terry played Bosola straightforward, as a man who was angry at the Cardinal's ingratitude. At the Pit Stephen Boxer emphasized the character's sarcastic nature. I asked how the change of cast affected the performance.)

I think that Bosola is a complicated character. Basically there are certain things that would remain true whatever actor played him... his

bitterness, his disenchantment, his intelligence, his cynicism, his amorality, which turns into morality, all one has to find is the reasons that are different. And I think the main difference between Stephen and Nigel was that Nigel was someone very much of a soldier and with Stephen, who was more a scholar.... So there was more of the sceptical scholastic quality in Stephen, and more of the brutal... more powerful man in Nigel, although I also, ironically, think Nigel has a more poetic quality than Stephen. I think although they were quite different, I don't think it affected the allover balance of the production much.... I think that Nigel's performance was more enigmatic, strange performance, which might dissatisfy some members of the audience but really interest other members of the audiences. I think that for most people Stephen's was probably an easier interpretation to follow, but possibly it might be a little less interesting. I think Nigel's was more dangerous, and Stephen's was safer. But I think that Stephen's was better for the play as a whole than the Nigel's.

(Bruce Alexander, as Ferdinand, emphasized the fact that the character is the Duchess's twin brother and her junior. For example, Alexander's Ferdinand reacted pathetically rather than menacingly to the news of the Duchess's childbirth. I asked how the director saw the blood ties between Ferdinand and the Duchess.)

I think it's very simple. I think that Ferdinand is in love with his sister. I think there was a strong element of incestuous love.... It is an unrequited incestuous love, but I think that Ferdinand is someone who has never managed to grow out of the sibling affection and dependency he has on his sister. He is profoundly jealous of his sister, that is why he moves in, as soon as her husband dies, to control her. He doesn't want her

to marry again; he thinks, 'For the first time in life I can have my sister back'. But because he is in many ways an ignorant and not a grown-up man, he... that's the way he has that need. He should have been married himself by then. I think that he was never married because he loved his sister and then his sister's husband dies he wants to get her back for himself again. And so quite apart from class element in his reaction to Antonio, he has the sexual jealousy, and that turns itself perversely, into the only physical contact he can have with her, which is to mutilate her, and to torture her. I mean he's a sadist driven and his sadism driven by his unrequited lust for his sister. Indeed a lust he cannot admit it to himself. He's a man who is not honest to himself, Ferdinand. Again he hasn't grown up enough to look at himself truthfully, to see what he is and [to] do something about it. So they are so closely bound, those two.

(Russell Dixon seemed to have presented the Cardinal as a protective figure who was aware of his position as the eldest of the house of Aragon. For example, he kissed Ferdinand's hand before leaving at the end of Act II, scene v, as if to encourage Ferdinand. Stage business like this seemed to suggest that the Cardinal's affection for his siblings was mingled with his pride in his lineage and awareness of political significance of his family. I asked how the director interpreted the character.)

I think that the Cardinal is indeed very proud of their lineage, and very much sees himself as the old brother. But I think, more importantly, he is very wrapped up in his own lust and his own ambitions... and I think that means he has a slightly casual and irresponsible attitude to what happens. Yes, he will get irate about his sister marrying a steward, but I feel that if it weren't for Ferdinand, he might absolutely be mad about it. And I think he rather wishes the whole things would go away and he could be

left to get on his political ambitions and his sexual licence. I think that he sort of was driven to be involved by Ferdinand's passion and paranoia, and goes along with it without really thinking about the consequence of it. It's like Ferdinand was active in the destruction of the Duchess, but the Cardinal was passive in her destruction. They seem equally, I think, that's Webster's point, that by being passive you can be equally as blameworthy as being active. And I wanted the character to be a complex, licentious, confused figure, who enjoys power, but who is utterly terrified of his own death, of his own lack of faith. And at the end of the play you can see a man who's a total hypocrite; if he was a cardinal of a profoundly religious spirit, he wouldn't be whimpering, jibbering, terrified wreck he is at the end, even doubting his own belief, doubting his own capacity to survive the judgement after death. He becomes a pathetic character. He does, finally, in that line, come to the sense of self-awareness, in that he realizes his own worthlessness. Ferdinand was sort of too mad by the end to really realize, to have such a clear view, but the Cardinal, at last, is sane and sees his own patheticness, but I think he is a weak man in a position of power, which is always a dangerous mixture.

(I asked how the director saw the political aspect of the play.)

I think that it's a political play only in the sense that it is saying people in power are driven by passions, and doubts, and lusts, and fears, and confusions just like everyone else. In fact Bosola says that in one of his speeches. He makes precisely the point, one of the quite early speeches when he's talking to Antonio just before the Duchess arrives and we see she's pregnant [i.e., II.i.102-10]. Study that speech and I think that's all that needs to be said about the politics of the play. You can't

really separate the personal from the political in life.

(Patricia Kerrigan seemed to have suggested that Julia was a victim of a male-dominated society, and that the only difference of her and the Duchess was that Julia failed to find a man of sincerity and that she fell victim to the Cardinal. I asked in what way the director had Julia ~~from a~~ contrast to the Duchess.)

I think that she is a victim of the male-dominating society. I think that she is someone desperate to escape from her unhappy marriage with a stupid, elderly man. But she does not have much moral centre to her and therefore falls easily prey to the blandishments of someone like the Cardinal, who can offer her sexuality combined with luxurious living. But in that sense she is [a] quite weak and not very morally centred human being. I think that the way she contrasts with the Duchess is that she's meant to make us think more that, however we might judge the Duchess's behaviour badly in terms of neglecting the offices of her state of Malfi, she is actually a wonderful wife and mother, that she preserves a real strong priority of family value, if you like, and that her behaviour was therefore more commended than other duchesses, who might [not have] married, [might have] run their country well, but who had many affairs, secret affairs on the side with men. And it shows one possible escape route in her society, which is to simply have adulterous relationships. I think the character of Julia is meant to highlight the personal morality of the Duchess.

(I asked about the aim of having Antonio stand next to the Cardinal and Ferdinand as he described their nature.)

That was just a non-natural<sup>?</sup><sub>istic</sub> theatrical device, which, I thought, was effective to introduce the world of the court and the outsider. And I

wanted the characters to appear like moving exhibits in a museum or in a waxwork gallery and that.... Delio was a man completely new to all this, who is being taught the ways of the court, in order to create the sense of the incestuous world, and it was just a theatrical device, which I found more<sup>a</sup>esthetically satisfying than having Antonio and Delio up in a gallery, not moving and just looking at them.



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CompD	Comparative Drama
ELR	English Literary Renaissance
IJES	Indian Journal of English Studies
JWSL	Journal of Women's Studies in Literature
MLS	Modern Language Studies
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
RenD	Renaissance Drama
RenR	Renaissance and Reformation
RES	Review of English Studies
RORD	Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama
SAP	Studia Anglica Posnaniensia
SEL	Studies in English Literature 1500-1900
ShS	Shakespeare Survey
SP	Studies in Philology
TD	Themes in Drama
ThR	Theatre Research International
ThS	Theatre Survey
TLS	Times Literary Supplement
YES	Yearbook of English Studies

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1960-61 -- Directed by Donald McWhinnie at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, and the Aldwych Theatre, London.

1971 -- Directed by Clifford Williams at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

1989-90 -- Directed by Bill Alexander at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, and the Pit, London.

### Recorded Material

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### Production Photographs

The production photographs for all the RSC productions of The Duchess of Malfi were consulted at the Shakespeare Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon. Eight colour slides taken by Tom Holte, which cover several scenes of the performance of the Williams production, were consulted at the Shakespeare Centre and the Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon. The limited number of the production photographs, taken by Angus McBean for the McWhinnie production and by Tom Holte for the Williams production, were reproduced from the negatives owned by the Shakespeare Centre. Other

photographs, taken by Angus McBean for the McWhinnie production and by Nevis Cameron for the Williams production, were reproduced by means of a laser printer. The photographs of the colour slides were reproduced in the Photographic Department of the Library of the University of Birmingham. The photographs for the Alexander production, taken by Ivan Kyncl, were reproduced at Joe Cocks Studio, Stratford-upon-Avon.

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