



HAL
open science

Performing Restoration Shakespeare

Amanda Eubanks Winkler, Claude Fretz, Richard Schoch

► **To cite this version:**

Amanda Eubanks Winkler, Claude Fretz, Richard Schoch. Performing Restoration Shakespeare. Cambridge University Press, 1, 2023, 9781009241212. <10.1017/9781009241212>. <hal-04124640>

HAL Id: hal-04124640

<https://hal.science/hal-04124640v1>

Submitted on 10 Jun 2023

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



HAL Authorization

PERFORMING RESTORATION
SHAKESPEARE

Performing Restoration Shakespeare embraces the performative and musical qualities of Restoration Shakespeare (1660–1714), drawing on the expertise of theatre historians, musicologists, literary critics, and – importantly – theatre and music practitioners. The volume advances methodological debates in theatre studies and musicology by advocating an alternative to performance practices aimed at reviving ‘original’ styles or conventions, adopting a dialectical process that situates past performances within their historical and aesthetic contexts, and then using that understanding to transform them into new performances for new audiences. By deploying these methodologies, the volume invites scholars from different disciplines to understand Restoration Shakespeare on its own terms, discarding inhibiting preconceptions that Restoration Shakespeare debased Shakespeare’s precursor texts. It also equips scholars and practitioners in theatre and music with new – and much needed – methods for studying and reviving past performances of any kind, not just Shakespearean ones.

AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER, Professor of Music History and Cultures at Syracuse University, is a cultural historian and musicologist specializing in British music and drama. She was the Co-Investigator for the AHRC research project ‘Performing Restoration Shakespeare’. Her most recent book is *Music, Dance, and Drama in Early Modern English Schools* (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

CLAUDE FRETZ is Associate Professor of Shakespeare and Early Modern English Literature at Sun Yat-sen University (China). He is also Fellow of the research centre ‘European Dream-Cultures’ at Saarland University (Germany). He is the author of *Dreams, Sleep, and Shakespeare’s Genres* (2020), and he has published various journal articles and book chapters on Shakespeare, early modern literature, representations of dreams and sleep in the Renaissance, modern theatre practice, and Restoration drama.

RICHARD SCHOCH is Professor of Drama at Queen’s University Belfast, where he was Principal Investigator for the research project ‘Performing Restoration Shakespeare’. His most recent books are *A Short History of Shakespeare in Performance* (2021) and *Writing the History of the British Stage* (2016), both published by Cambridge University Press.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-009-24120-5 — Performing Restoration Shakespeare

Edited by Amanda Eubanks Winkler , Claude Fretz , Richard Schoch

[More Information](#)

PERFORMING
RESTORATION
SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY

AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER

Syracuse University

CLAUDE FRETZ

Sun Yat-sen University

RICHARD SCHOCH

Queen's University Belfast



Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-24120-5 — Performing Restoration Shakespeare
Edited by Amanda Eubanks Winkler , Claude Fretz , Richard Schoch
[More Information](#)



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009241205

DOI: 10.1017/9781009241212

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2023

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions
of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take
place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

A Cataloging-in-Publication Data record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN 978-1-009-24120-5 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will
remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>List of Tables</i>	ix
<i>List of Music Examples</i>	x
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	xi
<i>Foreword</i>	xvii
<i>Joseph Roach</i>	
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xxi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xxiii
Introduction: New Shakespeare for a New Era	
<i>Amanda Eubanks Winkler, Claude Fretz, and Richard Schoch</i>	i
1 From Boards to Books: The Circulation of Shakespearean Songs in Manuscript and Print during the Interregnum	
<i>Sarah Ledwidge</i>	15
2 Heroic Shakespeare at Lincoln's Inn Fields	
<i>Stephen Watkins</i>	38
3 More than a Song and Dance? Identifying Matthew Locke's Incidental Music for <i>Macbeth</i>	
<i>Silas Wollston</i>	61
4 Cross-Dressing in Restoration Shakespeare: <i>Twelfth Night</i> and <i>The Tempest</i>	
<i>Fiona Ritchie</i>	79
5 Performing Restoration Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century	
<i>James Harriman-Smith</i>	97

vi	<i>Contents</i>	
6	An Actor's Perspective on Restoration Shakespeare <i>Louis Butelli</i>	118
7	Staging Restoration Shakespeare with Restoration Music <i>Robert Eisenstein</i>	132
8	Davenant's Lady Macduff and the Subversion of Normative Femininity in Twenty-First-Century Performance <i>Sara Reimers</i>	142
9	Facts as Ideas: The Theatricalisation of Scholarship <i>Kate Eastwood Norris</i>	163
10	Syncopated Time: Staging the Restoration <i>Tempest</i> <i>Amanda Eubanks Winkler and Richard Schoch</i>	180
	<i>Bibliography</i>	199
	<i>Index</i>	211

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-009-24120-5 — Performing Restoration Shakespeare

Edited by Amanda Eubanks Winkler , Claude Fretz , Richard Schoch

[More Information](#)

xxiv

List of Abbreviations

GB-Och	Oxford, Christ Church Library
US-NH	New Haven (CT), Yale University, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library
US-NHHub	New Haven (CT), Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
US-NYp	New York Public Library
US-Ws	Washington, DC, Folger Shakespeare Library

Introduction: New Shakespeare for a New Era

Amanda Eubanks Winkler, Claude Fretz, and Richard Schoch

When the English Civil War began in 1642, London playhouses were closed down. A temporary parliamentary edict issued on 2 September 1642 proclaimed that ‘Publike Stage-playes’ were unbecoming in ‘the Seasons of Humiliation ... too commonly expressing lascivious Mirth’.¹ By 1647, the ban on theatrical performance had become permanent. Yet this interdiction did not result in total suppression of dramatic activity during the Interregnum. Private performances, whether in houses or schools, continued to take place. More publicly, William Beeston tried but failed to re-establish Beeston’s Boys (a popular troupe consisting mainly of boy actors that performed from 1637 to 1642) at the Cockpit, but he succeeded in being granted title to what remained of the Salisbury Court Theatre in 1652. Meanwhile, playwrights such as Sir William Davenant circumvented the ban on stage plays by producing dramatic spectacles generically designated as ‘operas’ because they consisted of singing, declamation, and changeable scenery.² Indeed, Davenant gained approval from Oliver Cromwell’s government in the 1650s to produce ‘Heroick Representations’ – the most famous of which was *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656) – initially at his own residence Rutland House and later in the Cockpit theatre in Drury Lane.³ Yet the formal ban on dramatic entertainment did mean that London’s public theatres could not officially reopen until 1660, when Charles II returned from his European exile and the monarchy was restored.

¹ Cited in Leslie Hotson, *The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962), 36.

² Scenic effect was a crucial feature of early English opera, as Davenant advertised on the title pages of *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656), *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658), and *The History of Sir Frances Drake* (1659). See Andrew Walkling’s *Masque and Opera in England, 1656–1668* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017).

³ William Davenant uses the term ‘Heroick Representations’ in *A Proposition for the Advancement of Morality by a New Way of Entertainment of the People* (London, 1654 [13]), 2.

2 AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER, CLAUDE FRETZ, RICHARD SCHOCH

Shortly after assuming the throne, Charles II granted exclusive theatrical patents to his courtiers Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Davenant, establishing the theatrical duopoly controlled by the King's Company (led by Killigrew) and the Duke's Company (led by Davenant). The rival companies continued until 1682, when they were merged and became known as the United Company. Because theatres had been suppressed for eighteen years, few new plays were available to perform when commercial theatrical activity resumed in 1660. Necessity alone compelled the new patentees to stage the old stock drama from before the Civil War: principally, the works of Ben Jonson, William Shakespeare, and Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher.

Comprised largely of veteran actors from before the closure of the theatres, the King's Company regarded itself as the authentic successor to the pre-1642 King's Men, the company in which Shakespeare had been sharer, playwright, and actor. On the basis of their claim for continuity in the theatrical profession, Killigrew's company secured (or possessed by default) the rights to most of the plays earlier performed by the King's Men, including twenty-two of Shakespeare's plays deemed to be the most popular. The Duke's Company, however, was made up of younger actors, including Thomas Betterton, destined to become the most important tragedian of his time. After petitioning Charles II for the right to reform or rework earlier plays, Davenant was granted rights to perform eleven plays, including nine by Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, *Henry VIII*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Measure for Measure*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Tempest*, and *Twelfth Night*.⁴

Initially, the two companies staged Shakespeare's plays mostly unaltered. *Othello*, *Henry IV*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Hamlet* were successful, but problems with other plays – especially the comedies – soon became apparent. Samuel Pepys, whose famous diary offers more eyewitness accounts of Restoration Shakespeare than any other source, noted on 1 March 1662 that *Romeo and Juliet* was 'the play of itself the worst that ever I heard in my life'.⁵ He was even more critical of an unrevised *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which he saw on 29 September 1662: 'I sent for some dinner ... and then to the King's Theatre, where we saw *Midsummer's*

⁴ For a discussion of how pre-1642 plays were divided between the King's Company and the Duke's Company, see Amanda Eubanks Winkler and Richard Schoch, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Sir William Davenant and the Duke's Company* (London: Arden Bloomsbury, 2021), 33–9.

⁵ Robert Latham and William Matthews, eds., *The Diary of Samuel Pepys: A New and Complete Transcription*, 11 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), vol. III, 39.



Figure 0.1 Sir William Davenant (1606–1668) by William Faithorne, after John Greenhill, published 1672

Night's Dream, which I had never seen before, nor shall ever again, for it is the most insipid ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life.⁶

It did not take long for Davenant, whose portrait is shown in Figure 0.1, to realise that he could make a name for himself and his company by staging revised versions of Shakespeare. Under his bold and imaginative leadership, the Duke's Company gained a reputation for staging Shakespeare's plays with pioneering theatrical innovations. Davenant's adaptations arose partly from necessity, because the plays given to the Duke's Company were comparatively few in number and written in a manner deemed unsuited for the tastes of Restoration audiences. Davenant's first adaptation, performed in 1662, was *The Law against Lovers*, based on *Measure for Measure* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

⁶ Latham and Matthews, eds., *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. III, 208.

4 AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER, CLAUDE FRETZ, RICHARD SCHOCH

When Pepys saw *The Law against Lovers* on 18 February 1662, he commented: 'I went to the Opera [i.e., Davenant's theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields], and saw *The Law against Lovers*, a good play and well performed, especially the Little Girle's (whom I never saw act before) dancing and singing.'⁷ One of the 'Little Girle's' whose performance Pepys so admired was Mary ('Moll') Davis, a member of the Duke's Company throughout the 1660s and known particularly for her skill as a singer and dancer. Mary Davis was not the first woman that Pepys saw on the stage, because actresses were part of Restoration theatre right from the start. Indeed, the appearance of professional actresses in England is one of the defining features of the Restoration stage. For the first time, Lady Macbeth, Juliet, Ophelia, Beatrice, and Isabella were played not by boys, but by women. Nor would there be any return to past theatrical conventions, because in 1662 Charles II had issued a royal patent banning boy actors from being cast in female roles. And so, the Restoration theatre produced the first generation of professional English actresses. In addition to Mary Davis, that inaugural generation also included Nell Gwynn (who became mistress to Charles II) and Mary Saunderson (who married Thomas Betterton). The novelty of women appearing on the London stage, along with its unembarrassed potential for erotic allure, helps to explain in part how Shakespeare was adapted in the Restoration. In revising *Macbeth*, for example, Davenant substantially expanded the role of Lady Macduff, partly to create a virtuous counterpoint to the villainous Lady Macbeth and partly to provide good roles for the women in the Duke's Company. Davenant's and Dryden's adaptation of *The Tempest* created more roles for actresses – Sycorax, Caliban's sister; Dorinda, Miranda's sister; and Milcha, Ariel's companion – while the new character Hippolito was performed as a 'breeches role', a male character played by an actress and usually in costume that explicitly displayed her figure.

As implied by Davenant's expansion and invention of dramatic characters, Restoration versions of Shakespeare often entailed strong rewritings of the original text, frequently with a new emphasis on the mixed genre of tragicomedy and musical and scenic divertissements. Some adaptations explicitly responded to the new political reality – a once deposed but now restored monarchy – by affirming royal power and denouncing regicide and rebellion in ways that sometimes effaced the moral ambiguities of Shakespeare's precursor texts. Thus, most of Shakespeare's history plays and Roman tragedies were converted into political commentaries. Given

⁷ Latham and Matthews, eds., *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. III, 32.

the close personal and legal connections between the stage and the crown, we cannot be surprised that the English Restoration theatre effectively operated as an extension of the court.

Other alterations to Shakespeare's texts were dictated by changing literary and poetic style. Restoration dramatists and their audiences valued direct, unadorned language much more than figurative speech. Davenant's *Macbeth* refers literally to the 'last minute of recorded time' rather than metaphorically to the 'last syllable'. Symmetry in dramatic structure was prized more highly than the messy subplots found in many Shakespeare plays. Thus, Davenant and Dryden created the role of Hippolito (a man who had never seen a woman) in their version of *The Tempest* as a counterpart to Miranda (a woman who had never seen a man). Meanwhile, Nahum Tate endorsed the royalist ethos of the Restoration stage by ensuring that both a chastened Lear and his virtuous daughter Cordelia survive in his 'happy ending' version of *King Lear*.

In terms of the two most fundamental aspects of Shakespeare in performance – the acting and the text – the Restoration theatre did not perform Shakespeare's plays the same way that Shakespeare's own company had performed them only decades earlier. Restoration theatre artists did not view Shakespeare's works as immutable dramatic masterpieces but believed that they needed to be reshaped and refined before they could be properly presented on the stage. Dryden's prologue to his version of *The Tempest* lauds Shakespeare as the venerable 'Root' out of which the Restoration stage has freshly emerged: 'As when a Tree's cut down, the secret Root / Lives under ground, and thence new branches shoot; / So, from old Shakespeare's honour'd dust, this day / Springs up and buds a new reviving Play.'⁸

Changing theatrical tastes also meant changes in theatrical production. Because plays were now performed exclusively indoors (initially, in converted tennis courts) and because Charles II and his courtiers had grown accustomed during their exile on the continent to seeing elaborate movable scenery used in theatrical productions, the Restoration theatre was poised to make its mark through spectacle and scenic effects. Benefiting from Davenant's work with Inigo Jones and his assistant John Webb on the final Stuart court masques performed at the Banqueting House, the Duke's Company in the 1660s and 1670s exploited the theatre's full

⁸ Thomas Shadwell, William Davenant, and John Dryden, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island: A Comedy* (1674), in *Five Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, ed. Christopher Spencer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1965), 'Prologue', lines 1–4.

6 AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER, CLAUDE FRETZ, RICHARD SCHOCH



Figure 0.2 William Dolle, engraving of scenes at Dorset Garden Theatre, in Elkanah Settle's *The Empress of Morocco* (1673)

potential for spectacular *mise en scène*, including movable painted scenery (see Figure 0.2). After the company's move to the larger Dorset Garden Theatre in 1671, elaborate new machines enabled both people and objects to fly across the stage. The integration of music and dance with scenic and machine-based spectacle, practised previously only in court masques, was brought to the Restoration public stage with renewed vigour.

Although the King's Company eventually copied the elaborate staging introduced by their rivals, the Duke's Company always remained more innovative. The eyewitness testimony of the spectator Samuel Pepys and the prompter John Downes offers a case in point. On 7 January 1667 Pepys saw a performance of Davenant's adaptation of *Macbeth*, which expanded the roles of Macduff and Lady Macduff, introduced the new role of Duncan's ghost, and ramped up the entertainment value with additional singing and dancing. Pepys praised Davenant's version of Shakespeare's tragedy as 'a most excellent play in all respects, but especially in divertisement, though it be a deep tragedy; which is a strange perfection in a tragedy, it being

Introduction: New Shakespeare for a New Era

7

most proper here and suitable'.⁹ According to Pepys, the play's diversissements – such as the witches' comical and operatic performances – did not diminish the tragedy, but rather complemented it. Indeed, the spectacle was itself the 'perfection' of the tragedy, the culmination of its theatrical potential. John Downes, the long-serving prompter for the Duke's Company, extolled the combination of visual spectacle with singing and dancing in his description of the lucrative revival of Davenant's *Macbeth* (1673) at the new Dorset Garden Theatre:

[B]eing drest in all it's Finery, as new Cloath's, new Scenes, Machines, as flyings for the Witches; and with all the Singing and Dancing in it ... it being all Excellently perform'd, being in the nature of an Opera, it Recompenc'd double the Expence; it proves still a lasting play.¹⁰

Downes also served as prompter for Thomas Shadwell's 1674 operatic version of Davenant and Dryden's *The Tempest*, the most lavish and commercially successful production of Restoration Shakespeare. The opening stage direction, which seeks to represent the storm conjured up by Prospero, sets a high bar for multimedia performance spectacle: to the sound of a sizeable orchestral ensemble, 'Several Spirits in horrid shapes fl[y] down amongst the Sailors, then rising and crossing in the Air.'¹¹ As with *Macbeth*, stage spectacle and box office income went hand in hand for this much revived and 'all New' version of *The Tempest*: 'having all New in it; as Scenes, Machines ... all things perform'd in it so Admirably well, that not any succeeding Opera got more Money'.¹² As musicologist Michael Burden rightly concludes, 'scenes and machines were an intrinsic part of the nascent genre of dramattick opera', a genre that includes some of the most vibrant, successful, and long-lived Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare.¹³

Understanding Restoration Shakespeare

F. J. Furnivall's 1892 variorum edition of *The Tempest* included in its appendix the full text of Shadwell's 1674 revision of the Dryden–Davenant adaptation of Shakespeare's play. As might be expected of the man who founded The New Shakspeare Society, Furnivall included the famous

⁹ Latham and Matthews, eds., *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. VIII, 7.

¹⁰ John Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus, or an Historical Review of the Stage* (London: Printed and sold by H. Playford, 1708), 33.

¹¹ Shadwell, Davenant, and Dryden, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, 117.

¹² Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, 34.

¹³ Michael Burden, 'Shakespeare and Opera', in *Eighteenth-Century Shakespeare*, ed. Peter Sabor and Fiona Ritchie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 204–24 (209).

8 AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER, CLAUDE FRETZ, RICHARD SCHOCH

Restoration version of *The Tempest* in his scholarly edition so that it might be despised all the more easily: ‘unless we read it, no imagination, derived from a mere description, can adequately depict its monstrosity’.¹⁴ In so doing, he set the precedent for a century’s worth of literary scholarship that has felt free to dismiss Restoration Shakespeare as parasitic deformations of the superior original plays.

Furnivall’s condemnation also set narrow terms for future critical enquiry, defining Restoration Shakespeare as a purely literary object, more or less ignoring its life on the stage. As evident in G. C. D. Odell’s *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving* (1920) and Montagu Summers’s *Shakespeare Adaptations* (1922), the result of this constrained perception was that scholars focused overwhelmingly on textual adaptation, explaining how Restoration versions deviated from their Shakespearean originals (e.g., in plot, structure, character, and imagery) and how those deviations could often be read as veiled pro-royalist commentary. Literary bias still operates in recent – and valuable – scholarship, including Sandra Clark’s 1997 edition of Restoration Shakespeare and Barbara Murray’s meticulous play-by-play analysis in *Restoration Shakespeare: Viewing the Voice* (2001).¹⁵ While there have been important studies of the general performance aspects of Restoration drama, especially Peter Holland’s *The Ornament of Action* (1979), Jocelyn Powell’s *Restoration Theatre Production* (1984), and Timothy Keenan’s *Restoration Staging, 1660–74* (2017), the core performance aspects of Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare have been systematically overlooked ever since scholars such as Judith Milhous documented their synthesis of script, song, and music.¹⁶

Accordingly, a principal historiographical aim of this volume is to rebalance scholarship by interrogating how Restoration Shakespeare operated as a complex theatrical experience and not merely as a dramatic text, let alone a dramatic text presumed inferior to its precursor. Overturning the longstanding literary emphasis in scholarship, this volume constitutes the

¹⁴ F. J. Furnivall, ed., *A New Variorum of Shakespeare*, vol. 9 (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1892), viii.

¹⁵ Sandra Clark, ed., *Shakespeare Made Fit: Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare* (London: Everyman, 1997); Barbara A. Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare: Viewing the Voice* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001).

¹⁶ Peter Holland, *The Ornament of Action: Text and Performance in Restoration Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Jocelyn Powell, *Restoration Theatre Production* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984); Timothy Keenan, *Restoration Staging, 1660–74* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017); Judith Milhous, ‘The Multimedia Spectacular on the Restoration Stage’, in *British Theatre and Other Arts, 1660–1800*, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Washington, DC: Folger Books, 1984), 41–66.

first edited collection that investigates Restoration Shakespeare from multiple material, critical, and performative perspectives. As such, it promises to increase our understanding of Restoration Shakespeare by investigating how the plays were – and continue to be – the basis for performances that integrate acting, singing, music, and dance within an overall dramatic narrative. The present volume does not seek to replicate previous studies of Restoration Shakespeare from the perspectives of textual revision, political context, or original staging conditions (including scenery).¹⁷ Instead, all the contributors to this volume share a commitment to studying Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare not as relics of a theatrical past but as vehicles for performance that can transcend their printed texts and their original political and material staging conditions.

Performance as Research

The inspiration for this volume arises from the international research project ‘Performing Restoration Shakespeare’ – generously funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council in the United Kingdom between 2017 and 2020 – for which the editors of this volume were Principal Investigator (Schoch), Co-Investigator (Eubanks Winkler), and Research Fellow (Fretz). In partnership with the Folger Shakespeare Library and in collaboration with Shakespeare’s Globe, the project brought together scholars and practitioners in theatre and music to investigate how and why Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare’s plays succeeded in performance in their own time and how and why they can succeed in performance today.

This volume’s contributors are drawn from the research teams assembled for the project’s various scholarly and performance events, with each contributor having participated in at least one of the project’s core activities. The project’s first event was an open workshop on Shadwell’s operatic version of *The Tempest* (1674) held in the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at Shakespeare’s Globe (London, July 2017).¹⁸ Throughout the week-long workshop, a research community of academics and artists reflected on and performed three scenes from the play that richly blend drama and music: the frightening ‘Masque of Devils’ (2.4), the charming duet ‘Go thy way’ between Ferdinand and Ariel (3.4), and the stately ‘Masque of Neptune’ (5.2). We learned a great deal in that inaugural workshop, not just about

¹⁷ For an overview of scenic practice in Restoration playhouses, see Holland, *Ornament of Action*, 19–54.

¹⁸ An archival recording of the event is available for study purposes at Shakespeare’s Globe.

10 AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER, CLAUDE FRETZ, RICHARD SCHOCH

the performance aspects of Restoration Shakespeare but also, and equally importantly, about how to find a common language for scholars and artists in the rehearsal room.¹⁹

Profiting from that initial experience, we then undertook a more ambitious task by partnering with the Folger Shakespeare Library, Folger Theatre, and the early modern music ensemble Folger Consort to mount a full professional production of Davenant's *Macbeth* (c. 1664), with participating scholars actively contributing to the creative process throughout rehearsals. Directed by Robert Richmond, the production of Restoration *Macbeth* ran at the Folger Theatre in Washington, DC, from 6 to 23 September 2018.²⁰ Adopting a play-within-a-play concept, the production was set in St Mary Bethlehem Hospital ('Bedlam') in London, two weeks after the Great Fire of London in September 1666. Recalling Peter Weiss's *Marat/Sade*, the Bedlam inmates perform Davenant's *Macbeth* and use the performance to murder the hospital's warden (cast as Duncan in the play) and then to take over the institution where they had been held as virtual prisoners. Yet this framing device did not prevent the production from actively embracing the distinctive aspects of Davenant's *Macbeth*, most especially the musical set pieces sung by the three witches, for which we used Amanda Eubanks Winkler's edition of John Eccles's late seventeenth-century score.²¹ Reflecting the appeal that Restoration Shakespeare can have for audiences today, the entire run was sold out before the first preview performance.²²

Our project's final public event took us back to the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, where we held a Restoration Shakespeare showcase in July 2019 for a mixed audience of the general public, theatre and music professionals, and scholars in Shakespeare studies, theatre history, and musicology. The showcase included reprised performances of the duet 'Go thy way' from the Dryden-Davenant version of *The Tempest* and two scenes from

¹⁹ See Claude Fretz, "marvellous and surprizing conduct": The "Masque of Devils" and Dramatic Genre in Thomas Shadwell's *The Tempest*, *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700*, 43.2 (Fall 2019): 3–28.

²⁰ A full video recording of the production is available for study purposes at the Folger Shakespeare Library.

²¹ Amanda Eubanks Winkler, ed., *Music for Macbeth* (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2004).

²² For discussions of the revival of Davenant's *Macbeth* at the Folger Theatre in 2018, and for its implications for modern theatre practice, see Claude Fretz, 'Performing Restoration Shakespeare "Then" and "Now": A Case Study of Davenant's *Macbeth*', *Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies*, 48.1 (March 2022): 27–56; Sara Reimers and Richard Schoch, 'Performing Restoration Shakespeare Today: Staging Davenant's *Macbeth*', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 37.4 (Winter 2019): 467–89; and Deborah C. Payne, "'Damn you, Davenant!': The Perils and Possibilities of Restoration Shakespeare', *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Theatre Research*, 32.1 (Summer 2017): 21–40.

Introduction: New Shakespeare for a New Era

II

Davenant's *Macbeth*, with Kate Eastwood Norris recreating her performance as Lady Macbeth from the 2018 Folger Theatre production. The afternoon concluded with a roundtable discussion on the challenges and rewards of performing Restoration Shakespeare today with Will Tosh from Shakespeare's Globe and Robert Richmond and Robert Eisenstein, who were, respectively, stage director and music director for our production of Restoration *Macbeth*. Norris and Eisenstein are both contributors to this volume.

'Performing Restoration Shakespeare' is hardly the first research project that brings together academics and artists to study historical performance. In recent decades, scholars in Shakespeare studies and musicology have repeatedly collaborated with artists to recreate as best they can original performance styles or playing conditions. Within Shakespeare studies, such approaches – sometimes referred to as 'Original Practices' – are prominent in practice-based research and published scholarship that creates and reflects upon productions at Shakespeare's Globe (including the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse) and the reconstructed Blackfriars Playhouse at the American Shakespeare Center. Many valuable insights have been gained from those pioneering efforts. Yet the historical authenticity paradigm underpinning such research has itself been challenged on historicist grounds: contemporary performance practice cannot forsake its own here-and-now reality to retrieve past experiences; the impulse to recover 'original' styles arises from modernist values about purity of artistic form; and original early modern performances were created through improvisations that by definition cannot be precisely recovered or even fully known.²³ Others argue that the claim of 'restorative' artistic practice to approximate composer or authorial intention is itself anti-theatrical, precisely because it denies performance its own hermeneutic agency, reducing it to a messenger on its creator's behalf.²⁴

Mindful of these critiques, 'Performing Restoration Shakespeare' explicitly did not adopt the paradigm of 'Original Practices', nor did it make any claims whatsoever to historical authenticity. The very nature of Restoration

²³ See, inter alia, Peter Kivy, *Authenticities: Philosophical Reflections on Musical Performance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); Alan Dessen, "'Original Practices' at the Globe", in *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, ed. Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 45–54; Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); and Bruce Haynes, *The End of Early Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

²⁴ Cary Mazer, 'Historicizing Spontaneity', in *Shakespeare's Sense of Character*, ed. Yu Jin Ko and Michael Shurgot (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 85–98.

12 AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER, CLAUDE FRETZ, RICHARD SCHOCH

Shakespeare reminds us that the vitality of theatre lies in innovation, not replication. Instead of reinstating what it presumed to be an authentic or authoritative version of Shakespeare's plays, the English Restoration theatre – the first generation to do Shakespeare 'after' Shakespeare – changed absolutely everything: the script, the performers, the music, the *mise en scène*, the location and layout of the theatres, and the composition of the audience. And so our project, in its public performances of scenes from *The Tempest* and in its full production of *Macbeth*, has sought to turn the insights of performance studies back onto performance itself, enacting the principle that historical performance genres are intelligible only in a dialectical sense: that is, historical sources and scholarly expertise are not abandoned but *transformed* into new events for new audiences, with the past and present existing in creative tension.

This volume reflects two of the core principles of our research project on Restoration Shakespeare: first, that published scholarship and researched theatre and music practice are complementary activities, each enriching the other; and second, that Restoration Shakespeare is best understood as a performance event that embraces and integrates drama, music, dance, and scenic spectacle, rather than simply as a dramatic text. Accordingly, the contributions to this volume take a multidisciplinary and a multi-modal approach, with contributions from theatre historians, musicologists and literary critics, as well as leading theatre and music practitioners. Far from reducing Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare to simply being topical versions of the original plays, the ten chapters in this volume attempt to do full justice to this distinctive but under-studied historical performance genre.

Collection Overview

Reflecting its interdisciplinary approach to studying Restoration Shakespeare, this volume is organised by methodology and materiality rather than by chronology, dramatic genre, or elements of performance practice. The first three chapters investigate some of the archival sources, intellectual contexts, and processes of revision that together reveal the distinctiveness of Restoration Shakespeare. Examining the transmission of Shakespeare's songs into the Restoration period, Sarah Ledwidge argues that the popularity of music in Restoration Shakespeare can be partly explained by the hitherto unacknowledged circulation of Shakespeare's songs in print and manuscript during the Interregnum. Situating Davenant's adaptation of *Macbeth* within the broader context of his playmaking career, Stephen Watkins highlights the connections and discrepancies between *Macbeth*

and the heroic operas and plays that Davenant himself wrote and produced in the 1650s and 1660s. In so doing, Watkins demonstrates how the dramaturgical alterations made to *Macbeth* conform to Davenant's particular authorial style. Finally, Silas Wollston examines 'The Rare Theatrical' compositions of Matthew Locke, showing that many of them date from the same time as the *Macbeth* productions mounted by the Duke's Company in 1664 and 1667. Wollston further contends that these compositions enable us to reconstruct Locke's instrumental music for *Macbeth*, which encompassed the first and second music performed before the play commenced, a curtain tune, and act tunes.

Chapters 4 to 7 outline the enduring theatrical life of Restoration Shakespeare, beginning in the 1660s but extending (for some plays) into the nineteenth century. They also consider some of the performances created in recent years by the research project 'Performing Restoration Shakespeare' in partnership with the Folger Shakespeare Library. Fiona Ritchie explores how the Restoration convention of the 'breeches role' – a male character played by a female actor dressed in male attire – was influenced by the first appearances of professional women actors on the English stage in the early 1660s. Investigating the appeal of Restoration Shakespeare for later generations of actor-managers, James Harriman-Smith discusses how David Garrick used Nahum Tate's *King Lear* – more than half a century after it was written – as an intermediary between himself and Shakespeare's original play. Harriman-Smith's chapter is followed by structured interviews with two performing artists, both of whom were involved in the 2018 Folger Theatre production of Davenant's *Macbeth*. Louis Butelli, who played Duncan, reflects on the complexity of finding the right acting style for a contemporary performance of Restoration Shakespeare, the challenges posed to an actor by Davenant's language, and the benefits of having scholars and artists working side by side. Robert Eisenstein draws on his experience as musical director for the Folger Consort to articulate the creative tension between musicians who are committed to historically informed practice and stage directors who are less motivated by historicist concerns. Reflecting on the challenges of staging historical performance genres today, he proposes a range of solutions to satisfy musicians, actors, directors, and audiences alike.

Following on from Eisenstein's account of contemporary music and theatre performances, Chapters 8–10 reflect on how the scholar-artist collaborations in the research project 'Performing Restoration Shakespeare' can articulate a new model for the practice-based study of historical performance. In so doing, these concluding chapters seek to advance

14 AMANDA EUBANKS WINKLER, CLAUDE FRETZ, RICHARD SCHOCH

methodological debates in theatre studies and musicology by advocating an alternative to performance practices aimed at reviving 'original' styles or conventions. Collectively, they articulate a dialectical process that understands historical performances on their own artistic and contextual terms, but then uses that understanding to reanimate them for audiences today. Drawing on her observation of rehearsals for *Macbeth* at the Folger in 2018 and also on her later experience of devising scholar-artist workshops with actors from Lazarus Theatre in London, Sara Reimers explores the underappreciated radical potential of Davenant's Lady Macduff. Kate Eastwood Norris, who played Lady Macbeth in the Folger production, explains the logistical and creative parameters of her undertaking, details how she collaborated with the production's scholarly team, and argues that the essential creativity of both scholarship and performance can help academics and artists to forge a productive alliance. In the final chapter, Amanda Eubanks Winkler and Richard Schoch offer a first-hand account of how scenes from the Shadwell-Dryden-Davenant adaptation of *The Tempest* were developed through scholar-artist collaboration and performed in the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse in 2017. This practice-based experiment reveals how the present necessarily reconfigures the past, such that the performance of any historical work is inevitably shaped by present-day actualities, whether the bodies of the actors, the performance space itself, or the expectations of both artists and audiences.

As revealed by the content and focus of its various chapters, this volume has two main goals, one about scholarly substance and one about scholarly method. With respect to the substance of scholarship, we hope that this volume, the first devoted to Restoration Shakespeare in performance, will encourage scholars from multiple disciplines to discard any notion they might have that Restoration Shakespeare is at best an inferior form of dramatic poetry or at worst a deformation of Shakespeare's theatrical genius. With respect to the methods of scholarship, we hope that our collective experience of working in a fully sustained way with actors and musicians on Restoration versions of *The Tempest* and *Macbeth* will encourage other scholars and other performing artists to take up this neglected but theatrically compelling repertoire to create yet further performances nourished by a dialogue between the archive and the rehearsal room, enriched by the union of scholarly creativity and artistic imagination.