

PART XVI

MAKING THE SCENE

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Among his other accomplishments, Shakespeare has been hailed as a master of great scenes: places where words, lines, characters, and plots come together in stunning ways. All the stranger, then, to discover that the word “scene” in Shakespeare’s time was just beginning to acquire the full range of meanings it holds for us. From *scena* as the physical stage, the word “scene” was extended in the sixteenth century to include a segment of a play marked at its beginning and end by an empty stage, the big effect of what was being acted at a given moment, fictional setting, the act of acting, and a theater-like episode outside the theater. By the eighteenth century, the definition had expanded further still to include “scene” as a synecdoche for theater itself; stage scenery; tableau; a picture of a place, incident, or assemblage of objects; a display of exaggerated feelings in real life (“making a scene”); the sphere of a particular activity or interest (“the jazz scene”); and a place where a certain set of people meet and carry on common pursuits (“the SoHo scene”). Shakespeare makes all of these scenes, as the chapters in this part illustrate.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER INCLUDE

- But what do we mean by “scene”?
- Scenes inside the theater
- Scenes outside the theater
- Marking scenes, *re*-marking scenes
- Shakespeare’s greatest hits
- Cuttings
- Shakespeare on the world scene

149. *ROMEO AND JULIET* 2.1:

“BUT SOFT, WHAT LIGHT THROUGH YONDER WINDOW BREAKS?”

Mariacristina Cavecchi, University of Milan, Italy

Act 2, scene 1, in *Romeo and Juliet* – “the balcony scene” – has had a strange yet highly suggestive history. Although no balcony is ever mentioned in Shakespeare’s script, Juliet’s balcony has appeared everywhere, in both high and low culture: theater, cinema, painting, advertising, and cartoons. In performance history, the tradition of a balcony goes back only to the middle of the eighteenth century. In the city of Verona, the balcony at 23 via Capello (the “Casa di Giulietta,” Juliet’s House) goes back only to 1940. It was added to the thirteenth-century house at that time to make the tourist scene complete. In all its variations, Juliet’s balcony is a threshold between the individual and the society, between love and war, between genders, perhaps even between the genres of comedy and tragedy, and definitely between high and low culture.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Balcony under construction
- Celluloid and digital balconies
- Liminal architecture
- Balconies amid the fray today
- The balcony in the via Capello
- “A balcony for all seasons”

150. *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* 3.2: "LORD, WHAT FOOLS THESE MORTALS BE!"

Patricia Fagundes, theater director, Brazil

Act 3, scene 2, of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a complex and action-intensive scene that presents the climax of confusion and conflict between the lovers, and between Oberon and Puck. In this chapter, the director of Cia Rústica, an independent theater company based in Porto Alegre, southern Brazil, discusses the creative process that transformed Shakespeare's script into a highly successful production in 2006 – a production that drew on Brazilian cultural traditions. Act 3, scene 2, was realized as a cabaret scene, with the lovers and Puck moving to tango rhythms.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Bringing the hidden to light
- *Midsummer* as cabaret
- The rehearsal process
- The scene in parts
- Lost in the forest
- The production's reception

151. *HENRY V* 3.1: "ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH"

Mariangela Tempera, University of Ferrara, Italy

Act 3, scene 1, of *Henry V* – the scene in which King Henry delivers the famous line "Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more" – offers a great opportunity to play to the crowd for applause. Every actor who plays this scene needs to be aware of both the onstage and offstage responses to his words. This chapter surveys how the scene has been played in films and stage productions ranging from Laurence Olivier's patriotic 1944 film to Richard Olivier's 2010 production at Shakespeare's Globe during England's competition in the World Cup.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Shifts in perspective from stage to screen
- How the scene plays across the English Channel
- Inspirational uses of 3.1
- Comic uses of 3.1
- Henry of Monmouth, MBA

152. *HAMLET* 3.1: "TO BE OR NOT TO BE"

Ann Thompson, Kings College, University of London, United Kingdom

Act 3, scene 1, of *Hamlet* – the "To be or not to be" scene – presents a number of difficult questions. Are things that are said in this scene consistent with things that are said elsewhere in the play? Who on stage actually hears what Hamlet says? Who is present onstage and who is seen by other characters to be present? Why does Hamlet treat Ophelia as he does in this scene? Does "To be or not to be" actually belong in this scene at all? Is it really a "soliloquy"? For an editor, there are also questions about how this scene appears in the three early texts of this play, the "bad" Quarto of 1603 (Q1) and the two "good" texts, the 1604–05 Quarto (Q2) and the 1623 First Folio (F).

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- What is odd about this scene in the "good" texts?
- What about this scene in Q1?
- Is "To be or not to be" in the wrong place?
- How do editors tackle this famous speech?
- Some examples of variant readings
- Hamlet's mystery

153. *MACBETH* 1.3: “KING HEREAFTER!”

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Johann Heinrich Fuseli’s painting *Macbeth and Banquo meeting the witches*, done for John Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery in the 1780s, is a testimony to the power of the play and to the artist’s fascination with it, but it also records a striking change of focus in Fuseli’s thinking about the play and indeed in the way the play was being imagined at the end of the eighteenth century. This chapter studies six pictorial versions by Fuseli of *Macbeth* 1.3 and 3.5 that date from 1766 to 1812. In these representations, Fuseli moves from stage action to domestic drama to Byronic tragedy.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- *Macbeth* as a domestic tragedy
- Heroic fantasy
- Resizing Shakespeare’s scene
- The rival witches

154. *OTHELLO* 1.3: “FAR MORE FAIR THAN BLACK”

Tom Cheesman, University of Swansea, United Kingdom

Translations are always haunted by a sense of inadequacy or injustice, but still they are well worth attending to, and not only as documents of the translating culture. Their mutations can capture interpretations we might otherwise overlook. Take the Duke’s paradoxical, punning, epigrammatic, parting couplet, spoken to Brabantio, in act 1, scene 3, of *Othello*: “Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.” This chapter considers a selection of English paraphrases and French and German translations of this difficult moment across the past 250 years. Every translation-mutation disobeys the law of the original so as to make a new event. Any one mutation must be unjust, but they all enact a cumulative interpretation so rich that incrementally it can approach justice after all.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Black praise/fair slander
- Colorless translations
- Duke/*Duce*/*Führer*
- Humanist and political antiracisms
- Next?

155. *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*: INTERVIEW WITH HARRIET WALTER

Paul Edmondson, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, United Kingdom

As part of the Royal Shakespeare Company’s (RSC’s) Complete Works season (2006–07), Dame Harriet Walter performed as Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra*. This chapter about how Walter performed the play’s final scene draws on a private interview with her conducted in 2010, supplemented by visual descriptions based on close consultation of the RSC’s archive video held at The Shakespeare Centre in Stratford-upon-Avon. The production, which featured Sir Patrick Stewart as Antony, was directed by Gregory Doran for the Swan Theatre, an intimate auditorium with an audience of about 440, ranged on three sides of an apron stage. The visual design of the production included abstract scenic backdrops to differentiate Rome and Alexandria. Lighting, sound, and a few suggestive items of furniture and properties conveyed a sense of space.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Walter’s approach
- Preparations for the voyage to the Nile
- Playing the final scene
- Three suicides

156. *KING LEAR* 5.3: “NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER, NEVER”

Kobayashi Kaori, Nagoya City University, Japan

Precisely because it is universal, the story of *King Lear* travels. As a story, it is told in ways that reflect the concerns of the teller and the audience. The concerns of *King Lear* may be universal, but productions in Japan, Singapore, Korea, and elsewhere in East Asia have realized those concerns in ways specific to those cultures. The play’s last scene offers a particularly suggestive reference point. This chapter surveys how *King Lear* 5.3 has been realized in three landmark productions from England (Eyre 1998, Nunn 2007, Grandage 2010) as compared with seven productions from Japan, Taiwan, and Korea, most of them available for viewing on A|S|I|A, the Asian Shakespeare Intercultural Archive.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- “Is this the promised end?”
- Two models for portraying Lear
- The fall of a “titanic king”
- Lear “is like all of us”
- *King Lear* as ritual
- *King Lear* as a women’s tale

157. *RICHARD III* 5.4: “MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE!”

Keith Gregor, University of Murcia, Spain

“A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!”: there is evidence to suggest Shakespeare’s line in *Richard III* 5.4 had already become the object of mockery barely a few years after the play was written and first performed. Richard’s famous words at Bosworth Field have for centuries been taken not, as might seem the case, as a desire to flee the battlefield at any cost but as a determination to continue the fray. Successfully resaddled, Richard can reengage with the enemy on equal terms; on foot, his physical disabilities are compounded by a loss of stature as king and captain of his army, as well as making him an easy target for Richmond’s cavalymen. This chapter surveys the famous line’s fortunes across four centuries.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Horsing around
- Cibber’s rewrite
- Richard today

158. *THE TEMPEST* 4.1

KRZYSTYNA KUJAWIŃSKA, UNIVERSITY OF ŁÓDŹ, POLAND

Krzysztof Warlikowski’s production of *The Tempest* at the Rozmaitości Theatre, Warsaw, in 2003 brought into the masque scene three middle-aged rural women dressed in original Polish folklore costumes and carrying traditional Polish wedding gifts of bread, salt, and two snifters filled with vodka. This overt intrusion of Polish reality into the masque scene was not just another example of “Shakespeare Our Contemporary” but an invitation to consider Polish national identity just a few years after the end of communism and one year before Poland joined the European Union. Warlikowski’s *Tempest* seemed to offer a national forum for evaluating the losses and the gains of an emerging democracy.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- “Enter three women”
- Shifts in authority
- The tempest of Polish politics
- Old sins in modern costumes
- The dangers of freedom
- Prospero as disappointed idealist
- The limits of reconciliation
- The universal and the particular