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Shakespeare's Globe

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# Research Bulletin

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## **Actor Interviews 2000**

Red and White Companies

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(Globe Research)

## Actor Interviews 2000 Red and White Companies

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## **The Season 2000 Actor Interviews**

### **General Preface**

Last season I interviewed members of the Red and White companies about their experiences playing and working in the unique space that is Shakespeare's Globe. I took a key phrase from Mark Rylance's welcoming address to both companies – 'the pursuit of eloquence' – as a starting point. What, I asked them, does this mean to you, and how does it manifest itself in practice playing on the Globe stage?

This season I asked members of the 2000 Red and White companies to focus on the technical requirements of playing and working in the space. I asked them to describe the practical and technical nature of the actor-audience relationship, and to note and reflect on the skills they had used to help the art of storytelling in Shakespeare's Globe. I chose this as a starting point for all of the interviews, though each of course reflected an individual and specific viewpoint. As a result I was party to many rich discussions that touched upon issues from music composition to wig construction and everything in between.

The interviews were conducted in August and September 2000. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who gave their time and expertise to the production of this bulletin so that we may continue to learn more about this extraordinary space.

Jacquelyn Bessell  
Head of Research  
Shakespeare's Globe

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## **Interview with Geraldine Alexander**

***Ariel, The Tempest / Emilia, The Two Noble Kinsmen***

### **The actor/audience relationship**

I think you need to be very clear about the story of the play. When you talk to the audience, be as precise in your relationship with them as you are with your objectives in the scene. I think the audience is a treat that you are given and you shouldn't stuff your face with them. I think the biggest thing you learn from the Globe – you notice this when you take other jobs elsewhere - is that there's no such a thing as a generic "crowd". The audience is made up of individuals, which is what you see when you look out. Consequently, when I go into another space to work, I pretend I can see faces. I believe the idea of a fourth wall sometimes serves as a kind of protection for the actor, from the audience. Once you see the audience as individuals you don't need to protect yourself; you need to share your story with them. I think that's what I've learned from working here.

That direct relationship with the audience is something that (technically) I don't find easy. I stepped out of the storytelling during one performance at the very beginning of the show, when Ariel enters with the small boat. I tried looking at the audience that night, but straight away I realised I'd blown it. I'd blown it because I'd seen individuals in the audience at an inappropriate moment. I discovered *that's not the story*. The story (for that moment) is: Ariel's seeing the sea and the world of the island out there. Instead I had established a relationship between an actress and an audience, instead of letting them into the magic of the story. It was a huge lesson.

There's a strange little bit right in the middle of *The Tempest* where Ariel is talking to Gonzalo: 'My master through his art foresees the danger /That you, his friend, are in...' (II,i). As she continues, the line suddenly goes into the third person, and this I have played out to the audience: 'For else his project dies - to keep them living'. But now, having finished the play, I think it would have been better if I had addressed it all to Gonzalo. As it is, playing out to the audience draws their attention to me as an actress, not as Ariel.

## Vocal demands

Right at the beginning of the season Mark (Rylance) talked about the impact of the changing weather conditions on the voice in this space. I think he's absolutely right. I didn't realise that when you get cold your voice will become dry as well. Some days your voice resonates well, and sometimes it doesn't. I think you shouldn't try to compensate by working harder, but that's an inevitable temptation.

## Verse Speaking

I think we would all find it much harder to speak a contemporary play in this space. I think we'd all rail. Shakespeare's verse is probably more easily understood than contemporary speech in this space, at least that's what I suspect.

## Physical features of the stage

I like the way *The Antipodes* uses the pillars, with benches around the bases. As Ariel I *always* want to jump up onto the ledge, but it's too thin. Yes, the pillars can be difficult to negotiate, and you have to avoid getting stuck in between them. You can make use of them, though; in *The Tempest* we imagined them as trees on the island.

In general, the roof was very good for *The Tempest*, and I felt that everywhere I looked I was being helped in some way by the space. In *The Two Noble Kinsmen* I feel that the stage represents Athens, a foreign landscape for Emilia, so I kick the pillars or lean against them. They are simply pieces of Athenian architecture and so are foreign to me. Perhaps Emilia thinks they are phallic pillars, something to do with penises and all this macho crap! In *The Tempest*, as a feature of the island - of *my* island - I rather like them.

## Focus

I think the actors have to help each other direct and sustain focus. Very early on in rehearsals for *The Tempest* we did an exercise on the stage with one person speaking while other people moved around; those of us watching this found we didn't know where to look. It seems like we forgot the lesson of this exercise during the season.

Ariel spends a lot of time on stage watching and listening. At one point in the play I'm perched on a crystal for a very, very long time, and a lot of new information is being imparted, about the plots to kill Prospero. I know that if I start fidgeting about the audience is going to stop listening to the actor whose line carry a huge weight of plot at that moment.

You have to be precise. You must keep reminding yourself of the *story*. I think that is probably true of any play, but actors don't always remember to think of their own character journeys as part of the larger story. You learn so much about this when you watch other shows on the stage – I would advise anyone working there to see as much as they can.

**Interview with Steven Alvey**  
**Trinculo, *The Tempest***

**The actor/audience relationship**

I was here for *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* in the 1996 Prologue Season and at that time nobody knew what the audience was going to be like. On that first night everyone had, I think, an extraordinary, emotional response to playing the space. It was an extraordinary night, not least because it was the first performance by an in-house company at The Globe since 1620 or something like that! Nobody knew whether the audience would be polite, whether they were going to behave as though it were an ordinary theatre or whether they were going to throw oranges. I think from the time the first actors entered there was a sort of hushed awe, because they knew that something special was happening; within minutes it became quite a raucous experience as the audience began to react as the Globe audiences do now.

So there was a sort of 'magic in the air' as people say, and then of course an actor fell from the balcony onto the stage and broke his leg, and the whole atmosphere became very bizarre - 'is there a doctor in the house?' - that kind of thing.

The first lesson I learned about acting at the Globe came when Proteus (played by Mark Rylance) makes a speech where he's debating whether to stay faithful to his friend, or try and nick his girlfriend. The speech seemed so clearly written for audience reaction: audiences would react in a shocked way, and Proteus' next lines seemed to respond to their response perfectly. That was something you don't get in an ordinary theatre because people sit there quietly in the dark and listen in a passive way.

**Differences between the experience of early Globe performances and this season's**

What one did notice in some of the earlier shows sometimes - I've seen it here in *Henry V* for instance - was a sort of amorphous audience who go "boo" when the "baddies" came on. That rather blanket response seems to have stopped, and I think that generally audiences seem to have grown up a bit with the Globe, and they tend to react, 'when they should' (an awful thing to say). Rather fortunately, it seems they now react when the text indicates some kind of reaction, rather than this amorphous 'being happy/being sad', and this gives you a springboard to the next part of the speech. It shows that the plays were written for this kind of (more active) audience.



## Comedy

I've often said - and I think a lot of actors would agree with me - that if you want to destroy an actor's confidence completely, get him to play a Shakespearean comic role and get him to rehearse for six months in front of a director and four bored stage managers. The tiny bit of rehearsal I had as Trinculo (replacing the injured Paul Chahidi at a moment's notice) was on stage, in front of the tour parties that kept coming in. I know some actors find this distracting but for me it was fantastic because you can work with some kind of reaction, you can talk to them, and because they're not your peers or your colleagues, that frees you up. It's far easier to do Trinculo's opening speech in front of 1,500 strangers than it is in front of eight people you know very well.

If you choose to improvise, using modern words (which audiences love) it takes you away from the world of the play. What we found is that you move into and out of the world of the play quite quickly, but if you go too far you can't drag the audience back. On occasion we have gone too far out of the world, and it's hard to drag them back. The first Trinculo-Stephano-Caliban scene is a fairly raucous scene, and in our production it's the end of the first half. So I don't think we're compromising the actors who come after us, because there's an interval in between. However, we did find that sometimes when we started throwing fish around that the scene was moving into a variety act, and not *The Tempest*. Sometimes you go where the audience takes you, and the danger is that audiences don't always want to lead you along the story of *The Tempest*. Maintaining control and trying to stay true to the text is so important. Within certain parameters you *can* leave the world of the play and come back, you can make reference to the fact that it's raining (it would be foolish not to) and that's going to take you out of the play for a second. But audiences can accept that. You've got to be quite careful, and there's no time to rehearse that. Different issues come up at different times and you've just got to see how it goes and trust to your own technique.

## Tragedy

Mark Rylance's Hamlet is hilarious, and he manages either not to leave the world of the play and be funny, or to leave it and then bring you right back. And I think that *Hamlet* has scotched the rumour that tragedy wouldn't play well here. There's a lot of very funny material in the text of *Hamlet*, and it's only what happens at the end that makes it a tragedy, just as it's only because Prospero decides to forgive everybody instead of shattering them against the rocks that makes *The Tempest* a comedy. You shouldn't warn the audience, and there's no point telling them the end of the play at the beginning, and I think audiences here have learned that just because it's a tragedy, it doesn't mean you can't laugh.

## Technique

You've got to be heard. Going back to *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, we were all playing the first week of performances at the tops of our voices, because we were intimidated by the space. Later we found that either we'd got used to being at full pelt, or we'd come down, and we were still being heard. You can be very quiet at the Globe and still be heard, or you can be incredibly loud and not be heard at all. That's true of any theatre, and it's nonsense to say that it's specific to the Globe. The problem is that the pillars tell you that plays are to be heard and not always seen at the Globe, so I think it's more important to be clear, to be vigilant and to include every part of the audience in your performance.

### **Interview with Geoffrey Beevers**

**Horatio, *Hamlet* / Doctor Hughball, *The Antipodes***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

I think because it's close to being in the round, and because the daylight lights the audience as well as the actors it's therefore an inclusive space. It is an extraordinary space; so little theatre gives you a real sense that the audience can influence what is happening on the stage. You don't get this if you're sitting in the dark looking at the equivalent of a screen.

#### **Soliloquies**

I am convinced that the soliloquy grew out of this sort of theatre and is intended to be shared with the audience in a completely personal way. The audience becomes the mirror with which you can share your thoughts, however big, small, intimate or grand. It is essential to use individual people; if you talk to an individual person in the audience then everybody else in the audience feels included. If it's a long soliloquy I imagine you need to change your focus occasionally, but I think the secret is to use individuals out there as if they were your *alter ego*.

In intimate scenes between a few people, you don't need to look directly at the audience to share it with them. All you do need is to be aware that there is somebody probably sitting behind your head, fifteen feet up or whatever it may be, and that they need to hear it. It's a question of awareness, and then you find yourself expanding to the right size. I haven't found that easy over this season because you don't begin with quite enough practice on the stage before you open the play, so most of one's experience is gathered in performance. The result is that it's slow to grow on you. At the beginning of the season the space felt very big and hard to reach, and by the end of the season it was beginning to feel like an overcoat that fits. Over the whole season my aim has been to see how intimate I can be, and still feel that I'm reaching everybody.

## **Vocal demands of the space**

It's quite demanding technically in terms of diction; I notice that some people are better at producing loud vowels but sometimes you can't hear the consonants very well; others bite out the consonants so powerfully that you can't actually hear the vowel. It's not easy but you have to get a balance. I don't build in a fourth wall, even in intimate scenes. The fourth wall is the outer wall of the theatre. There are always two things going on in an actor's mind: one is you are always involved in the scene as the scene; two is a technical side in you that's simultaneously taking in and monitoring everything. Technical awareness needs to be particularly well developed in this particular space. You are subject to more external influence than you would normally expect - the sound of a helicopter or the cry of a child - and you actually have to be taking these things on board. I notice that Mark actually acknowledges them to the audience; his eyes will just flick upwards if he hears a helicopter, as if to say to the audience 'I know it's there but let's accept it and go on'. It is interesting and quite possibly right for this space, but I haven't probably enough confidence to do that yet.

## **Asides**

I've gained confidence slowly, more from *The Antipodes* because in that show I have more asides to the audience to expand that relationship. It's a matter of inclusion. When Hamlet refers to the groundlings as being incapable of anything but 'inexplicable dumbshows', of course they then respond with a huge vocal reaction; then Hamlet says '...and noise!' You have to wonder whether Shakespeare was aware that the actor is going to make a break before 'and noise', and has written it with that in mind. I do think that this is the most interesting kind of research going on, and I'm very interested to be part of it and what works and what doesn't. I don't know if these kinds of issues have been subject to much academic scrutiny until now, because it seems unlikely that these kinds of issues would become apparent in a conventional theatre environment.

## **Physical features of the stage**

I think it's fairly silly to be negative about the pillars, because one has to deal with these things as they are. That said, my instinct is that the roof may be too heavy, and I suspect that if they did build it like this in 1600, they may have cursed it rather. But things that appear to be a disadvantage have hidden possibilities because of their very difficulty, and in this way the pillars actually become very interesting. I enjoy using the pillars in *The Antipodes* as we hide behind them, look around them, move in front and around them. You can't ignore the pillars because they block out a certain section of the audience all the time; that doesn't matter if you try to be aware that there are some people who are only *listening* to you at any particular moment.

One of the odd things is the “lighting”. As the pillars and the roof are so heavy, one of the things that tends to draw you downstage is that the front of the stage is better lit than the back of the stage; the daylight reaches the front and doesn’t so much reach the *frons scenae* and balcony. It would be interesting to see *Romeo and Juliet* here, to see how well you could light the balcony, which is the darkest place to look at, especially on a hot summer’s day when the light is in the audience’s eyes. Could you ever use mirrors? Mark talked about the corners being very strong, and I realise he is right; it feels lovely, floating out there beyond the pillars in those corners. You feel amidst the audience and it is better lit out there than the balcony or the centre stage area.

Another thing that’s occurred to me about the stage is that it’s beautifully painted in Elizabethan style, but it’s quite a fussy background to act against. I noticed that you can see faces with wonderful clarity against a black curtain or a drape, and I wondered whether it would be better to have something simple for our faces to be seen against. I would personally like to see the stage as simple as the front of house. I think you probably drive the quest for “authenticity” to its limits to test everything, but sooner or later you also have to take into account that this is a modern space as well. It’s a curious paradox.

### **Future experiments**

I’m interested in the notion of multiple costume changes. They might have employed a lot of hirelings or supernumeraries who were doing quick changes and also playing all the smaller parts. Alternatively, they might have used a smaller cast, and they would have played in one costume for the entire evening, simply putting on a hat, coat or cloak to mark a change of character. I don’t know whether that would read quite as well - if, for instance, Fortinbras’ army simply put on a green cloak right over whatever they were wearing. I think it’s worth exploring. I suspect that they kept it very simple; modern dress on a very simple stage. Therefore, “authenticity” might demand going back to a modern equivalent of that sense of simplicity, rather than going down the line of grand design. That simplicity of approach would interest me because it throws you back to the basis of it all: to the actor, the audience and the space, in which you hear these amazing plays, and *that* really is exciting!

### **Interview with Giles Block**

#### **Master of Play, *Hamlet* / Master of Verse, *Hamlet*, *The Antipodes***

### **The actor/text relationship**

As an informed member of the audience, before I came to the Globe I remember having the impression that actors were breaking up the line too much in an attempt to be clear. This tends to be the result of a desire to make the line less obscure, by sounding out each word. However, it is actually counter-productive, because we

understand not by establishing a connection with each individual word a person says, but rather through a whole spray of words that comes towards us. Oddly enough, it often doesn't really matter if we don't even hear one or two of the individual words; we still understand what's being said. So that was one observation I noticed.

And there's another pitfall that is almost the opposite. Shakespeare's wonderfully fluent, and this fluency tends to override what I feel is written into these texts, which is someone speaking for the very first time; creating something in the moment. So an incredible fluency can make it all sound so polished and easy that it is seamless; to me that's not as real as someone who is clearly thinking and speaking at the same time.

The problem really is the time. There comes a point where the actor has to be allowed to cut the umbilical cord – or whatever it is that connects the actor to the director - and start to play and be a free spirit. It's more important than almost anything that this process happens. So, the time one has available for actors to discover how the verse works is limited in a way. The kind of work getting everyone to see the possibilities of the spontaneity behind these texts finishes shortly after the show has opened.

I think that the approach I've been taking here comes to some people much more easily than to others. What we're aiming for is the line which is the response to some spontaneous need you have to express, which sounds like the only *possible* thing you could say, that fully defines the need of the moment and of the emotion of the moment. I feel that we have probably achieved 60% of that goal. There are pitfalls that people can fall into: I noticed both years that some actors do really hard work in learning where the line ends. However, sometimes they don't quite take the next step which is finding the spontaneity of expression, so the end result sounds a little artificial. Conversely, if you ignore the shape of the line the actor no longer sounds (to me) as if he or she is creating this line "in the moment". I suppose the experience of working here has made me more aware of these particular little traps that you fall into.

So, how to solve these issues? How can we make verse-speaking at the Globe even better? If we can be bit more rigorous, we can really help the actors' sense of confidence in the language grow. Once they've got it, it's wonderful. The vast majority of actors really do it pretty well and some make the verse sing in a wonderful way. You need to make sure you've got enough rehearsal time in which you can give the language full attention.

### **Development of Verse Speaking at the Globe**

I would be very interested to see the development of a kind of school here, perhaps a six month course during the fallow season, open to actors who have completed training at drama school, for instance. Those people could potentially stay on to

play in the summer. That way, a group of actors would develop who had this experience very early on in their careers. Mark also encourages previous company members to return, and in those cases there is perhaps the opportunity to work further with these individuals, knowing that there's a little bit more to be achieved.

### **Audience, reality and the stage**

There are times in these plays when the audience is in a position of observing the action almost as if they are a part of it. In *Julius Caesar*, for example, we have Caesar in a crowded market place. Also there are times when a monarch addresses his army, as in *Henry V* or *Richard III*. On these occasions the spectators can be more than just observers or witnesses. They are addressed as if they had a right to be there. At other times, the audience occupies the privileged position of being able to follow this action, without actually *being* there. When Claudius and Leontes plot the death of Hamlet, they are alone. However, Claudius and Leontes know that they are being judged and watched, and I suppose they are willing to justify what they're doing.

Obviously when you get into soliloquies, most soliloquies - not all, but most - are absolutely directed to the audience; the audience share all the anguish that Hamlet goes through, explaining himself and in so doing understanding himself more. We've just been experimenting with a new way of acknowledging the presence of the audience, which I'm not sure is authentically Shakespearean. Just in the last two performances we've tried this new way of opening, so that the 'Who's there?' of that first difficult scene is talking about the actor sensing the audience. This is a good way to tacitly admit to a presence out there. So there is a whole range of different relationships the audience can feel themselves to be cast in.

### **Pillars**

For me it is important that each scene really possesses the whole space. I don't mind the pillars, but I think in practice it's probably best you don't lean up against them. I wouldn't object to that, but I feel it's best when you don't use them too much. From the very side seats on the lower area, they can be tricky. They cut off a lot of the downstage area. In rehearsals we remind each other not to get in a line, not to spend too long down below the pillars. We try and create the scenes within the round and use the heart of the stage, and the heart of the stage is above the pillars. Downstage corners are great places too; where an actor almost seems to be floating free.

Apart from that I don't think they are really problematic, and in fact they frame the stage and give it a sort of definition. The actor needs to find ways of developing routes around the stage and sometimes the pillars rather help those. There are certainly some benefits to the pillars; the way they look and in some ways the way they help shape the work. They define the space as well, sometimes very helpfully.

## Original Practices

I always felt that last year - the 1999 Roman Season - was an experiment, and it was one that was absolutely right and proper we carried out. I thought that the all-male cast, for instance, was really successful and the outcome was really very happy. I think it's not something to be repeated time and time again. In terms of actually rehearsing, it's surprising that there is no difference at all. I don't mean in terms of how the company responded, but actually in terms of laying down scenes, getting a scene to work. Danny Sapani and James Gillan approached Charmian and Iris simply as characters and they absolutely became those. On the other hand, there are so few parts for women anyway, that I don't feel we should repeat the experiment too frequently, but I can well imagine it happening again. Of course there is an extra dimension when you have Viola played by a boy who spends the time dressed as a boy. There is a little extra bit of tease and magic and intrigue, and as such there is an undeniable attraction about thinking about repeating the experiment again.

## Interview with Tim Block *Marcellus, Hamlet / Player, The Antipodes*

### The actor/audience relationship

The obvious and immediate thing was also the biggest surprise to me when I first performed on the Globe stage: you can see all these heads at stage floor height peering up at you! There were tour groups going through the theatre while we did our technical rehearsals, which I thought was great, because it gave us an inkling of what it would be like to see people out there. I think that there's a more definite sense of theatre as a kind of collaboration, when the audience knows that they are visible to the actors. It's a joint effort. They give us licence to pretend to be kings or queens or beggars or whatever.

### Pillars

In *Hamlet* my character finishes in the first Act so I have to say the pillars haven't really bothered me. Occasionally I think I'd better not stand between them, but in general I don't really take much notice of them. But I did have a very strange experience the other day. During a warm-up on stage I did the Chorus from *Henry V* – not out loud, but I suppose I said it out loud – and that was a really weird experience. It was so obvious that the speech was written with this theatre in mind. The audience has to give their ten pen'orth and energy in order to make the thing work. When (at the beginning of the play) Francisco says "it's bitter cold and I am sick at heart", it's often the best laugh of the afternoon, when we're obviously baking and sweating away.

### Verse speaking

I really feel a show has gone well when I actually don't think "I'm speaking Shakespeare". Of course, there's some of Giles' influence there. His belief is that most of the time we speak roughly in iambic pentameter naturally, and that the line is about the length of a breath, and so the end of a line gives you time to think what you're going to say next. When speaking in normal everyday discourse you don't pause at the full stop. To me it's a challenge to try to just say those words - not like lines, not like poetry, not like *Shakespeare*. Having been to Otley Hall and gone out into the darkness to play the scenes on the ramparts, I realised that you actually talk quite quietly when it's dark and you're on guard in a deserted place; that's difficult, almost impossible to bring to the space. I don't think that we've yet discovered how quietly you can speak in that theatre.

There's an odd balance to be struck when you play scenes that would normally make use of the fourth wall. For instance, in the scene with Marcellus, Horatio and Hamlet, though I'm very much directing my focus on Mark, at the same time the whole theatre is drawn in. I don't sense them in that scene in the same way as in the earlier scenes on the battlements, but I'm still aware that they need to be included.

### **Focus**

I think you have to come on with a purpose and you have to exit with a purpose. Anyone out there who isn't focused or contributing to the scene will act as a black hole for an audience. At the start of rehearsals we were introduced to the space for the first time, and as an exercise we moved to different parts of the theatre to test the acoustics and discover who could be heard in the auditorium. What was interesting was that you could hear people much better when others on stage were looking at and listening to the speaker. And I think that, without lights to help you, the rest of the actors have to consciously give focus to the person who's speaking. It's a long time since I've acted on such a big stage, and it's always pretty tiring. There's a lot of energy required to play here. But, if you're focused and know what you're doing, you sort of fill the space, somehow.

### **Interview with Jasper Britton**

***Caliban, The Tempest / Palamon, The Two Noble Kinsmen***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

I'm always very tuned-in to the mood of the audience. I'm listening to them all the time. I'm listening for coughs, I'm watching for fidgeting - laughs obviously - because they're so instructive, and they teach me where I'm right and where I'm wrong. The frustrating thing I often find about acting is that a performance will have developed beyond recognition from the first preview to the final performance. I often feel that it's because I'm being lazy in rehearsal, that if I'd worked that bit



harder than I would make the leap that I make during performance. In fact, I know that's not true, that it's entirely down to the audience and what the audience tells me about what I'm doing. Only half the work can be done before you get it in front of an audience.

The spectacular thing about this space is that you have the two sides of it. The groundlings have their own extraordinary agenda, their own playfulness and a tremendous desire to be included. There's a great seduction that comes from them, to which I freely admit I have succumbed, partly to just explore it and partly to just enjoy it. The seated people have their own specific energy. They're far more voyeuristic and withdrawn than the groundlings.

### **Soliloquies**

If you have a soliloquy, you have to share it with the audience, staying inside of the character but stepping out of the play in a way. Caliban (for instance) can be on the island, but he can equally be in the Globe in London, in 2000. As long as I stay in the character there are actually immense liberties to be taken – it's a kind of innocence that is my passport, I think.

The first thing I would say is that I would differ with you slightly about how much tight focus you could achieve on that stage; I think you can achieve an awful lot, simply because the audience have made me aware that they are aware of actually very small things occurring, which has surprised me. You can throw things away at the Globe; it doesn't have to be gigantic and sign-boarded at all. Oddly enough, I don't think that there are specific points where you have to be on stage, to draw focus. Until we did *The Two Noble Kinsmen* I was convinced that the only place to be was downstage, along the front; not the middle of the stage, but the middle of the circle. I was particularly concerned about the great line in *Two Noble Kinsmen*, 'I saw her first'. I remember saying to Will (Keen), 'I think we're going to have to find some way of just cheating our way downstage, because otherwise it's never going to work. He agreed, but in the rush of getting the show on we didn't do anything about it and so I found myself at the first preview upstage, chained to Will, standing on this metal bizarre thing, and thought 'oh well, here goes, I'll put it down to experience'. So I just said it as simply as I could, and the place fell down, and the place has continued to fall down ever since. I think that as long as you can be heard by the majority of people, it doesn't matter about where you are, frankly; it's being heard that's the only important thing.

### **The pillars**

As I said before, my favourite place is down below the pillars. They're there, but subconsciously, and you just sort of absorb them. I use them, I hit them, I chase Will around them, so they don't bug me at all. I wish the stage went out further into the yard. When the Brazilians (Grupo Galpao) were here they had an extension, which we used for our tech. It was brilliant, and I thought it would make

such a difference, four or six feet or more, because I think the middle of the circle is where you want to be.

When Will and I (in *Two Noble Kinsmen*) sit on the steps down from the front of the stage - absolutely in the middle – we can speak incredibly quietly, and can hear ourselves coming back from 360 degrees all around the theatre. It's like putting on headphones and hearing some sort of weird stereo effect. There's a sketch somewhere – is it the de Witt one? – which actually shows quite a lot of stage in front. When it wasn't raining, an extended stage would be great; further away from the back wall of the stage you could get a better angle for the people to your left and right and almost behind you.

### **Physical/vocal demands**

You have to raise yourself to astronomical levels, and that's why it's so exhausting. I think that the space takes everything you can give it, really. That's not to say you can't be subtle with it, but if you're going to be subtle you have to have supreme concentration, because it's so exposing. It's very easy for an audience to see who's on the money and who isn't, and that's quite alarming! It sounds as if I'm being terribly pompous about my fellow actors, and that's not the case at all. Playing Caliban, people have said 'my goodness, you're so free', and that's something to do with taking risks.

You've got to be very careful about the verse, because I think it's very easy to be completely misunderstood in there. Obviously there are distractions, like aeroplanes, seagulls, pigeons, other people moving about, people drinking, mobiles going off, rain, whatever. Achieving focus is quite difficult on that stage, and if they're not with you you've got to wait for it to come back or you've got to haul it back somehow. That's why I'm always surprised when people say, 'oh, you're so free', because in actual fact, it's all very refined, edited and I'm always re-editing myself.

It's really raw, and it's quite scary; like a bear pit; there's something quite gladiatorial about the Globe as a playing space. I'm always frightened of injuring myself. Apparently someone's done themselves a mischief almost every year, and I'm not surprised, because of the energy and concentration required to think about five things at once. You don't have to shout, but it's incredibly easy to be lost.

Can I say one thing about the floor? The floor is a nightmare. They put this varnish on it, which contains grit in it. The grit lasts two weeks, and after that you are left with a skating rink, a varnished skating rink. It's so slippery, it's something that really needs to be sorted out. Especially when we've got to do a swordfight on it, and all sorts of crazy things. You only need the tiniest bit of water on it and it is like ice. It's crazy.

### **Comedy v tragedy in the space**

Comedy's a piece of cake, it's unbelievable what they'll find funny. I find that comedy is almost too easy. Maybe it's a contemporary thing, maybe we're anaesthetised to tragedy, you know. People do say that they get very moved in *The Tempest* and in *Kinsmen*, when Will dies. However, it will be a challenge if the Globe stages heavy tragedies in seasons to come, I think.

### **Interview with Tim Carroll**

#### **Master of Verse, *The Tempest* / Master of Play, *The Two Noble Kinsmen***

#### **The actor/audience relationship at the Globe**

In most other spaces, the audience is quite a negligible factor in your thinking as a director. In a comedy you will of course note on the first performance when they laugh and you will of course note when in subsequent performances they don't laugh as they did the first time, all that sort of thing. But the impact of the audience is quite contained within a narrow band of reactions. At the Globe, unlike any other theatre, you have to consider - for instance with a quiet, serious or contemplative section - whether they will stand for it, or whether they will just start talking, or call out 'get on with it'. So there is a much greater degree of trepidation involved! Going into the first performance you can't be absolutely sure that anything you're doing will carry, and if it doesn't carry, then the natural result is that the audience will affect each other and the actors. Now this isn't unique itself of course. If you do a comedy in any theatre and nobody laughs during the first five minutes, the actors lose confidence. It's just much more pronounced here. Once they do laugh here, there is a much greater sense of getting a snowball going, and the danger then is that one thinks the only aim in life is to create an avalanche.

#### **Groundlings**

I think the extraordinary effect of groundlings on any performance is owing to the particular combination of being visible, being close to the stage, standing up and being packed together closely. Those are the four things which combine to make a very potent cocktail. This really illustrates the truth of Hamlet's speech to the players, where Hamlet says 'though it makes the unskilful laugh, [it] cannot but make the judicious grieve' (III,ii) Hamlet seems to be making this distinction between groundlings and galleries, but it's not that people who can afford to pay for the seats are intrinsically more intelligent. Actually if you switch the population round the exact same thing would happen. The groundlings display an instinctive response to those conditions. What it means is that quite often in performances, if you're sitting in the gallery at the side you can see the groundlings howling with laughter while at the same time you can see the people in the galleries sitting with their chins in their hands looking extremely bored.

I think that nearly happened in one performance early on in the run of *Kinsmen*. There were various lines that got hoots of laughter which had never struck us as

funny before, and the cast became very intoxicated by that. They were so chuffed that in general the show was a great success, that somewhere around the fourth or fifth show, we really lost control, the groundlings decided it was an out-and-out comedy, and they were not going to allow any thing to be contemplative or quiet. They barely tolerated the quiet moments, in a way that was almost insolent. The actors felt that they had shot themselves in the foot. You have to create a certain kind of hysteria, but then you also have to be able to pull it back when you want to. So the relationship between the audience and the production as a whole is a potentially dangerous thing as well as a very enlivening thing; it ensures that the production can't go stale.

Good productions get richer and more interesting here, because the actors are aware that any sort of complacency, any settling into a West End run sort of feeling will very quickly rebound. This cast have had performances where they go out and (very much as you could in the West End) begin sort of lining the reviews up along the front of the stage, and then sort of sit back, light a cigarette and wait for the audience to laugh. They absolutely won't do that here. And so they come off stage at the end criticising the "useless" house out there. But ultimately this produces a good result, because they play the next performance much more carefully. A simple example is they stop leaving those gaps for laughs. In a rather sadistic way, I always love it when Will or Jasper pause simply because they expect the audience to laugh, nothing happens, and they look ridiculous. I always chuckle to myself because I know that they will go off stage smarting, learning the lesson. I think it is a lesson we can all learn.

### **The Globe as a directors' theatre**

A lot of people thought that working at the Globe would be somehow coarsening, that it would necessarily entail a dumbing-down of all our standards, rendering us therefore corrupted artists and unable to go anywhere else and do work of any other kind. It's completely untrue and instead I think one learns a much greater degree of clarity and focus in one's directing of actor. Like all directors I have enjoyed the toys, the soundtrack and the lighting, for example. Without all those to create the focus and tell the audience where to look, directing at the Globe really sharpens up your stagecraft, especially your ability to arrange pictures on stage so that people know where to look.

At the Globe, the eyes of the other actors are the equivalent of lights in conventional theatres. You have to have a very strong sense of what the target is on stage all the time and I think you've got to use focus on that. Sometimes I would say there is a risk of losing the multi-layered subtleties of plot and multiple agendas. You *can* manage that occasionally on a stage like this, but it is quite difficult. It isn't a question of a having lit portion of the stage from which if your eye happens to wander you see something else of interest. If you create that kind of picture here without the lights then you aren't sure which is the lit bit, so you do have to make sure that even if people are reacting differently, they are reacting to

the focus. Literally, the simplest way you create a focus for them is by turning the other actors' eyes in that direction.

I think what all that means is that you don't necessarily create focus in a different way, it's just that you have to create focus more often, that is all. In a conventional theatre perhaps you establish hierarchies or different levels of status within a given scene, or whatever you want to create the picture, and then you can effectively leave that for 20 minutes while the scene plays. You can't do that in the Globe for obvious reasons. If for instance you have a duke who just sits still throughout the scene, some of the audience never sees the duke at all throughout scene. So the dynamics of the space offers both a struggle and a blessing because you have to find some way of moving people around periodically. You do have to create a kind of fluid style.

It's noticeable - or at least I hope it is noticeable - that I almost never use furniture in my shows. I think it's a mistake to use lots of furniture. Tables would really not look right up there; they are too small and somehow too defining. They are not suggestive. If you are going to suggest an interior you should do it using absolutely minimal means, and let us imagine the rest. Anything else is not in keeping with the spirit of the space.

### **Interview with Kate Fleetwood**

***Iris, The Tempest / Jailer's Daughter, The Two Noble Kinsmen***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

To be frank, first of all it's quite shocking, and you want to run off! It's because the need to communicate is much more obvious and immediate here. Maybe you cover a moment in rehearsals that seems right, but equally you can go out there, see people eye to eye just know 'that's not going to work'. You realise instantly whether the relationship is working or not, so you have to be very sensitive to that and not just plough your way in thinking 'this is what I did in rehearsals and so just accept it'.

You feel a sense of responsibility towards this audience; you feel that anyway when you're acting, but here it's more apparent. You can see that the audience comes from many walks of life: young women, young men, children, elderly women, elderly men, and that was quite useful in rehearsals, to imagine the types of people that you're playing to. Choosing to pitch specific speeches to specific people doesn't alienate anybody else, it just gives you another connection; in a normal theatre you're less likely to pick up on who's there

## Soliloquies

During soliloquies you make connections between the audience and yourself and they will either experience sympathy or intrigue, or curiosity, whatever. I feel that if you've created a kind of connection with the audience, they will feel like they know you. I have soliloquies (in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*) where I'm more or less sane, and later ones when I'm more or less insane. If I play the more mad soliloquies also as direct addresses to the audience they may feel challenged. I hope they think 'we thought we knew you' or feel like 'we know you more now'. I wanted to manipulate them, but not in a way that would make them feel alienated, but to challenge that notion of direct address. Direct address is not necessarily to make them feel comfortable. The notion of speaking a soliloquy in a darkened auditorium, and not really knowing who you are talking to feels like a contradiction in terms.

## Pillars

I find the pillars quite useful. The Jailer's Daughter wants to talk to so many people, so the need to move around the space is in the part; the pillars help define the space so that I can move about and help everyone to see and hear me. I think they're really regal and beautiful, and they can represent the outside world or something very domestic. So you can feel like you're in a house, or a courtyard or a wood. I like their presence, they are affirming.

I've found that you can remain in place on the stage without having to absolutely freeze for fear of pulling focus. Without lighting to pick you out in darkness, you become very small in this huge space when still. You remain in the world that you sat down in, for instance, until you choose to come out of it.

## Vocal demands

This place demands a tremendous amount of stamina from the actor – you have to get lots of early nights and drink lots of water - and I hope that my voice has become more muscular because of it. It's sounding pretty tired by this late point in the season. Assessing the vocal demands of the space without an audience is a sense thing and I sort of have a sense of how to fill the space - I think that's something personal and just comes from basic practice filling those kinds of spaces. To really relax on that stage is just about the best thing you can do, and avoid being tense or shouty. Remember, the audience *want* to listen and hear the story. You don't have to push it.

Certain voices carry better in this space than others, I think. There are sometimes places where your voice carries better than others; there's a wonderful place right on the lip of the stage - it doesn't have to be downstage centre - where it just feels like Dolby stereo, as well as a couple of other places near the pillars, where you really feel like you're in a resonating chamber.

I find it hard when it is raining heavily and there were no groundlings, because I tend to overcompensate. I think 'I'm just going to shout' and of course I use the wrong part of my throat, and it messes up my voice.

My favourite places on the stage are definitely the two downstage corners. They're perfect. When you come to see shows, you forget how powerful they are. In the corners you feel as though you're *in* the audience. When you have moments on those edges, they're so magical for people to watch (I hope).

### **Focus**

There is no fourth wall here and everybody knows that so there's no point in pretending there is. You need concentration to focus the audience's attention, especially because there are no lights to tell them what is important or where to look at any given time.

I think it's about not being dogmatic - 'look, watch this' - but about taking your time to connect with the audience and really talk to them, so that they want to go where you want to take them. When it really works they feel like witnesses or like friends, and there's a naturalness about it that is nothing to do with epic melodramatic acting. If you speak to people from the word go as naturally as possible, make the language your own and make it their own as well, then it just pays off so much.

When you're doing Shakespeare in a conventional theatre, even if you're constantly thinking 'Oh the imagery here is so good, we don't need anything, just the words' somehow you still end up with the big set and the lights. But here it's so true, the words will paint the picture and the words do that better here because there isn't anything else to compete with or undermine them.

Another thing I'd like to say for future actors here is don't be afraid to be daring when you use the space; it can make people feel uncomfortable, you can have an uncomfortable time in this space and it's still doing its job. Everybody knows when they go to the theatre that it's live; I don't know whether that's magnified here, but there is a curious atmosphere coming from them: 'Oh God, I'm standing here being part of this'. I think it gives people a real sense of empowerment as an audience member, and I think part of the beauty of this building is that it's not "easy".

### **Interview with Harry Gostelow** ***Guildestern, Hamlet / Peregrine, The Antipodes***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

The audience is very close and very immediate. Though it seems obvious to point out, in a dark theatre there's a kind of wall between you and the audience, and

here there isn't. The groundlings are always the quickest and most responsive to humour. In the past I have, for example, played a comedy line over to the left, and found that those people laughed first, but that not many of the others did; when I changed the focus and did it straight out front *those* people laughed first. Surprisingly, I'm most relaxed in front of what would be normally a more tense environment, being so aware of the audience's immediate presence. I would have thought that because I could feel everyone was looking at me I'd become even more self-conscious, but in fact it's worked the opposite way and I feel a greater liberty and freedom on this stage.

In the scene between Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Hamlet we can be quite intimate and jovial amongst ourselves, whilst still acknowledging the presence of the audience. The scene itself may be quite low key, but you still know they're there and you're doing things for them – whether you're consciously opening up sightlines or making sure you're heard. I suppose I'd describe that acknowledgement as drawing them in to your world rather than going out to join theirs.

I enjoy Peregrine's speech towards the end of *The Antipodes* (it's rather like Bottom's speech when he wakes up) which I direct straight out to the audience, as though it were a soliloquy. Actually it's a very self-revelatory speech, pondering "ah, I've been dreaming and if I now awake" and though I'm looking at the audience, taking them in, I'm really talking to myself, trying to work out what on earth has been happening. It's helpful to be able to see them, but I'm still talking to myself.

### **Pillars**

A lot of the time I'm a kind of supporting character in a scene, and so I try to line myself up with whoever's speaking and the pillar, because that way I'm not going to block anyone's view. Generally you have a choice of being very close to it, and blending with the pillar, or being quite some way away from it so that people can see through you and you're not a wall. I think you acknowledge that they're there, and remind yourself not to get drawn too far down towards the front of the stage, but to use the depth of the stage and diagonals instead.

### **Dual realities on the stage**

There are a variety of ways to create the sense of two levels of action on stage. If you have to maintain a life on the stage that is not directly involved with the present focus of action, you can look at the people who are in your world, giving total focus to them. This way, the audience understands that you're unaware of what is happening on the other side of the stage. Sometimes when I'm not supposed to be hearing things I just animate a conversation without any words - just mouthing away - but that doesn't feel so good actually. It seems too active, somehow, and I'm concerned that the audience gets curious about what you're miming, thinking



you're whispering "actory" things (about what happened in the last scene or what's going to happen next). *The Antipodes* presented many challenges of this kind – needing to keep your space alive while the focus is somewhere else - it was quite a technical play. You certainly had to learn your cues very sharply, and you had to give your cues very sharply because the other actors needed to be very confident that when they came in there would be no clash of different worlds.

### **Vocal demands of the Globe**

I think it's an instinctive thing really. I feel pretty good about being heard but I've never quite yet been bold enough to take it right down and just whisper things, like Mark (Rylance) sometimes does. You just have to be confident that you can still be heard. I suppose I'm just not sure I will be, therefore I keep it at a certain level.

My mother noticed that she couldn't hear some of my consonants when I played Guildenstern, with a beard on, whereas when I was playing Osric in the same play, without a beard, everything was fine! It was as if the beard was a sort of muffler, restricting my mouth so probably I wasn't fully opening my mouth because I was afraid the beard may have come off!

### **Interview with Leader Hawkins Voltemand, *Hamlet* / Player, *The Antipodes***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

The actor-audience relationship at the Globe is extremely powerful, extremely liberating, and exciting. I could hardly praise it more highly than that. I think the essential difference is the sharing of the light. We are all in the same world and there is no pretence of creating a peep show, which the proscenium arch theatre has. You can't shut yourself off from those 1600 people who are staring at you, who recognize you as a vulnerable human being and either welcome you, or wait for something to go wrong!

This year in *Hamlet* the famous half a dozen soliloquies came up for examination. It seems to me in our proscenium arch concept the actor is alone in his soliloquy. He's speaking his thoughts. The drama is all in his head. On this stage, however, I'm sure that that is quite impossible. Your imagination can establish that no one else in the drama can hear you, that you are separated from the rest of the players, but you can't possibly separate yourself from the audience. It seems to me that the soliloquies in trusted hands will work well - just as well, perhaps even better – with a degree of playing to the audience. There is a way of appreciating their presence and response and even their challenge, and it takes a great act of faith really and confidence on the part of the actor to feel that he can engage their attention as he is speaking. You have to engage their attention with the soliloquy but you have to

control, to be just that little bit ahead of them in terms of thought. I think in the Globe you actively work to get the audience concerned, and Mark (Rylance) has shown me that you can demand that they accompany you on your journey - of introspection or whatever - and share your thoughts. It's a wonderful and exciting thing which isn't really available to an actor who's playing to a darkened auditorium through the "fourth wall".

The audience is so anxious to be a part of the story. I recognize amongst my colleagues there are some who glory in the direct music-hall sort of connection and are skilful in building on that. I wouldn't classify myself in that particular group of my good colleagues, although I get enormous health and strength (literally – I can stand upright as I cannot offstage) just by walking on. It transfigures me, it really does, and it's tremendously exciting.

Of course nearly all my experience of theatre until just these last three years has been proscenium arch. Enthusiastic as I am for the Globe - and much as I resent some of the seemingly insensitive, disinterested criticisms that come up in the Press from time to time - I don't think it is the be all and end all of the Theatre's experience. The Theatre as an entertainment agency has advanced in many ways since 1600, and no one would deny the fascination of the wonderfully spectacular décor which is possible in a proscenium arch theatre. Most playwrights that we are aware of post-1600 have written to take advantage of these advances and the move into the darkened auditorium with the proscenium arch. Although Chekhov is perhaps my favourite playwright, I don't think I would welcome stagings of his plays here, because he was writing with a clear idea of where the audience would be. Similarly, Shakespeare was writing for what I believe were very similar circumstances to those we are working in. You can make the reservations, but I think we are as close as we've ever been to the circumstances he envisaged as he put pen to paper. That's what makes it so exciting.

What I would like to see developed (and what I think would help the Globe to greater success year after year) would be *eloquence*. That was the term Mark gave us as the guiding principle for last year's plays and I embrace it wholeheartedly. The actual ability to speak clearly to 1600 people in that space, and be conversational whilst doing that places demands on an actor's technique that we haven't really faced up to yet, I think. We've got to achieve that basic level of vocal competence before we can develop and make it human – truly human. Oratory is something which belongs to theatre and yet few of us could stand much of a test in that way. It is with the voice that one will control and influence the audience, more so than with movement. In the work of Shakespeare and some of his contemporaries the words to be spoken are very rich and wonderful and it's a privilege to do it. It's not the same as soap opera and chat. No musician (no singer or instrumentalist) would never think of playing a phrase with such dynamics that the last couple of bars are never heard. And yet my dear colleagues – and myself no doubt – repeatedly speak lines that are only partially heard. It is interesting that you can observe from the stage that one section of the yard will respond to a joke because that's the only

section that hears it. Now if we were made more aware of that I think we would begin to solve the problem. I'm sure training in any exercise is an essential preparation for performance. I wish our vocal coaches were less reassuring – and I really do. Mark Rylance was saying last year that the eloquence would affect our movement (our gestures and deportment and everything, as well as voice) and truly it should.

### **The pillars**

I think it would be possible to support the Heavens on a cantilever rig-up, but I think that to take the pillars away would be disastrous. To think of the Heavens just as an apron stuck above the stage would be a disaster. I would fight that. I don't find the pillars any trouble at all. One recognizes that they do restrict the view in a small measure for certain members of the audience – rarely more than 100 out of 1600. One can just recognize that and if one has not the leading role in the scene you're just there to sort of merge, join the pillar. The use of the seating around the pillars in *The Antipodes* I think is very attractive. I imagine that it will be used quite often. It's delightful, a bit like a bandstand.

### **Original practices**

In *Hamlet* I'm more or less tied up with string and I can't even do it all myself - but of course there are helping hands available. I don't object to it, but I wouldn't say that I am stimulated personally, knowing that the stitching is of a particular kind. The research that has been made possible and the practical application of it I approve of by all means, but as a performer I think a few zips or velcro would be acceptable. And I honestly find it very difficult to believe that in 1600 cobblers only made one shape of shoe. I've had to do over fifty performances of *Hamlet* with a pair of shoes that give me problems. They simply do not take on the shape of your foot and I still can't tell the right from the left after wearing them all that time. I don't feel happy on the ground with them.

Of course that stage is a lovely space. It's a wonderful building. Actors and audiences are going to love that space for the rest of time whatever the critics say. And the thing that has impressed me most this third year, the thing that really has come out this year is the enormous amount of satisfaction that the audience get from each performance. Most performances are rewarded rapturously. I wonder how some of the critics explain or account for the degree of satisfaction, the measure of satisfaction of the audience.

### **Interview with James Hayes Polonius, *Hamlet* / Joyless, *The Antipodes***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

Something that happened the other night I felt was interesting. I think they allowed another fifty people in and consequently the yard was a bit fuller. People came around the sides more which was good, and there was less chance for the audience to move about as much as they have done sometimes. You can't help noticing when they walk all the way around the semi-circle and then all the way over to the other, and I think it's tough for the actors to play against those distractions. People probably think "oh this is a fascinating venue" but they must never be allowed to think that we're just up there doing a turn as part of an exhibition. The work is intense and very, very good.

### **Otley Hall**

I found Otley Hall (the Elizabethan mansion in Suffolk) fascinating. I learnt more about the play, the character, Elsinore and courtly intrigue there than in a lot of the rehearsals back in Southwark. For example, I was up in a bedroom with Laertes and Ophelia, and we were playing with an idea that on a previous occasion he had gone to Paris with her. We played this scene in front of Richard Olivier, and then suddenly one of our observers came up to me and said "Excuse me, you're wanted downstairs". I made my excuses and I went downstairs. In the room I was sent to there was a 'political' meeting going on and I got involved. An improvisation full of court intrigue.

When this finished I went back upstairs to the room to try and continue the scene where we had left off, but Laertes and Ophelia weren't there. Then I saw Penny's [Ophelia's] personal diary on the window sill and I thought "there's no one else around", so I had a bit of a gander at this. Suddenly I heard someone coming, so I scrambled to set it as it was, back on the window sill. Penny came in and we carried on the scene. A lot of that went on. There was intrigue, and a lot of that began to be put into the play. I feel that the world of the play was created there, to a large extent. I've never done that anywhere else in any other company and I thought that was absolutely fascinating. I spied on scenes out of windows, from behind curtains. I saw Hamlet and Ophelia in the garden apparently intimate. There were lots of things going on, and it all seeped into the head.

The visit to Hatfield House was particularly useful because of the supposed connection between the character of Polonius and Lord Burghley. When we were down in the archives there we were shown various documents, including precepts that Burghley had sent to his son in Paris. The archivist later sent me a copy of them, and a postcard of Burghley on his donkey – 'on his ass' interestingly!

### **Original Practices**

I did *Othello* with Sam Mendes at the National which was set in 1930s Italy - in khaki uniforms. Playing *Hamlet* in Elizabethan dress, in broad daylight, I suddenly realized that Shakespeare has written not only the play, he's written the set, he's written the weather, he's written the light; he writes the atmosphere.

Many years ago I saw a production of *The Merchant of Venice* on television. There's a scene where Lorenzo and Jessica are lying on a grassy bank, and Lorenzo is describing the sky and the stars at length. This TV production featured a mock grass bank in the studio, and as the two actors lay down and as Lorenzo said "see Jessica", the camera behind him and Jessica looked up to the roof of the studio which was covered with twinkling little fairy lights as stars! Talk about gilding the lily! When you work at the National or the RSC you get all the resources, but in a way with Shakespeare you don't really need them. We do it fairly simply here. The plays work.

The Globe stage, with those gold pillars, is perfect for *Hamlet*. But in what I saw of *The Tempest* I thought it didn't help at all. I think the decoration would be more effective if it was a little more neutral, and that's why I'm personally dead against them painting the whole auditorium. I think that the effect of white plaster and oak is just incredible and I'd like to see a little more of that on the stage myself. It's very, very busy.

### **Vocal demands of the space**

You can't take it easy in there; you've got to be pretty clear and use the voice, although you don't have to shout. I think most people here can be heard. I think is very important with Shakespeare to keep up the pace as far as possible, and to speak as rapidly as you are able, provided you are articulating properly. I think all too frequently we condescend to audiences for Shakespeare, being at pains to remind them that "this is rather difficult language", and it's nonsense. Shakespeare is never lost for word, or phrase, or thought. He is just unbelievable and I think you just have to trust him and play it at a speed as close to regular, contemporary speech as possible.

People have been complimentary about the pacing and I think that has been something Giles has pushed for – hence the overlapping scenes, keeping the movement of the play surging along. If you watch an actor take a long speech, spell it out and break it up, by the time he gets to the end of the speech you've understood bits along the way, but you really haven't understood the full speech. Worse still, you don't know *why* he made the speech. Keep it moving. As someone ends a scene, the next person starts talking. You cannot take a moment to savour that past scene when there are people standing in the audience below you. It's humbling to think that 600-700 people will stand through 3 ½ hours of *Hamlet*, plus a two minute jig and a long curtain call and be very happy to applaud and call you back. For that, I think you owe them pacing and you owe them a good show.

### **Interview with Phil Hopkins**

**Percussion, *Hamlet* / Musical Director, Vibraphone, *The Antipodes***

## Musician/audience relationship

It's an indirect relationship; as a musician you support the actors on stage, which is what an audience should be concentrating on. But there are times when the musicians feel a very direct relationship with the audience, especially when we play on the stage itself. I think it's nice that the Globe offers that experience to people because in a lot of other theatres, music is piped into your ear, or it's confined to the pit, and people don't really understand what they are listening to. We provide interval music for *The Antipodes*, and it's almost like playing a 10-minute concert; I feel that we are giving them something very direct, and their response is very immediate and gratifying. But most of the time the chief function of the music is to point to the next bit of action. So the musicians tend to respond to the players, rather than take a leading role themselves.

Any performance has to be built up from scratch, every day, however well set it is. There's no such thing as "automatic pilot" at the Globe! There's nothing worse than not giving your full concentration to one bit of music because you're worried about the next one that's coming. I think the longer the season goes on, the more you can put into it and the better you can make it, hopefully.

## Cues

Musicians aren't always working with the MD, and a lot of the cues come from stage management. Quite often I take word cues from the dialogue on stage. At other times the MD will conduct the cues, so there are a range of methods we use. When I'm MD-ing *Antipodes* I'm working from the script most of the time, so I've got to judge when an actor is going to come to the end of their line and then conduct the band in, timing it so I can get them right in at the end of the line. I very much enjoy the responsibilities of MD-ing. Though naturally the composer is ultimately responsible for the music, I enjoy having the opportunity to shape each individual performance in terms of setting the tempo and conducting the cues.

## Technical Rehearsal

The composer acts as the link between the director and the musicians, who have to get the music in the right place mechanically, and at the right volume. Before technicals begin we will have practised the pieces of music written for each cue; during technicals we work through to the appropriate place in the script and we play it through. Typically, the cue will turn out to be too long or too short. The composer listens from out in front, and then makes suggestions - drums a bit quieter, the clarinets a bit louder, etc - and because she understands the building's acoustics so well, Claire (van Kampen) is particularly effective in this process.

For *Hamlet* we experimented a good deal with moving the musicians around inside the tiring-house. If you need to suggest music from afar, you tend to move the

musicians out into the stairwell. When the musicians are set up in the Musicians' Rooms on the balcony, wind instruments tend to go at the front, with the drums at the back. Physical positioning of this kind fulfills the role here that in other theatres is handled by the sound department moving faders up and down; here we actually move our physical presence around the building, which is great! It's one of the many things that make the Globe a unique experience for audiences.

For example, to give the impression of Fortinbras' approach, the first cue is two trombones and a drum played quite loudly out in the stairwell, to give the impression of distance. Then I move from the stairwell through the door into the tiring house and across behind the curtains; I arrive at a point right behind Dragan (Micanovic) who plays Fortinbras. Finally, I move across the discovery space until I'm cued to stop playing by stage management, at which point the actors go on. Presumably that gives the impression of a drum moving nearer and nearer, and that kind of effect is required a lot. In *Antony and Cleopatra* last year, I deputised for Mike Gregory, and there were all sorts of very complicated manoeuvres backstage! Claire has such experience in the space that we're moving beyond first base, musically-speaking, and achieving a lot of fairly sophisticated acoustic effects.

### **Period v Modern Instruments**

*Hamlet* is essentially a classic "trumpet and drums" production, and whether you're playing period instruments or contemporary ones, the principles are pretty much the same: blowing hard into a bit of brass or hitting a drum with sticks. Those are both naturally very loud instruments, and they tend to work in this space.

For *The Antipodes* Claire has written a modern sounding score, influenced by the American composer Steve Reich, and this uses marimba and vibraphone, clarinets, saxophones and flutes. Consequently we have to work much harder at balancing the sounds between us, so that we can hear what we are doing on the gallery as well as gauge what the audience can hear. For *The Antipodes* we consider the different hardness of mallets to be used to get the sound across. We found it a lot harder work to get it right because it's not such a classic set up as trumpet and drums.

I think the second play in the season tends to be the one that you feel free to experiment a bit more and I think it's producing something quite good. The vibraphone is a naturally quiet instrument, so I had to use quite hard mallets to get the sound across. In *The Antipodes* I'm also using hand drums, which creates a very ethnic African or Asian sound, which is good for creating a sense of distance and travel to exotic lands. You have to put a lot of force into playing a hand drum to get it into the space, so I get quite sore hands especially after the interval music. We have also found being open to the elements means we have to create more sound during the day, particularly rainy days, because for some reason the damp air seems to hold the sound back. If it's raining the drumheads get damp and soggy, which again means you have to compensate by playing harder.

## Acoustics

I can't honestly say if there is a qualitative difference between music played from the upper and the lower tiring house, because I'm making the sound rather than listening to it out front. I play the Ghost music from the upper tiring house (using a bowed vibraphone which creates a lot of harmonics and a metallic sound) and I've been told that really resonates around the building. It's possible that, because it's at a higher level, this sound might run further through the wooden building, rather than sinking down into the basement. Maybe that is why we don't bring the musicians downstairs more often.

I know in *Antony and Cleopatra* there is a strange stage direction, a music cue that describes music below stage: "*Music of the Hoboys is under the Stage*"(IV.iii). At the other end of things I really like hearing the fanfares in *Hamlet*, from the brass players standing all the way around the middle gallery, with the sound coming at you from 360 degrees. There are three fanfares at the start of the performance, almost like a warning that the play's about to start. The third fanfare dovetails directly into the tolling of the bell, which is the very beginning of the play.

I think it's great that at the Globe you don't know what place you are going to be playing from until the technical rehearsal period. You can find yourself in some quite unusual places and it's quite fun playing a drum on the go.

## Interview with Claire van Kampen Director of Theatre Music, Shakespeare's Globe

### Architecture and Composition

The architecture of the space itself and the nature of the plays to a certain extent dictate how you write for this kind of acoustic space. You have to take into account the stories of the plays and the style of the text. Shakespeare's verse is of course iambic and therefore it has its own rhythm and pulse that need to be considered. Writing music for the Globe is completely different from writing for the same text to be treated in other spaces - with lighting and usually with little reference to the text's own innate musicality.

Architecture doesn't ordinarily prescribe the kind of music you write or the instruments you write for. I don't know of anywhere now where composers are writing the kind of music that we have to write here, for a prescribed architectural space. If you're writing music for a theatre play you can alter things with mikes.



So, if your piece doesn't quite work at the National because the Olivier isn't right architecturally you can implement a miking system that will balance things up, and you can't do that here. Working here is like going back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when composers used to write for St Mark's in Venice or the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza; Mozart, two centuries later, used to write for particular music halls or salons or opera houses that he knew. This is a crucial difference.

One day we had just finished *The Antipodes*; the clarinetist on *The Antipodes* is the dep clarinetist on *The Tempest*. His principal player was on that night (for *The Tempest*) and so after *The Antipodes* he began his journey home. However, at 6:30pm we got a call from his principal on *The Tempest* saying that he was stuck on a train and there was no way he could get up to London in time for the show. The principal player on *The Tempest* plays a very particular kind of clarinet called the *klezmer*; it's very particular to Eastern folk music and that's why Nigel wanted to use it on *The Tempest*, as a kind of style for this Bosnian/Albanian folk ensemble. His dep didn't have his clarinet with him, because he plays bass clarinet and soprano sax on *The Antipodes*. It was a huge problem. Very quickly, I thought through the score of *The Tempest*. I came to the conclusion that the different cues he would have to play really would work on soprano sax and bass clarinet. The dep agreed with me. I reminded him that he'd have to transpose on sight, but he said this was no problem.

The soprano sax has a big, primitive sound that has a kind of sound relationship (although played very differently) to the shawm. It's connected to a jazz culture, unlike the klezmer clarinet which is firmly rooted in a folk culture. The bass clarinet has a slightly out of tune quality at the top of its range that makes intervals much more pure and rather like the original folk instruments played, slightly out of tune. The odd juxtaposition of these two instruments within the score seemed to drive the show in a different way; particularly in the storm sequence, the soprano sax was a powerful choice.

This episode convinced me that you have to break old moulds when you write for this space. What works on paper, or what works academically, or what is the right form doesn't always create as much energy as an instrument that you would probably never consider in the ensemble. I don't mean to be negative about this; it is the liberation of being able to work here all the time that has taught me to a degree *what* will work, and *why* it will work.

### **Human voice and instrument pitch**

I think that you have to be very wary of this potential problem. I think that certain woodwind instruments do conflict with the human voice; they're similar and they collide. Instruments that honestly don't collide ever are the instruments of the period; perhaps their harmonic series enables them to sound at a pitch that people can speak with. I think often in rehearsals you don't hear the very high, passionate pitches that our voices often reach in performance. A composer can be misled,

because the situation in rehearsals is so different from the performing situation in the space. I don't write very much until we get into the space for this reason, and that's why you see me frantically writing music during the technicals; you've got to hear the colours together.

I think the actors that have played this space before are rehearsing in a different way: everything is *bigger*. And that doesn't mean that they're relinquishing the intimate, but they have a different concept in their minds of how it will all read in that space. A composer that hasn't written for that space before might have an idea about it that's actually false: often they'll think that it's a big space, an outdoor space and they need to use very bright, hard sounds, but actually you can write very delicate things. I'm also really convinced that the architecture of the tiring house isn't fully developed and that we haven't quite found out how it was built yet. It was very interesting to see the Teatro Olimpico. It has a kind of circular shape inside, but on the back of it there's a sort of bulb that is needed for the different perspectives to go down. It's interesting to me because in our theatre here we can't seem to get enough depth. Once the musicians go into the tiring house we find we need depth and distance; we tend to try to solve this by dividing the upper tiring house off into sections. The trouble is that every single year we use it like that we have musicians playing outside the tiring house on the staircases. Why? We know what the text is asking for, but how do we do it?

You don't achieve depth and distance in sound by playing quietly, it doesn't work; even if you play quietly in that space you feel the presence of that instrument unless they are physically moved further back. Sound travels through air; it's about the distance sound travels, not the volume at which it is attacked. Every year now, consistently, we're using the staircases. Last year all of Tim Carroll's music (for *Augustine's Oak*) was played from the gallery; this year he's using the Globe as a box of tricks. He has placed musicians out on the piazza at the bottom of the stair towers, as if they're kind of outside on the river somewhere; he's *using the Globe geographically*. I'm not sure that's inauthentic, actually. It's a very practical, interesting thing that you wouldn't find anywhere else because you'd simply put your electronic speakers somewhere else. You'd keep the musicians in one place and use amplified sound to throw the audience's imagination to where the sound's supposed to coming from.

### **Underscoring the text**

Music is a very powerful emotional force in this space. Also, it's traditional to underscore Shakespeare plays in our culture, it's very cinematic. There's a piece of underscoring in this year's *The Two Noble Kinsmen* for the scenes in the temple. It's a very beautiful piece of music, but because of it I find myself not listening to what people are saying on stage for that scene. That's not because of the volume of the music (which is perfectly judged), but because it is prescribing a certain attitude and emotional quality to the scene. There is a big passionate speech about Mars that is underscored by music that is very quiet and gentle throughout. In a sense a

composer needs to borrow from another tradition of cinema - you need to create the musical equivalent of an establishing shot, and then you need the actor to take the energy over. Maybe you can come in at the end, but in most cases I don't think that underscoring really works.

In *Hamlet* what I have done mainly is to "top and tail" the text. At the end of Act I ('Time is out of joint') I have put in a bridge cue, to highlight the out of joint nature of where we've got to and link us back into the world of the court. So, you've got courtly sounds in there - of trombones and things- but you have a bit of the ghost stuff in there as well, so you're kind of caught between two worlds as Hamlet is at that moment. That's storytelling, not really underscoring emotion: that's the difference to me. The ear certainly goes to the music first, and music has a direct emotional connection to the heart. Shakespeare's language represents slightly harder work for an audience who can too easily switch off and let the music dictate emotional reaction. So though it sounds over-simplified to state it as such, underscoring emotion always feels wrong to me in this space. It's difficult, because you can't really say to a director or a composer 'please don't underscore', you can't take that right away; and sometimes they don't realise that that's the thing that's not liberating their theme. I think it's just like looking at one colour for a long time, the colour red, just staring at red, instead of seeing a kaleidoscope of colours; the music ceases to be surprising and unpredictable. It can become inappropriate, distracting.

I see my role very much here as host; I want new composers to work here, I want good composers out there to come here and write for the fantastic acoustic space. It's difficult because I want to give them the benefit of what I've learnt but I feel I must be very careful not to be didactic about the hard lessons that I've learned here.

There are bigger artistic questions that I do feel quite strongly about now, but I feel it is important to liberate the artists who come to work here, within certain parameters. Obviously if a composer told me that they didn't want to write for acoustic instruments, and they wanted to amplify everything, then that is a parameter that I can't go beyond. There are certain rules that the space dictates, and that as a discipline is challenging.

### **Interview with Will Keen**

***Ferdinand, The Tempest / Arcite, The Two Noble Kinsmen***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

There is a lot that is very interesting for the audience to look at apart from the actors on stage; this potentially gives an actor absolute control or total lack of control. What they concentrate on is down to you, rather than the directorial decisions made in rehearsal. This is not the case in a conventional space. Normally, the director can decide what they see and what they don't see, and people aren't

allowed to unwrap sweets or cough. When you do talk outs in those kinds of theatres, those are the kind of complaints that people make: 'Can't we do something about those boiled sweets?'

It's a wonderful thing actually: if you do have a cough and you are watching an amazing scene you just don't cough until the end of the scene. That's the deal. Don't you agree? Whereas if you aren't particularly gripped by what you are seeing then of course you cough, it's totally unconscious. So here it's lovely to be made aware when you've lost them and need to do something different. You become aware of the audience's inattention through a sort of 'rustle' of inattention, as you are in any theatre, but it is particularly obvious here. It's easier to notice among the groundlings because they are closer.

The difference between the groundlings and the galleries is interesting. Sometimes you feel that you do a show that the groundlings have got and the galleries haven't, or *vice versa*, because they seem to have such different energies. When they're both on it it's fantastic, but sometimes you'll feel like the groundlings are having a great time, and you look back at the galleries and they are slightly bemused at best. I find the lower galleries particularly difficult to gauge, because they feel so far away and it seems difficult to include them. The energy of the groundlings is irresistible. These people are so excited to be there apart from anything else. I think there is something about pride as well; when it rains, they clap louder at the end because they are so proud that they've been there.

### **Showing awareness of the audience while retaining a degree of naturalism**

That is something that doing *The Two Noble Kinsmen* definitely taught me. Doing *The Tempest*, I tend to work harder for less reward, I don't know why. What's interesting about *Kinsmen* is that it's possible to be incredibly naturalistic. It seems that you *don't* need to be constantly referring to the audience, although there are obviously techniques and you can include them in certain things. You can do asides and also 'semi-asides'. There are times when you can treat the audience as your mind, so you can sort of find your thoughts in the audience. You happen to be looking at them while you're talking to them, but they're helping you think something through in your own mind. The naturalism that I think we've explored in *Kinsmen* seems to be compelling, the audience doesn't need to be 'worked' and included. They are incredibly attentive, even during the very conversational, not particularly "theatrical" scenes. I found this surprising and delightful. What I'm saying is, in a way, the less hard you work the more the audience seems to come to you: they are so proactive.

I find *The Two Noble Kinsmen* easier than *The Tempest*, probably because the production is less well known. The absolute first point of call with *Kinsmen* is the story, whereas if you are working on something like *The Tempest*, because it's such a well-known play, you sense some level of expectation.

### **Vocal demands of the space**

When I'm tense or I feel the audience isn't with me, I start pushing vocally or I start speaking more loudly, which doesn't necessarily make me more audible. Relaxation and confidence and believing that they will be interested is very important on that stage. You can speak very quietly and still be heard. It is clarity of intention that travels rather than volume.

Gestures too can be very small; sometimes you are doing something tiny in one part of the stage, and a pocket of the audience are getting it; this seems to spread throughout the auditorium. So much of it boils down to confidence. You can feel very out of control on stage and if you lose it, then you *really* lose it!

### **Physical features of the stage**

The pillars don't particularly worry me at all. They enforce a kind of mobility; you can't stay a long time in one position, but the size of the stage and the size of the auditorium also enforce that. The geography of the stage means one gets sucked towards the pillars in some way, and I don't know why it is. Perhaps it is because without furniture you want to have something to lean on. But in terms of sight line issues, the pillars don't particularly distress me.

I think the only difficult thing about the pillars is connected to the geography of the stage; the position they are in means that the stage splits into the bit that is inside the jurisdiction of the pillars and then the strip that goes all the way round that. Marrying those two areas can be difficult. For me it's not just the line between them; there actually seems to be a triangle to avoid. The value of that central space on any normal stage would be fantastically strong, so it's odd to have to avoid that consciously. Strong moves on that stage seem to be long straight lines, from corner to corner, and it's difficult not to become ruled by that.

### **Interview with Kananu Kirimi**

**Miranda, *The Tempest* / Queen, *The Two Noble Kinsmen***

### **The actor/audience relationship**

I watched *Hamlet* early on in the season and noticed how when Mark (Rylance) spoke it seemed personal and general at the same time. Everyone in the audience felt like he was talking to them in particular. I remember the first time I chose to

do one bit to the audience I discovered that you can't pretend that it's your mirror or that it's all one person. I realized that you have to be specific, and talk to individuals. Recently I discovered that when individuals catch your eye you have to actually look at them and not be scared to allow that contact to happen. That's what's real about it.

I remember before the first performance I looked out the window and thought that the audience looked like a tidal wave coming in and I just thought "oh God". I remember being surprised just how warm the audience could be, and writing in my diary "I can't believe I've learned so much in this one evening".

### **Taking focus on the Globe stage**

You don't come from the dark into the light so you need a certain kind of energy to make an entrance that will draw the necessary focus. It's part of the storytelling, carrying the next part of the story.

So you need absolute commitment to the clarity of the story, at each moment. At times I've decided that I'm going to have a bit more of my own agenda of how I want to do the scene; certain parts have never felt right.

The first time the audience responded loudly and warmly to a joke – my picking up one of the logs that Ferdinand is having such trouble with - it was such a good feeling. From the character's point of view, I wondered at first whether I should smile as much, as I'm not meant to be noticing that they're all cheering. But then it felt like a much more inclusive thing. Normally you'd lock it out and ignore it. Acknowledging the audience seems to make the experience more human in a way. At the end of the log scene with Will, when we're touching one another for the first time, you'd think that that would be something which we'd block the audience out of, because it's intimate. But there are times when I've been sighing with the audience and it feels really great. It feels like the voices of your imagination cheering you on.

### **Vocal demands**

You can't be afraid to really announce every word and that comes with knowing exactly what you want to say to the other person. Mark Rylance sounds really casual on the surface, but what I remember is that he used every word. I would have liked to have worked with the Masters of Verse and Play in a more integrated way, because they felt a bit separate to me.

### **Pillars**

At the beginning of the season I thought "they're there, what a shame, how do I get round them?" Half way through the season I thought "they're there, how can I use them in the play?" I think that the place where I feel most strong and sharing is

in the left corner near the audience, and I'm not there very often. I always seem to find myself in the top right-hand corner. In the corners you feel very close to everyone. For some reason you feel higher when you're in the corner. I find that there I can look up more easily at people on the different levels.

### **The Yard**

For some reason I thought that the story would be in danger of getting lost if we tried to play in the yard, but actually it feels really good. The groundlings feel they are involved in the action and it seems like they start to behave as though they're part of the play.

### **Interview with Penny Layden** ***Ophelia, Hamlet / Diana, The Antipodes***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

It can feel strangely claustrophobic – which is quite interesting in an open air space because you see the density of the audience. You know that you're not going to be entering a black space, but that you will actually see colours. Things you would never think of in a conventional theatre can affect and distract you here, like the afternoon sun blinding you as it reflects off a bright orange mac! So there's the visual thing first of all. That leads on to a shared energy, because of that tangible, specific communication that you get when you really look into people's eyes when you talk to them. Now and again you get people who look away, because they are shy. Either you change and look at somebody else or you use their reaction, which can be really interesting, as long as their reaction helps the story. The story is the most important thing, obviously. What they're doing is trying to take themselves out of the equation but you can buy them back in somehow by improvising with what they give you - it can be the tiniest second of an exchange. Share the power with them and make them be complicit with you.

When Ophelia is mad my relationship with the audience changes. The stakes are higher again somehow. Maybe they *do* feel complicit in what's happened to me, and they feel somehow responsible. It's probably macabre fascination, that weird, human, voyeuristic element, mixed with a great sympathy. Often when I've finished my last song before I go off there's a moment where it's completely still and quiet outside. It's like everything has stopped. It's quite magical when you really feel that. It feels like 600 people are listening. Silence itself has such strength and presence in that space.

#### **Focus on the Globe stage**

As an issue I think this is inseparable from intention, because you should never be self-consciously drawing attention to anything you are doing, for the sake of drawing attention; playing the truth of your intentions within the bigger picture of the story is the most important thing. If you are not the main focus of the scene - if you are a listening party - then your intention is to gather the information that the other person is giving out, and therefore your energy is going *into* that person to get their information. I think of it in what is possibly a slightly esoteric way, but ultimately it comes down to playing the truth of the situation and having that higher sense as a person and actor that the important thing is the story.

I think you can enter or exit *without* pulling focus, and I think you can also use entrances or exits as a *means* of taking focus. I think what Giles has done with *Hamlet* is great, in that we have fantastic overlapping entrances and exits. I have quite a long exit after the nunnery scene. Hamlet is doing 'Speak the speech I pray you...' and one of the Players has replied to him before James (Hayes) and I have got off stage. In the meantime I'm still acting "how could you do this to me?" to Polonius, but we keep it very much between ourselves, making the bubble around us smaller as we exit, I suppose. So this little bubble is allowed to roll off while the bigger bubble of the next scene gets bigger and bigger as it takes over the space. When the focus has to shift to the new scene, so your energy has to somehow reduce into the tiny bit of action that is enough to get you off stage while keeping the truth of your situation going.

## **Pillars**

I use them, again at the end of the nunnery scene, when the King and Polonius come back on. I actually hide behind a pillar, and I'm aware that the audience around that corner of the stage is actually watching me. I hope they're listening to what's going on with the King and Polonius, and all my energy is going towards listening to what they're saying. Hopefully whatever is going on in my corner is telling the big story anyway.

We use the pillars a lot in *The Antipodes*, because of the seats we built around the base of each pillar. There are times when you can almost melt into them. Slightly up stage or slightly down stage of either pillar is usually a good place to be seen by about 90% of the house, I think.

Upstage of the pillars (personally speaking) is one of the strongest places to be, because your peripheral vision takes in much more than if you were at the front of the stage with people behind you. But I do like the downstage corners as well. They're amazing places for reaching out to the audience. You've got this sea of people who can buoy you up and you feel like you can really touch people there.



## **Vocal demands of the space**

Acoustically, I think it's a brilliant space. I would advise any actor coming here not to approach it as a problem space at all, but to approach it positively. I think that you can get lulled into a false sense of security vocally, because people seem so close. Again, it's about intention. If you play your intention clearly you can play around, whisper and still be heard *if* you work with a full, supported voice. If you're not supported and if the thought doesn't come right from the right place in order to bounce to wherever it needs to go, I think people will be straining to understand.

Because it's such a large space there's a big temptation to just scuttle around and keep moving. It's very easy to think people aren't going to watch you unless you're moving on that stage. But this is not true; there's a lot of strength in stillness.

Environmental distractions like helicopters mean you have to speak loudly – you have to up the ante – which makes intimate scenes more difficult. A technical thing kicks in and you know you have to give it more power. However, I think it's about telling the truth; you sing the truth, you can whisper the truth, you can shout the truth as long as it's from your heart.

When we play the "nunnery" scene I become very aware of people, because Mark spits on his hand and rubs it on my face and people make noises and sometimes laugh. People move when something makes them uncomfortable. People tend to shift a bit or they crane their necks to look a bit more. In those situations the bond between you and your scene partner becomes vital. You have to keep the connection between you strong, let them see it and share it, but agree somehow that "it's not theirs, this is ours, but we give it to them". I think Shakespeare makes it very clear – with asides - when he wants the audience to be integral to the action. So I think it always comes back, physically, vocally, emotionally, spiritually, to intention and committing to that intention.

I would say to anybody coming to work in this space that it's a wonderful, liberating, enlightening and invigorating space. It's hard work, but I think it gives you a hell of a lot, because of its very *tangibility*.

## **Interview with Jackie Matthews**

Master of Movement

### **Physical demands of the space**

The space creates a number of physical demands, and a lot of these are a result of having to play outdoors. Specifically, the actors have to establish and maintain a level of truthfulness to what is happening on the stage, and then they have to make sure this reads to the lower and upper galleries, without letting it dissipate into the open sky. It's a challenge to get the size of gesture that's needed, while keeping

those gestures specific and true to the situation. I felt that my job in the class work was to promote a heightened awareness of your body moving without it becoming self-conscious.

### **Heightened language and physicality**

I think that sometimes audiences at the Globe and elsewhere might find it 'witty' when actors break the frame, and bring the story into the realm of the audience, in the here-and-now. Personally I think that it's cleverer (and better) when asides and other conscious references to the audience are related to the text, rather than departures from the text. For example, at the Globe you often have to contend with aeroplanes flying overhead, and using part of the text to comment about it has generally worked better than stopping the story to comment on the aeroplane.

It can be tempting for any actor confronted with heightened language to bring the text and the level of physicality down to a recognisable, "real" level, so that both are very present, in the moment. Sometimes when this happens it runs against the needs of the text. In the Globe, when the voice and the movement *do* work together, there's a feeling of contact with every person in the audience, without necessarily having to bring the play down to a kind of "everyday" reality.

There is a physicality, or series of gestures, that actors can achieve to match the height and strength of the text. It's very easy to see that different people move differently. Just as there are ways of moving that are natural to the individual, there are ways of moving to match a text. The most important thing to remember is that the speech and the body should match each other, unless you make a directorial choice to separate the two. Working in a "pure" sense, you can heighten the movement to match the text. You can use the body and your physical imagination to create the pictures that the audience needs to see.

### **Potential hazards/overtraining**

Blocks to this physical imagination include stiffness, pain, too much ballet or dance, bodybuilding or any technique that locks the body, making it tense. Often the actor wants to be fit in order to be able to withstand a rigorous rehearsal and performance schedule, but in going to the gym too often they can block their channels of energy which in turn blocks their physical imagination. Hardening the tummy very often blocks the voice, so my job as a movement coach is to give people enough stamina to withstand the schedule, but also to unlock their channels of energy through a freedom of the spine, the shoulders and the legs. This process should allow the physical imagination out.

### **Technique**

There are physical techniques that you can teach actors if you have time as a starting point to get their physical imagination going. An animal, or an element can

be the inspiration for abstract or “pure” movement: once the actor has explored specific movements for the animal or element he or she has chosen as an expression of the character, they can internalise those movements and incorporate the text. Their character retains only a hint of the element or animal, sizzling away underneath. The audience doesn’t recognise the element or animal, but the groundwork put in by the actor helps them to create a unique physicality for their character.

The modern idea of physical theatre is something quite specific, like the work of *Théâtre de Complicité*, but actually I believe that all theatre is physical theatre. Taking a physical approach with an actor who is stuck on something in the text, for example, can help find a different way in to the story. As the movement coach I am trying to find each actor’s way in. I’m not trying to impose what I think on top of what they really feel. I think that the job of a movement coach is to bring to the surface anything that will help the actors feel confident.

### ***Ensemble***

I think that the idea of the classes for the Globe is to get everybody working together because everyone is coming from different places. I wanted to get everybody into a way of moving as a whole – not everyone moving in the *same* way – but everybody working together as a group. One of the most important physical elements is the support for the voice; I wanted to free their bodies so their voices were also free. Having class work gives you the potential to get everybody shaped up to equivalent levels, working together along the same lines. In fact I would say that above all else, the most important physical goal is to get the voice ready.

*Ensemble* playing in a space like the Globe is only possible when each individual feels able to release their individual physical imagination. It doesn’t stem from trying to impose a kind of “house style” on a group of actors from very different backgrounds with different levels of experience. Working as an *ensemble* has to accommodate everyone’s individual methods and their individual ways of working, and as such it takes time to generate a genuine sense of *ensemble*, but perhaps that should remain the ultimate goal. I hope the classes give a kind of continuity to what would otherwise be the sum of individuals working independently.

### **Interview with Robert McBain**

***Gonzalo, The Tempest / Jailer’s Brother, The Two Noble Kinsmen***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

I’ve played in a lot of different kinds of spaces before, including the back of a medieval cart! I love the relationship with the audience that kind of playing sometimes offers, and one of the reasons why I wanted to come here was to experience that intimate contact with the audience in a different way. At this point

in the season, with both shows up and running, I still find it a very exciting space to play in, because as far as I know, the actor-audience relationship in this space is like no other.

In terms of geometry, it is a brilliantly-devised space, designed to bring the actor into contact with the audience. At the same time, everything I might ever have learned about stage positions is turned on its head at the Globe. There is no such thing as “upstage centre” at the Globe! In fact, if they could be called such, “down left” or “down right” are the strongest places. Each time you go on the stage you learn something new about that geometrical relationship with the audience, and I find that fascinating, and extraordinary.

### **Pillars**

I’ve never thought of the pillars as the sides of a proscenium arch, but perhaps I have thought of them as *obstacles*, because the little strip of stage *outside* the pillars is really far more important. You can use this to walk around the edge of the stage, for a soliloquy, for example. The centre of the stage simply isn’t the strongest position. Still, the temptation is to think of the pillars as obstacles, and it is very important to keep reminding yourself that there isn’t a single seat in the house that has a view of the whole stage, and nobody expects to see the whole stage. That is a big adjustment to make, although it is slightly similar to playing in the round. If you play in the round, there’s no point in worrying that you have to say an important speech with your back to half the audience! In that situation you have to learn how to keep moving! The same rule applies here – you can’t hope to dominate the audience from a single position and deliver an important speech from there. If you succumb to the temptation to spend a lot of time at the front of the stage, you give a bad deal to the people standing and sitting around the sides of the stage. I don’t think that I’ve cracked it yet – I’ve only been here six months! The issue needs constant rethinking.

### **The yard**

I suppose that if we had an empty yard for any length of time, we’d have to change a lot of the blocking we use in both shows. There is a terrible temptation to play to the yard all the time - it has a terrific pull that you have to resist. Not everybody does! If you don’t, you find yourself pacing up and down the front edge of the stage too much, instead of sharing it out to the whole house.

### **Playing in the space**

Working at the Globe I’ve become aware of the extent to which you have to acknowledge that you’re an *actor*, playing a part, and not actually the *character*. I think this is integral to Shakespeare’s writing, and he wrote for the Globe. You don’t encounter this kind of self-consciousness on the part of the actor when playing in a proscenium arch theatre to a darkened auditorium. You can never

pretend the audience doesn't exist here, and so you can never pretend that you aren't an actor playing a part.

You can step out of it at times, and you can do so in ways that don't involve sharing jokes with the audience. Gonzalo, for instance, is quite a serious character and doesn't have the same kind of comic rapport with the audience that Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo do. However, I can obliquely address the audience from time to time. The audience is aware that I'm an actor, and is seeing the play on two levels: they see both Gonzalo and the actor playing Gonzalo. It represents a radical difference from playing to a darkened auditorium, and perhaps has more in common with street theatre than anything else. Street theatre has a similar self-consciousness about it, I think, and Mystery Plays are like that too.

### **Vocal demands of the space**

I think it is important to get to know the stage early in the rehearsal period. It's easy to be deceived about the vocal demands of this theatre; it's easy to believe that you are being easily heard. The space feels very intimate and you can fool yourself that perhaps you don't need a huge amount of voice. I find myself checking this all the time.

### **Future experiments**

Our production of *The Tempest* was very unconventional and was very exciting but I'd like to work in authentic costume in a slightly more "Shakespearean" way, to experiment more with traditional playing conditions. I felt very aware that we are doing what Shakespeare and his colleagues did around 400 years ago, and it is lovely to experience; I think I would feel that connection even more were we observing more strictly what we know to be the original practices of The Globe. I realise we don't necessarily want to reproduce it, but just to understand it. Often I sit in the Lords' Rooms and wonder how it looked 400 years ago, and what it was like to be an actor then.

### **Interview with Joanna McCallum**

**Gertrude, *Hamlet* / Barbara, *The Antipodes***

### **The actor/audience relationship**

I think there's much more intimacy at the Globe than you might expect. The first time I came on to the stage it felt as if a lot of people were in the room with me. Because the audience are part of it and we are all in this together, we don't need lighting effects or other levels of technical support; once all the members of the company on that stage are listening and looking at the integral element of the scene then the audience will as well. I think it's a very invigorating space.

Gertrude talks directly to the audience on one occasion. I'm thrilled to be able to break that little seal, to be talking directly into someone's eyes. Then she disappears back behind that thin veil again into what is happening on stage within her time. In *The Antipodes* I have to directly address the audience a lot, which literally involves picking people's faces and chatting to them - not just to the groundlings. I've found it's very good to use the middle and upper galleries so that everybody feels involved. The best position for this kind of address is, obviously, right downstage. I found I couldn't move and talk and try to get a laugh from centre stage upstage of the pillars, so I walked down and talked to them from the front, and I got the laugh back. Also with a very convoluted joke – like the ones I have - people have got to listen and understand to get the point. So, to do too many things at once is confusing.

The audiences are very attentive, they are extraordinarily quiet for three and a half hours. Their attention is very strong, and you can feel it. No one wants to break it in any way. In actual fact somebody once fainted and Mark Rylance and myself paused in the middle of the closet scene. Very quietly Mark said " I think we'd better wait and see how our friend is", and everybody watched silently as the man was helped up. You could hear a pin drop. But then the play was able to continue because of the concentration that the nine hundred sitting and six hundred standing had.

### **Vocal Demands**

We had voice production classes with Stuart Pearce, who talked about the importance of feeling grounded. You feel you have to be very grounded and very steady with your breathing, much as you would in any other theatre. If you move too fast or move around too quickly that can be confusing, vocally. When I've watched performances here sometimes I have missed what they've said in this way. The elements also affect the sound of the voice, and depending on the atmosphere the voice can sound muffled or very piercing and strong. You have to begin to understand the space and use it.

### **The Schedule**

The schedule is very tiring, though I find the space itself energising and invigorating. I can be terribly tired because I've tramped across London, but the minute you're on the stage, you've got a real buzz, possibly because you don't have to suffer hot lights, which can make anyone feel ghastly.

I do find the stage very unforgiving. It's very hard oak and it hasn't got a sprung floor. Foolishly, I kept jumping down off a pillar, and that was a bit hard on my feet. I worked at the Young Vic, when it first started in the early seventies. The Young Vic stage was wood on concrete and a lot of people had the same sort of problem.

### *The Antipodes*

A lot of the time I am on the stage, part of the story, watching and listening, though I don't have a great deal to say. Purely practically, I do realize that I'm moving a little more often on the stage than I did in rehearsal, because I can see from where I am that for instance, three people are outside of the pillar on the other side, and they are blocking off a great deal of the audience. So I feel that I could be doing the same on my side, and I tend to move up to the back of the stage at various moments to compensate. If you crowd round a pillar to watch and there are three people abreast, one side of the audience can be cut off for quite a long time. I think we need to take the lines from the vomms (the entrances line up diagonally with the pillars) and really trust that it's a good idea to go downstage and upstage with one another, and know how to swap it around very casually. If you get stuck in between the two pillars a vast amount of the audience sees you but then too many people are cut off.

In *The Antipodes*, James Hayes and I have quite a long scene together and we've devised a way - I think and I hope nobody realises what we're doing - to swap diagonal lines; when Jimmy's got quite a lot of important stuff I'm down, and then we swap it around. Otherwise we'd cut each other out. So we devised our own little bit of blocking by trial and error, and it worked very well.

### **Physical features of the stage**

For Gertrude's "willow" speech, the worst place I could have been was between the two pillars. So I stood back and stage centre. Quite a lot of productions use a spotlight on Gertrude for that speech, so she's isolated and the speech comes from nowhere. But I prefer to actually talk to my fellow actors and I deliver some of the speech to Laertes, some of it to Claudius. Again that was using the diagonal, and I did that on purpose for this stage, rather than give it as a soliloquy in the centre of the stage. I did it specifically because of the pillars.

I don't have a particularly favourite spot in general. There are all sorts of wonderful places. The corners are terrific, particularly for *The Antipodes*. The effect (from the yard) of the actor apparently floating is fantastic. I feel I haven't had a chance to explore the whole playing space, and I would have loved to be in a play where I could have entered through the yard and made more use of the rest of the theatre. In both our plays we have a little railing around the edge of the stage, which possibly has blocked us off a bit.

The highly coloured *frons scenae* gives a sense of theatricality. We're not set up on pedestals, and there are no pretences to realism. As a result I think there is a definite rapport between audience and actor in this theatre, more perhaps than in many others that use lighting and blackouts. In the dim darkness, not only can the actor not see the audience, but also they don't have to *work* in any way.

## Original Clothing

They're very beautiful costumes. Aren't we lucky? I'm fascinated by them. The only problem I have experienced is that the little felt shoes give no kind of support. I was really pleased when it was decided *Hamlet* would not be in modern dress, because it's easier for the Court not to be modern. I'm afraid our idea of "dread royalty" has diminished. If you took our royal family as a model there'd be a lady in a hat, and that's about it. The line 'My dread lord' tells you these are powerful people.

I love the costume. I don't mind wearing corsets. It helps tremendously. I think the groundlings enjoy the original clothing, but despite the remarks of a few critics, it hasn't become a museum. Using original clothing means there are no distractions and "concepts", and the story comes through. The most important thing is hearing the play and listening to the story.

## Otley Hall

I thought our rehearsal period at Otley Hall was quite remarkable. We began right before the play of *Hamlet* started, and we played through the story of Gertrude and Old Hamlet, and the marriage to Claudius. The time at Otley ensured that we all came from the same world; we all knew where we were, and we knew each other's position in that world. As actors we also trusted one another. A great deal of work was done but it was very imaginative. After Otley we were not faced with standing on an oak stage in front of fifteen hundred people, scared. We knew we were actually creating something.

## Interview with Terry McGinity

*Alonso, The Tempest / Jailer, The Two Noble Kinsmen*

### The actor/audience relationship

The relationship that I developed with the audience was made easier for me because of work I had done last season, from which I learned a great deal about that sense of closeness with the audience. This season, starting with a different character, play and situation, that relationship needed to be redefined, of course. For instance, in *The Tempest* I'm playing Alonso, who is more private than a lot of the other characters in the play. Some of these other characters have a very direct relationship with the audience, and engage with them frequently, often in a humorous way. As that isn't appropriate for my character, I almost feel I have to try to pull the audience back to my world, away from the more open world on the island with all the other characters. I say *try* because it is an ongoing process, to get them to look into my character's little world, his dilemma, into his heart really, which is quite an intimate and small thing, not a large outward thing. Throughout



the season I've been simplifying that, honing it down and refining it to what I feel it should be: a simple, direct relationship between myself and my character, his grief and the audience.

With *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, playing the Jailer is again about grief - his reaction to his daughter's madness – but the relationship with the audience is quite different. It's far more shared and it's more open. The Jailer's Daughter has a direct relationship with the audience and in a sense my character must take the audience's view of her. I often get the feeling that the audience is looking and waiting to see how my character responds to this girl, going mad. I'm aware that it is my responsibility to do it as truthfully as I can and as simply as I can. It's important because the audience is very 'up' with the story, and they don't need any extra indication of her condition. The audience doesn't need to see the face of the actor to indicate the emotions being felt. You can be seen from all sides *and* you can be seen very well.

I felt initially when I first came to The Globe that it was not a particularly intimate space, but you only have to sit in the upper galleries to see how close you are to the audience. They can see perfectly well what is going on inside your eyes. Your gestures do not have to be blown larger at all, in fact it is a case of refining it down to a more natural kind of level. I think I have done that with *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

### **Pillars**

I feel perfectly comfortable with the pillars on stage. They become part of what I need to use. I may lean against them if I am tired or worried. I am not concerned about the obvious impediment to sightlines because I am never in one place for that long. You must trust that the audience can imagine what you are doing, even if you are not speaking.

### **Vocal demands**

It is a space that allows you to be really intimate with an audience. However, you can only be quiet when you know you have the audience with you. It sounds paradoxical, but it really depends on the moment in the play. There are so many different ways in which to bring the audience back to you. For example, I had a couple of entrances in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* where a kind of quiet entrance was not working. Tim Carroll asked me to voice it very strongly, so that the audience would be shocked into switching its focus onto us. I could clearly feel the audience's eyes leaping from one area of the stage (where there the action had been) to us. There are many such moments when you do have to use your voice to bring people in, to compensate for the lack of lighting to attract the audience's attention.

### **Costumes/Clothing**

I think it is very important to inhabit the world of the play, and this applies to costumes too. The costumes are beautiful here, but you really have to work at it yourself to *live* in them. It is very easy to see costumes as being costumes and not being clothes. I think that you have to work at feeling comfortable and feeling that they are your clothes, and we are given very little time to do this. The actors have to use the technical week very much for this purpose, whether they are on stage, or in the Green Room, or wherever.

### **Soliloquies**

It is so enjoyable to find that you can talk to the audience so easily here. Last year I was doing *Augustine's Oak* and I had a kind of soliloquy in that. I found you can talk to the audience on all sorts of levels - the groundlings, the middle galleries, the top galleries – and each has a different quality. The groundlings form the guts of the thing, the belly. But you have to pay heed to the 'heart', the middle tier and the 'intellect', the top tier. The belly mustn't rule the roost.

Normally, an actor will try to create a "reality" of *where* he is in a scene – most often in proscenium arch theatres this involves constructing a fourth wall, to separate that reality from the audience. In the Globe naturally you have audience all around you, so the "fourth wall" in this case is 360 degrees. You create the fourth wall to protect the reality of the scene in a flexible way. It is merely there to establish for yourself in your own mind where you are. Added to that it is a fourth wall that (for me anyway) one is able to penetrate or push out. You can sort of extend it outwards or bring it back at various times, according to how intimate you want to be or how open towards the audience you want to be, so the feeling of a fourth wall is quite flexible. In doing this you can really feel that you are at one with the audience, and engage very directly with them. This is of course the most obvious way in which the Globe differs from a proscenium arch theatre and its darkened auditorium.

### **Interview with Jonathan Oliver** **Boatswain, *The Tempest* / Pirithous, *The Two Noble Kinsmen***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

I think that both plays I've been in this season have had their successes and their failures with this audience. My worry in *The Tempest* was that perhaps too much was focused at the groundlings to the detriment of the people in the galleries, because the groundlings are so prominent and so obviously reactive. They're so close (and they're not over-rowdy obviously) and they are much freer in their reactions. If you have a line that should get a laugh, and it works with the groundlings, you're off and running. This is a good thing in general, but there's a temptation perhaps to focus more in their direction than is just. There have been

times when I have felt awkward and almost a bit sorry for people up in the galleries. That's purely my opinion – my personal taste.

### **Use of the Yard**

It's very interesting how the standing audience reacts to me on my first entrance in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. There is a singer (Clara Sanabras) on stage at the top of the show, and because she is the only thing visible at the moment she has the focus. As I enter from the back of the auditorium the audience have their backs to me, so I get their attention by a combination of dazzling smile and very sharp sword pointing in the direction of the path I want to take. Having created a path for myself I then gesture to let them understand that it should remain an open path because more is going to happen. Then I focus where it is going to happen from by looking and pointing at it, and then finally the wedding party enters in a humorous rush. The procession has to wind its way in two different directions before we get to the steps and up onto the stage. Once the first convention is established I think that the audience realise that they need to move and create a path. Often they don't. Some wait until the very last second and often leave their bags in the way. Though I am aware of the audience, I'm not trying to pull focus but to act as naturally as I can in the situation. It's nice being in a crowd especially, in this scene where there's supposed to be a crowd there. They can stand as Athenians and just watch the wedding. I think I prefer that on those occasions when the crowd we're either playing to or we're in can stand for a reality.

I think my favourite use of the yard is the final exit. It's a very sad occasion (a funeral cortege) and it feels genuinely as though we are mourners and the crowd around us are sharing in that mourning with a genuine sense of sorrow and collective grief. I think it's more powerful exiting through the yard that way than it would have been had we just walked off the stage into the tiring-house.

### **The Pillars**

I think that they present a challenge and they're to be used. I'm sure most actors probably would prefer that the theatre had been built without them, but they have to be either fought against or wooed and won. I think that the longer one plays here, the more they become natural feature of the stage. In *The Two Noble Kinsmen* I often lean against them as if they were trees, and I'm quite happy about them. They undoubtedly interfere with sight lines, but there's always going to be a problem somewhere. You just have to remember that occasionally it's good to stand behind or in front of a pillar, to allow a line of sight to exclude you, if you're not involved in the main action; if you need to be seen you have to make sure that you're not stuck behind one!

### **Soliloquies**

If you've got a soliloquy I think you've got the right to choose whether you are speaking directly to these assembled people who are not in the reality of the play, but in *your* reality, and are to be spoken to and asked for advice or told things that they need to be told by you. Or you can entirely internalise it and not address them at all; it's all for their benefit and they'll hear every single word and see your every expression, without being directly addressed. I've done both and I don't know whether it should definitely be done one way or the other. I think both are valid. I don't know what Shakespeare wanted. Thinking back to previous productions I've been in, I would much more happily speak my *Richard III* soliloquies to the audience than the *Hamlet* ones because the Richard is more roguish, deliberately provoking and asking for an audience reaction. If your Hamlet is a lonely, solitary person who's desperate for Horatio's friendship, then how can he then talk to all these people directly? (Mr. Rylance may, perhaps, take a different view!)

My one big speech in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*- the story of what happened to Arcite at the end of the play - is a case in point. It's a messenger speech and I'm telling a story which affects each and every person. But I've chosen to give it to Palamon alone, and not to give any to the audience. I still look away from Palamon and look out, but I'm not looking at the people. I'm sure that it could work perfectly validly another way, but at this point in time I want the focus to be on Palamon as he hears the news. And with this play we know that 90% of the audience don't know the story, so they have to listen to every little nuance and twist that Shakespeare and Fletcher put in it.

### **Vocal demands**

It's a good acoustic theatre. The only time when I have a problem is in the opening scene of "The Tempest" when I'm playing the Boatswain. Of course it's the storm scene and so there ought to be noise, but there's far too much for my liking, and for my vocal cords' liking! Because the musicians are playing away like mad to create the ambience of a storm I and my fellow actors are having to bellow like mad and I've been told often that it's very difficult to hear. That annoys me a bit. The story has to come out and if the music is getting in the way then that should have been sorted out. The music in both productions has worked superbly but this is a rare occasion that happens to coincide with one of my scenes where there's a problem.

### **Inclusivity**

It's difficult but vital to play to the entire audience, and not be seduced to play mostly out to the front. It depends how well the play's been directed as well to go round the corners. I'm very aware that I don't give people around the corners as much as they should have.. That's something you have to learn. Also, to look up to the upper galleries. I don't think that anyone *only* plays to the yard and the lower

galleries, but it's actually lovely to look up and see the upper galleries against the sky, especially during a gorgeous summer's evening or afternoon.

## **Interview with Sarah Palmer Wigs Manager**

### **Training**

I went to college to do hairdressing with a make-up diploma. I was really lucky because when I was sixteen (I'd just started college) my art teacher was working on a crew at the Grand Theatre, Leeds. He told me there was a job available in wigs there, and encouraged me to apply, even though I had no experience at that point. After three days of interviews I got the job. I carried on with my college course for two years - wig making, hair dressing, everything - and I'd do a show at the theatre every night as well. So I had no social or love life! When I left college I got offered a job on *Guys and Dolls* at the National Theatre, so I moved to London. Then I started at the RSC when I was nineteen and worked there for fifteen years before I came to the Globe, three years ago.

### **Preparation**

I work with both companies, one in a full time capacity, the other as sickness cover only. I come in before the matinée to set up, and the time I arrive of course depends upon the amount of set-up time required. For *Antony and Cleopatra* (1999) we needed to arrive a few hours before the show, because the big head dresses needed fresh flowers sewn on individually, for each performance. *Julius Caesar* had a similar amount of preparation.

### **Cosmetics**

We make the powder, the foundation and the lipstick ourselves. In the week before the 1999 season opened, we were mixing potions in our cauldron! For foundation we used chalk powder and water. I used the same powder on Paul Shelley (Julius Caesar) as Caesar's Ghost. For dirt make-up we used burnt corks, and anyone that had drunk a bottle of wine the night before brought the cork in for us. We made lipstick out of wax, beeswax, and alkanet-root, which is used for dyeing fabric as well. It's an organic dye.

We have to do a lot of research. The face powder we make is the same as the foundation - chalk powder - with added arrowroot and oil of rose. The lipstick, or rouge, has a wax base that needs to be melted down with the fingers before it is applied. That's what I used on Mark Rylance's cheeks as Cleopatra. It's made from beeswax and alkanet root. For his eyeliner we used burnt cork again, applied with a tiny little brush. You have to be really careful in case a flake gets into the eye. I

don't think that experimenting with original practices is restricting. It's really interesting.

### **Caliban's make-up**

The wig shop is covered with polaroids, given to us by the designers. It's our job to match them up to what we put on the actors. For instance, the colours of Caliban's make-up this year came from an aboriginal picture the designer saw. I applied gold leaf to his eyelids using water soluble glue - obviously you don't want to use normal glue because he has to be able to get it off! Then I painted his eyes up with panstick which is an oil based colour, adding aqua colour for the eyeliner in white and black. And the rest is mud I make here out of clay powder. We have chocolate brown and a grey which I make darker with some black aqua. We use deep-sea mud, the expensive, cosmetic type of mud, and *lots* of sponges! Black aqua is a water-based pigment, which comes off fabric really easily!

Caliban also wears lots of little shells on his head, which I collect every time I go to the seaside. We tried using seaweed as well, earlier on in the season, but it stank and the room became full of flies! We decided not to do that any more! Jasper (Britton) comes in at around 35 minutes before each performance, and it takes him about twenty minutes to glue all his shells on his head. I mix some really thick clay, he puts it on to his head and glues the shells onto it.

### **Amazonian Make-up (*The Two Noble Kinsmen*)**

I brought in a Native American book for Geraldine (Alexander) to look through, and she had a lot of ideas of her own, too. One of the challenges for this show was the fact that Geraldine (who is very blonde and pale) and Yolanda (who is Spanish) were playing sisters, so to an extent they had to look like each other. So we put a fake tan on Geraldine. Then we decided we'd go a little bit further and give them both tattoos. The actors had sole artistic input into their tattoo design!

### **Wigs**

Jenny (Tiramani) didn't want us to use anything modern on the wigs for the original practices shows. We couldn't use tongs, rollers, quick-sets or anything of that kind. I had some sticks cut up into different sizes, wound the hair around these like bendy curlers, and set the wigs that way. The wigs take longer to dry this way because a roller has holes to let the air through, and the sticks don't, of course.

The first year I was here we tried a bald wig made from a pig's bladder. A real pig's bladder was moulded onto a block, then hair was put round it. In the shows for this season we have hemp wigs which are made outside. I have made wigs, but I don't normally have the time to do so, although I do a lot of repair work.

## Wig-Making/Repairing

The hair is knotted - one hair at a time, no more than three hairs per hole- in different directions through a lace foundation. I use a tiny little hook with a barb on the end; it's got an extra little hook that you can't see, and if you get it stuck in your finger then you can't get it out. Let me just show you, now with a wig the foundation takes a good day to make. I put the hook into the lace, hook on one hair, pull it through, wrap it round and do a knot. It's the same as wig making, and it takes a long time. I alter wigs quite often to accommodate different hairlines.

I can make a moustache in about 1 ½ hours; a beard in 3 or 4 hours, using the same technique. When making a moustache you knot it diagonally up to come down, so it gives it a bit of lift. A beard is knotted differently, usually just up to come straight down.

We also recycle wigs. Joanna McCallum's wig for *Hamlet* began life as Katherine Pogson's wig for *The Merchant of Venice*. I took the back off to make a half wig for Joanna. I'll probably put the back and front together again when the season is over. I also do a lot of moustache and beard alterations, and things like that.

## The Antipodes

Actually, the actors generally have a lot of input into the design of their costumes and make-up. For *The Antipodes*, Roger Gartland wears a wig for a character he decided to base on one of the costume makers, Luca (Costigliolo). So, as you might expect, we've got a picture of Luca up in the wig shop. That wig has been re-vamped, and was worn by Mark as Cleopatra last year.

Very occasionally, actors try to do create their look on their own, and then sometimes it's not so good! They might decide, for example, to shave off a moustache for their second show, when the designer for the first show especially requested they have one. A couple of years ago I had to put posters up all over the building, saying "Keep on your moustaches and beards!" It costs about £120 for just a little chin beard or moustache, so it's cheaper to grow your own! I think it's been written into the actors' contracts, and they agree not to change anything about their appearance without asking first.

## Tiring-house activities

We tend to assist Wardrobe with the quick changes, and Wardrobe will help the Art Department - we are all quite small departments and we need to help each other out when possible.

Like everyone else backstage, I make garters. We need two garters per actor, per season, so we all make garters in our spare time between changes. The garters are

knitted from ordinary wool, but all are at least 26 inches long, depending on how fat the actors' legs are!

There are no big hierarchies here – “who works in what department” – so everybody, even Stage Management, will dress. Stage Management will go on stage and do spear carrying, I'll do costume changes or door cues too. I like this way of working very much.

### **Interview with David Phelan** **Rosencrantz, *Hamlet* / Player, *The Antipodes***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

I remember thinking it was going to be weird and different from anything else. I didn't know what to expect, but I was determined to enjoy it! Here you have to embrace the fact that the audience is absolutely a part of you. Perhaps this democratising effect brings us more into connection with real life.

There is an amazingly direct connection to be made with this audience, even in tiny asides such as I have in *The Antipodes*. I think James Hayes came up with a useful guide or rule, or mentioned it first: you cannot look into a big black space of about thirty people (as you might in a darkened auditorium where your eyes cannot quite focus on individuals) and expect to make contact with anyone. Here you can and therefore *must* make individual contact with individuals because it is that which multiplies through the whole house.

It seems to me that the frame is there to be broken in this theatre. Sometimes your focus has to be very tight – just you and the one or two people on the stage – and at other times you have to imagine that all the audience are in the room with you as well. In court scenes (like *Hamlet* I,ii) the king looks out at the audience as though they are an extension of his court. Then he has a very intimate scene immediately after that, in which it would be odd for him to use the audience in the same way. In the scene where Rosencrantz and Guildenstern meet Hamlet for the first time we have to concentrate on each other - just the three of us - for five minutes or so. Mind you, we should still have the freedom to take in events from the outside world like, for instance, a pigeon landing on the stage. I have seen Mark (Rylance) quite openly just watch a bird as it flies past, as though that is happening in the “real life” of the play. The Globe is amazing because you can do things like that. Perhaps the cloud scene in *Hamlet* is a good metaphor for how the frame may be broken. When Hamlet and Polonius look at the clouds they are looking at *real* clouds. The reality for them is identical to the reality for the audience. They are the same clouds that the audience looks up at every day or night.

I think it was Stanislavski who said that the point of acting is to be not self-conscious but self-aware. I think it is tough to achieve this, but the Globe gives you



more clues perhaps than elsewhere. Laughter and stillness are the clues in a regular theatre and I think that laughter is the big clue here. Here stillness never happens because people in the yard are constantly shifting from foot to foot after standing for an hour for each act. The audience can do what it likes. I find this has relaxed me more (after the initial almost unbearable excitement of the first performance) because I get the sense that we are just people in a room together. I am not the person *literally* under the spotlight that you would find in another theatre; it just seems that everyone mostly looks at me if I am talking on the stage. I find acting on that stage is more “conversational”, strangely, because The Globe stops it from being too intimate. I think what I am saying is that everything at The Globe helps you to be real *precisely because* everyone is visibly and tangibly there together.

### **Pillars**

You have to try and embrace them in a way and recognise that wherever you stand there is always going to be someone who cannot see you because of those pillars. Mark pointed out to me there is one spot, a black square just upstage of the trap, where you can stand and lose the fewest people. It works because the pillars line up with the exits. I have one long speech - Rosencrantz has a twelve or fifteen line speech to Claudius – and I try to do most of my speech from there. The front edge of the stage is also very strong. I quite like the pillars; I think it is good to use them as part of the universe of the stage, so you can lean on them or, as we do in *The Antipodes*, sit around them. The only thing I do not like is when I catch myself in that straight line between the two pillars: there you’re cut off from a lot of people. It is so tempting to stand within that frame because you think you are only losing people at the side, but you are probably creating a bad picture so that you are losing people from everywhere. It reduces the depth of the stage. Mark spends a lot of his time looking directly upstage, and because he is a very generous actor the audience can enjoy his acting through his voice and the reactions of other actors on the stage.

### **Original practices**

Working with authentic clothing means you have to allow more time to get into costume. Wearing clothes that do not have flies also means you have to make sure everything is done up properly so that the audience cannot see your white shirt through your crotch! If you sit down too fast a point could break, so you cannot throw yourself around too much. Perhaps this tells us something about the way players of the time would have behaved, physically. You have to obey the etiquette of hat-wearing, for example in the king’s presence, though you might imagine the audience would see your face better if you obeyed a more modern convention of being bare-headed in front of a monarch. These conventions and disciplines give you a different way of looking at things. It is good to challenge the audience and not simply “translate” everything to “make it easier” for them. For instance, I take my hat off to try to create a greater sense of intimacy, when my character tells Hamlet that his mother wishes to see him in the closet. In a modern production the

hat would have been off scenes earlier, and so a subtle distinction like that would not have been possible. So, sometimes, that discipline has its advantages and can provide you with different solutions to problems.

It has been very hard work at times, but it has been the most wonderful and exciting summer. It is the most exciting place to be.

### **Interview with Tim Preece**

#### **Ghost of Hamlet, Player King, *Hamlet / Blaze*, *The Antipodes***

#### **The actor/audience relationship**

I like being able to see the audience. It gives their response an immediacy. You can't out-guess them. They're there and they're joining in and there's no hiding. It can only happen in this kind of space; if you try it inside, simulate it by putting the lights on, it becomes self-conscious - the audience is aware in the wrong way that they are being looked at, and that can be a barrier. Here the visibility is a channel. The only times I think the audience here gets in the way of the performances is when they've spent their five quid to have a quick look, and after ten minutes they feel they've done their Globe experience, and they go on to the Tate Modern, they don't bother to connect. That happens, we've become aware of that. I find I have to be careful at the beginning of *The Antipodes* when I have to pick somebody out to talk to that I get somebody who's listening.

#### **Asides to the audience**

It's easier to talk to the audience here than in other theatres because they're there for you. Obviously I've found that as time goes on and one is less tense and there is more room between the lines, suddenly you're working at the same speed but you've actually got time to see and think. What I find is now I've got time to pick up the people who might react, enjoy being talked to, I can play the next little bit to them, we play along and invent and they go with it.

#### **Changing performance conditions**

James Hayes and I were talking about the different atmospherics of the space and the way that performances changed during the season as a result. The last *Hamlet* was marvellous because suddenly it was a very still evening and none of us had to project. The whole performance changed, and had a wonderful, bell-like sound. It was great and we all went along with it and we did a different sort of performance than we had done for the whole of the season.

This afternoon, because the house was half-empty I went on and thought "right, I'll give it some energy", and I pushed a bit hard. In the second scene when I came back on again I just took it down and played it gently, and I realised my voice and

the acoustics were quite as good. You can actually play intimately, when you get used to the acoustics here. However, I also came to see *The Tempest* early on and stood right at the back against the lower galleries and only heard half of it. So I thought in this space I would have to make absolutely sure that the people sitting at the back of the lower gallery could hear me. The great temptation is to play intimate scenes to the groundlings below you, but often it's lost to the bulk of people sitting at the back. So it's a fine balance and you learn gradually over the course of playing it how to do it.

### **Physical features of the stage**

I have found the stage quite tiring. When the audience is there with you and the play's going well, it's great. When it becomes hard work, I think this particular stage is harder work than most. It may be just the way it's made, without any spring in the floor. It may be the size of it, because you have a lot of ground to cover. It could also be that the pillars mean you can't relax in centre stage. With the Ghost there is a point where I stop moving, and I try and make sure that I'm absolutely centre back of the pillars so that I can then settle. Those sight line issues are a problem and they keep one on the move. However, if they didn't exist, I suspect performances would be more static. I wish the pillars could be thinner, but otherwise I think that they're quite useful. In *The Antipodes*, I walk around them, lean on them and sit beside them. As the Ghost, I don't really use them because I don't function in a real space.

### **Original practices**

I had trouble with the armour, it was too heavy for me really. I got used to it, and I got stronger as the season went on, but at the beginning it scared me, it got in the way. It's an area of the work where I think there should be some concessions made. I don't know whether an actor of my build at that time would necessarily have worn full steel armour, there might well have been some pretence. I think that craft, as well as authenticity, has to come into the equation, and I think at the moment there isn't quite enough craft

I think the elaborate painted façade is unnecessarily busy and hides the actors. Theatre is an illusionary business and Shakespeare knows it is, so I'm not quite sure, yet, how the quest for authenticity strengthens that. It seems to me to inhabit an uncertain area between theatre as a process of imagination and the business of historical examination.

**Interview with Karen Tomlin**  
**Player Queen, *Hamlet* / Martha, *The Antipodes***

**Fourth wall/Focus**

I had to build a fourth wall for both *Hamlet* and *The Antipodes*. Of course you cannot ignore the audience, but you must not allow them to dictate your performance. The audience drives the performance but they could also destroy it. You must never forget the narrative. Each actor has to be a bit selfless, too. You can't pull focus. You have to be sensitive to the whole story, to the whole scene, rather than just your story. Within a conventional theatre setting there is perhaps more licence to do your own thing, but here it is the actors' job to give and take the focus when it's needed.

Clarity of thought or intention is paramount, whether it's an intimate scene with two actors or a large ensemble of 22. Without clarity it becomes telegraphing or pantomimic. I think you could get lots of general performances in that space, a kind of "general Shakespearean acting" (loud!). The sound distractions can tempt you to push yourself vocally, and so in your endeavors to be heard or to be clear sometimes character gets thrown out of the window, I think.

I think a third of the way through rehearsals they took us into the space. It was petrifying, but it did help me. It helped me begin to work out the dead space, around behind or between the pillars. And it was nice to have a chance to go on the stage and try it out. Towards the end of the rehearsal process it wasn't as frightening to go into the space, because a lot of the work was done. I know this is probably very radical, but I don't believe the play becomes incredibly different once it is transferred to the stage. Clarity of thought is all-important, and nothing about the stage experience can compensate if that groundwork hasn't been prepared in the rehearsal room.

**Vocal demands/Technique**

Acoustically I think it is a really good space, though there is an actual minimum level that you have to hit to be heard well. The problem is that sometimes I hear myself, especially in *Hamlet*, and I think "God, that's loud". I think I began work in that show from a purely technical basis and only later did I allow myself to relax. Initially I felt I was under an incredible amount of pressure coming on for only fifteen minutes, being the last actor on and being the only black actor in the company. All those elements impacted on that fifteen minutes. I worried that to the audience it

smacked of tokenism, and I felt I had to prove that I could handle the text and prove to them the reason why I was there.

But as I became more relaxed and we tried to rehearse *The Antipodes* I think I allowed myself to play more and actually relate to the other characters, instead of focussing purely on technique. I think it is great that we get a Master of Verse; Giles (Block) is an invaluable resource, but after a certain point you have to let your instincts take over once more, trusting that the technical work is done.

## **Pillars**

Those pillars! For me the pillars signify a struggle between authenticity and practice. The pillars make the actor's life difficult, they limit the way you use the space and because they're so big they upstage the players. I used to ignore them in *Hamlet*, thinking that otherwise I'd spend my entire time on stage trying to avoid the pillars. Rehearsals for *The Antipodes* were quite different because we'd based most of the blocking around the pillars, trying to use them as an integral part of the design. I think the only sensible attitude to take is 'the pillars are here, so we're gonna use them'. And consequently, they're absolutely fine, because we are *using* them. In *Hamlet* I have no relationship with them, whereas in *The Antipodes* they are part of the set. If the pillars aren't made to work as part of the set then they can only become an obstacle to the actor, something that impedes rather than enhances the theatrical space.

I think we need to put the space into some kind of context. It's a space that we're still trying to understand, but it's a space to perform in, not some kind of cathedral. Ultimately, what's achieved in the rehearsal room is what is most important.

## **Interview with Chris Tranchell**

### **Francisco/Cornelius, *Hamlet* / Truelock, *The Antipodes***

On the first day Mark welcomed the whole company. He said that this season was to be dedicated to the *actor*: both to those here in this company and to the actors in Shakespeare's company. He said that the work was an experiment, "Let's discover the specific emotional context behind the speech. Let's use the sensuality of this theatre". I recognised that what drew me to Shakespeare's Globe is very personal.

The most inspiring theatre that I have ever seen was in Armenia in 1983, in a production of *Coriolanus*. Almost as extraordinary was a production of *Uncle Vanya* at the Royal Court with Paul Scofield and Colin Blakely. All three leading actors in these productions had a strong physical presence, something loose and relaxed that gave them an emotional freedom. This let the audience into their personal, even private experience; they shared the spontaneity that they created.

The atmosphere in the audience for *Coriolanus* was almost like a carnival and yet the story had complete integrity; it was believable and serious. The Armenian actor was the host for the evening and the audience loved him. They may have had serious reservations about the *character* he portrayed, who was selfish and arrogant, but they didn't confuse the two. In the case of *Uncle Vanya*, part of what astonished the audience at the Royal Court was the depth of the relationship between Vanya and Astrov, two men who did not particularly like each other, but who knew each other better than they knew themselves.

I was in awe of Paul Scofield and Colin Blakely; they were something very special. I'd seen them both and they'd moved me deeply many times before, but suddenly the relationship between their characters was what came across. I long to be part of a theatre that can take an audience on this kind of special journey. I've experienced this with Chekhov; it is possible to get a sense of working with an audience; not showing a piece of history, or a beautiful piece of literature, but linking into a common experience, the common touch.

I had seen some of this in Shakespeare's Globe on the visits that I made before I came to work here. Especially from standing in the yard with others, this stage seemed to communicate a sense of the *present*, and of *sharing* the actors and the storytelling. It worked best when there was passion *and* humour. Hearing John McEnery playing Jacques – specifically a speech that I knew extremely well - I was very struck by the fact that I was hearing new things. Both he, and Mark Rylance as Hamlet spoke the lines as though they had just come to them. They identified with the audience as players like themselves, and it is this shared experience that moves the heart. And I realised that this kind of relationship cannot easily be achieved while sitting in a theatre in the dark, looking at a bright light.

This season was also a chance for me to work on *my* physical skills and the addition of having experts in movement to give us sessions was a joy to me. Glynn MacDonald the Alexander teacher helped me to free up both limb and brain. Victor Bischoff used a more dynamic tension method of developing body control. I think they both surprised me with the power that the mind can have over the freedom of movement. Stewart Pearce gave us vocal exercises that could be very effective and produce a rich sound in a session of only 30 minutes.

When we got to the first exploration of the text of *Hamlet* I appreciated the democratic process. Everyone contributed ideas and insights as an equal, whether or not the character had a lot to say. Giles Block led us through the wonders of Shakespeare's language and the naturalness of his verse. I feel that that piece of work, that I was part of, with such a rich text, set me on a journey that is surprisingly enduring.

I would like to say something about the *social* aspect of Shakespeare's Globe. I have always wanted the theatre to be as relevant to society as the breadshop, post office

or the butchers; a place to go to get the things you need in life, as well as something that fuels the soul. Coming to the Globe theatre throughout the whole season to see other events like Womad and Grupo Galpão's Brazilian *Romeo and Juliet*; all the music that was played in the productions; the intriguing bookshop; the armies of volunteers; the education department; all of it makes a full world. At Shakespeare's Globe there is a real sense of bringing theatre back into the centre of people's lives; communicating, talking to one another, sharing the storytelling and poetry that is essential in life.

### **Interview with Sian Williams Choreographer**

#### **The actor/ audience relationship at The Globe**

There is a *regard* that the actor has to have on stage – even in a black box – that makes an audience feel present and acknowledged in some sense. You can feel some sort of connection with a lot of performers- you somehow feel they know you're there, taking part in the ritual of acting out a story – it's almost a chemical mix that has to happen in any clearing that's made when somebody stands up and presents something. The interesting thing about the Globe is that you are much more exposed on the Globe stage. I had to step in for Clara Sanabras (Countrywoman, vocalist and lute player) for the dance in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and I didn't know where to set my gaze first, being so aware of all these observers and witnesses to the scene. It's a very exciting exchange.

When they were rehearsing *The Two Noble Kinsmen* I was conscious of how they were considering that relationship even in the rehearsal room. In a rehearsal room you're usually looking at a kind of wall that's rather too close to you, and you have to imagine beyond it. The actors were experimenting there with all the different *regards*: up close; and at a distance but seeing; seeing through all that, to thoughts. I find that whole area very useful to consider all the time. One of the actors in *The Antipodes* was telling me that he finds this space uses an enormous amount of energy, and I think that's probably because of this kind of consideration, that's going on all the time: how much do you get drawn into that relationship? When do you know that you've got to pull back and lead a little bit more with the action on stage? (Those are my words not his)

One of the aspects of training we have in dance is Laban theory; there's a whole section dealing with the natural movement of the body *in thought*. For example: your downcast regard is to do with the things at the back of your mind; when you are trying to solve something, you look physically towards a downwards angle; for inspiration you can often naturally think "up". These different physical qualities would be interesting to apply to the performing conditions in front of this audience. So, if you are thinking about something - and you're looking downwards - somebody standing below you in the audience might be used as source of energy to look at or look through in pursuit of the idea you're chasing. I thought it might

be interesting as a future experiment to set yourself certain tasks like that in performance - because at least they give you a place to stand! At the Globe there is always somebody behind you, and thoughts or fears can come from behind you, causing you to look over your shoulder perhaps; and there will always be somebody there at the Globe.

I like that notion, although it sounds mechanical in describing it, because physically it's very true to the body. The body can't help itself, it responds to the emotions in that way. I feel that apart from the beautiful eloquence that actors use to express uncertainty in their voice - in tone and tempo and all these things – physically, there is such fantastic potential. If the spine and the shoulders are tipped, and the chest is imploding, even slightly, this regard will register that the character is perhaps broken by the situation in some way. Similarly, if the character is gaining strength, we should be aware of it physically.

I often realise after seeing a theatre production that I've anchored the words to an image I have of the person speaking it. I can do this most clearly when I've been aware of them *physically* being at one with the idea of the character. Sometimes it can be a rather crude connection, for example, they were perhaps standing on a table when they said a line that stuck with me; but sometimes it is posture alone, or the fact that I'm aware that they had chosen to position themselves in a certain way. I remember seeing Anthony Sher playing Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*. In the last stages of the play, Leontes feels utter despair, and Antony Sher chose to be crouched in a corner downstage, just folded up. I remember thinking it was a bold decision to make what has to be quite a powerful speech from this most humbled position. I think it is useful for actors to identify physically how extreme you have to be sometimes. Once you've gone to places that are the most excessive ways of interpreting any given moment or feeling you may want to pull back, but these extreme choices are often really searing moments for the audience, that stay with them long after the performance is over.

Because Shakespeare's language is so rich, you can be bowled over by the notion of being able to physicalise this moment and that. When you come to do it, often it is just surplus to requirement, because the language says it all for instance. So, to try and put into practice what I've been describing, you need to be willing to fail, and I'm perfectly aware of that. But I think the real point is that even when you're being your most "poetic", there are still issues that need to be addressed physically: where are you physically? Is it a palace? Is your body a palace at that point, or is it the ruins of a destroyed castle?

It does seem there was a particular slump in British theatre - around the eighties and into the nineties – where it seemed you could listen to the radio instead, that you'd never need to see anything visual again. That was probably style; theatre seemed very much about the Word. Now the balance is shifting again, and perhaps training programmes may be addressing a more holistic way of working.



I think physicality needs rigour, there's no way around it, you've got to address it just as you would your vocal application, so in order to be really bold physically, you sometimes have to commit to the idea a long time in advance of the production. I remember telling my acrobatics teacher that I'd like to do some more aerial work - I'd started doing some quite late on in my training and I wanted to use it in my next production. He told me that in that case I should start work straight away, as I only had a year to go! I was shocked. I had imagined I would just start working on the new stuff a few weeks before the show, but he was right. It was amazing how long it took for me to get proficient enough just to hold my own weight, so that I was free to create, to invent things in these upside down positions.

So it's a big commitment for somebody to try and use a physical idea, knowing that it's quite possibly going to take us the whole three or four weeks of the rehearsal before we'll have it sufficiently prepared to work with it. In a way it's a mental commitment which can only come if it's a visionary thing as well, in which everyone is involved. I suppose it's right that these things are introduced gradually with sensitivity.

I happened to be at the beginning of Tim's rehearsals (for *The Two Noble Kinsmen*) and he decided to play lots of games. This was wonderful because it brought the actors right into perspective with each other; they learn the weight of the other person, the touch of the other person, and I believe that builds on a kind of understanding of things, and it will always be the foundation for strong ensemble work. It's hard because you've got to give yourself into the game of it, the fun of it, and you have to be very inventive. To get everybody in step, everybody moving like a wave, is fantastic, and five weeks down the line that kind of quality, the whole cast moving as one, is cemented in your physical memory.

It's lovely to work with actors, even though they have to learn to co-ordinate one movement after another in such a specific way, when in other areas of their work they're more used to finding things by trying. I can feel their resistance sometimes, because for them it must feel like a terrible constraint; perhaps they feel 'I might not want to move that way next time', but movement can be stretched and used in all sorts of pliable ways. I think that it's wonderful for an actor to have a choreographic notion of how their character moves within a scene so that when they come to perform they're free to explore the physicality of the character albeit within a given framework.

When you're trying to push the boundaries on stage, dance can help you understand and control your body, making you aware of fundamentals like balance, the position of the spine and muscular tension. Physical techniques can give an actor great support on stage, exposed to the world, having to look strong when they don't feel particularly strong that night, or breaking down with the same impact in every performance, or creating physical mayhem without doing themselves an injury.

Actors need a lot of confidence in order to play their roles: they may feel that technical elements that pin them down – ‘you lean on the table like this’ – can undermine them. However, a commitment to exploring the character’s physical behaviour in rehearsal can be very rewarding in performance.

If you are playing a very confident character that wears a big cloak, you need to know how to wield your big cloak with authority. On the other hand, if you’re playing a fragile character and you have to wear a big cloak, you’ve got to be equally skilful at using your cloak to demonstrate the fragility of your character.

Techniques are really important for supporting you, but they’re also liberating. I feel that it is important to commit to a physical approach that offers the broadest physical vocabulary. I think that’s the starting place.

### **Interview with Adrian Woodward Trumpet, Musical Director, *Hamlet***

#### **Acoustics**

Although the wood inside the Globe acts as a kind of sound board to a small degree, you are essentially playing in a theatre that is outdoors. Nearly all performances are sold out and 25% of performances will have noise disruptions of some kind: rain and thunder, overhead aircraft, overly exuberant audiences! This doesn’t necessarily limit the kind of instrumentation needed to accompany a play, but we have learned that you need to keep a few basic rules in mind: (1) music mustn’t be scored too quietly (i.e. *mp*) or it will be inaudible; (2) complicated, fast rhythmic passages tend not to be heard in this type of theatre and (3) notes must not be made too short. The latter has been perhaps the most valuable lesson we’ve learned. Short notes always have to be *tenuto* length, and even crochets must never be too *staccato*, otherwise they will not carry..

#### **Instrumentation**

I have heard many different kinds of instruments played at the Globe, including saxophone, clarinet, violin, exotic percussion, balaphone, vibraphone, double bass, accordion, and theorbo (to name but a few). All of these have worked well in underpinning the text. However, these instruments are hard to hear over the noise of (1) the public during intervals, and (2) during Playouts when the public are clapping, remembering that theatres were built for public entertainment, and audiences were expected to go away whistling a tune. The only instruments that have seemed able to cut through these moments so far are the instrument groups that I have been involved in.

I have taken part in seven productions at the Globe, and have served as Musical Director for four of these. I have played the Modern Trumpet, Baroque Trumpet, Renaissance Cornetto, Recorders and Percussion Instruments. The various Groups that I have worked with at the Globe have been with (1) Trumpets/Trombones/Side Drum/Field Drum OR (2) Cornettos/Baroque Trumpets/Sackbuts/Field Drum/Shawms (and occasionally exotic percussion).

The most common references to music in Shakespeare's text are the words 'Cornett flourish', 'Trumpet Tucket' and 'Hoboyes under the Stage'. Issues of authenticity aside, these instruments were attractive to an outdoor theatre such as the Globe because the music was loud and simple (by modern standards) with no inaudible running passages. Also, the musicians played in a tuning system known as *meantone*, which makes the chords 'ring'. In comparison, modern instruments do not have any ringing chords in their modern tuning system and are therefore at a disadvantage. It has always been normal for early instrumentalists to double on softer instruments such as recorders and cornettos, playing music which can underpin the text.

### ***And Finally...***

**Glynn MacDonald** (Master of Movement) *has written her own account of the 2000 Season as she experienced it:*

"Glynn's Globe Thoughts"

What an experience it has been at the Globe this year. This is the fourth year that I have had the great good fortune to be here, and with each year I learn more about this wonderful Wooden O. Maralyn Sarrington began the year by arranging a meeting with all the Masters. We were given the opportunity to say a little about ourselves and discuss the plan for the first year of the new Millennium. The plays chosen took us from the island of *The Tempest* through *Hamlet's* journey on to the prison of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and ended up in *The Antipodes*. What a grand body of work, and how thrilled we felt to be a part of it.

I have been given the title Master of Movement. At this time I feel very much a Journeyman, having completed a long apprenticeship, so I was filled with not a little apprehension to have this title. However, I did have a quiet feeling that the Globe is a place where it is safe to go through the necessary experiences and to travel a little further in my chosen field of work. This work is based on the Alexander Technique which F.M. Alexander (a 19<sup>th</sup> century Shakespearean actor) formulated one hundred years ago. It is a great joy to be able to bring my Master's work full circle back to the Globe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, to arrive back where it all began. The work involves a constant encouragement to develop a more conscious awareness both in myself and the people with whom I am working, to become more open to change. As an

Alexander Technique Teacher I use my hands to gently suggest 'a new way of being' involving less effort and contraction and enabling release to happen. This hands-on guidance enables the lessons that Alexander learned to be passed on more quickly and efficiently than people can usually learn on their own. There is always the temptation to do too much, but we learn how counter-productive this can be, and how end-gaining behaviour needs to be avoided in order to stop the habits that are holding us back. Working with actors means I have the great opportunity to help people who are already highly skilled in the use of themselves.

So the rehearsal process begins. The movement classes are in Duthy Hall, a good big space with the usual assortment of props lining the walls. Enough space to really move around yet not so cavernous to be frightening in the beginning. The Alexander Technique work is trying to help us find our true stature, where we are in time and space. For the last twenty-five years I have been sincerely involved in this study and I feel it is a wonderful privilege for me to be able to share this exploration with a body of talented actors, stage managers and directors. Always we are working first on ourselves and then with each other, trying to make the physical communication easier and clearer between us. We are strangers to begin with, but slowly through the kindness of strangers a company of friends begins to emerge. We learn to move as a corporate body. We begin to experience our own inspiration and with this new breath we learn to walk together.

As we slowly begin to find a little more ease and grace we start to become more aware of where we are. This is of paramount importance when we are working at the Globe which presents a unique challenge for actors. The nature of the building demands that the performers be aware of what is above them, below them, to the sides of them and behind them. We are completely exposed; there are no hiding places. As we stand in the circle of the Globe, open to the heavens and watched from below and all around by hundreds of eyes, we have to know how to embody our thoughts. As we begin to realise the strength of ourselves, to find our true stature and let our breath flow, we can explore the lovely movement exercise – 'From above me, from below me, from the side of me, from behind me, for me, for you'. This last instruction brings us back to the beginning where we can – as T. S. Eliot said – 'begin to know the place for the first time'. Always it is the first time, fresh, new and constantly surprising. We practise this exercise in the rehearsal space and then we have the fun of trying it out on the stage of the Globe. The theatre is empty save for some guides and perhaps a small group of people having a tour. It is a glorious moment filled with both a strengthening power and a feeling of humility and understanding of the connectedness of everything.

Actors have no other instrument but themselves. They cannot put their violin away or close the piano and walk away. Their minds and bodies are what they must use for their art. My role is that of a tuner of instruments. In *King Lear* we learn 'When the mind is free the body is delicate', so it is not just a matter of muscles but the whole mind, body and spirit working together to produce harmony. If we are too tense and making undue effort in our minds and bodies we will tend to be sharp,

and if we are collapsed and restricted we may be flat. Like an instrument we need to have an appropriate amount of tension which gives the right muscle tone so that we can be in tune. There are no short cuts to making these changes. We need to understand how the mechanism works and find ways of maintaining this level of excellence.

As we work through the classes and rehearsals the play emerges, like a large beast slowly waking up and stretching after a long winter rest. The 'brief chroniclers of time' tell their story and create the magic once again. At last, the first performance. And what a thrilling time it is, when we see the theatre alchemy begin. First a tiny spark, then a gathering of energy and momentum, until a fire breaks through and begins to burn, warming the circle, moving around until a steady blaze is going. It is moments of silence which fan the flames, until at the end we are all caught in a glorious burst of joy and applause. I am always so happy to sit watching the generosity of the actors, their courage to explore the text afresh, and the wonderfully enlightened choices they make. As part of the audience I have a chance to see the transforming power of Shakespeare on myself and the people around me. They are elated and renewed by the experience. Often they have come to the Globe wound up by their journey, their day, their life; after the play they are glowing with enjoyment, and we share the healing power of art.

So the season continued on through to the end of September. The last performance was *Hamlet* on a Sunday afternoon, after which Mark Rylance spoke most movingly, and the cast threw white roses into the audience. My husband Robert and I were sitting in the Lords' Rooms for this marvellous moment, and we felt again the magic of the Globe: a contained circle of human life brought together by a love of Shakespeare and a joy in life. We have worked together through the spring and summer, now in autumn we say goodbye, and go our separate ways, enriched by each other and taking a warm glow into the coming winter.

So as Master of Movement I say thank you for the chance to work again with the family at the Globe, and I wish you joy till we meet again.

*Deus vobiscum*

God be with you



