

SHAKESPEARE'S GLOBE

RESEARCH BULLETIN

Issue number 12

March 2000

Findings from the Globe 1997-1998 Season

Shakespeare's Contemporaries at the New Globe (1997-1998): The Maid's Tragedy, A Chaste Maid in Cheapside, A Mad World my Masters.

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The Maid's Tragedy (1997) – A Play by Beaumont and Fletcher

Directed by Lucy Bailey, Designed by Angela Davies

Synopsis and Cast

The play was written around 1610, probably for the King's Men at the Globe. The plot is simple and the story is only interrupted by the Masque that celebrates both the inviolability of the King and the joys of marriage - two notions that the play immediately proceeds to debunk.

Returning to Rhodes, the war-hero Melantius learns that, on the king's command, his friend Amintor is to marry his sister Evadne, and not Aspatia (daughter to Calianax) to whom he was betrothed. On the wedding-night, after a celebratory Masque, Amintor discovers that Evadne has only married him to conceal the fact that she is the King's mistress. Amintor feels obliged to maintain the pretence by his sense of duty towards the king, but his friend Melantius elicits the truth from him, then prevails upon Evadne to murder the King. He intimidates Calianax into giving him the keys of the fort. Calianax seeks to expose Melantius's plots to the King during his banquet, but he is disbelieved. Evadne, now filled with remorse, murders the King in his bed. Melantius and Diphilus take the fort but are pardoned by the new King, Lysippus. Meanwhile, the rejected Aspatia disguises herself as a man and provokes Amintor into a duel in which she is fatally wounded. Evadne then arrives and begs Amintor to take her to his bed, but Amintor is both shocked by her deed and filled with remorse for the wrong he has done to Aspatia. Evadne kills herself. Aspatia revives enough to reveal her true identity then dies. Amintor kills himself in despair. Melantius, Lysippus and Calianax discover the bodies and pour out their grief. Lysippus concludes the play with a short moral:

"on lustful kings / Unlooked-for sudden deaths from God are sent; / But curs'd is he that is their instrument"¹.

Geraldine Alexander	Evadne, wife to Amintor, sister to Melantius and Diphilus
Dean Atkinson	Cleon, plays sea monster in the Masque
Jonathan Bond	Strato, plays Aeolus in the Masque
Andrew Bridgemont	Lysippus / plays Proteus in the Masque
Lucy Campbell	Antiphila, Lady in waiting to Aspatia, plays sea monster in the Masque
Belinda Davison	Lady in waiting to Evadne, plays Cynthia in the Masque

¹ Based on the synopsis published in the Globe programme

Mike Dowling	Gentleman of the bedchamber, plays Neptune in the Masque
Michael Gould	Diphilus, brother to Evadne, plays Boreas in the Masque
Patrick Godfrey	Calianax, father to Aspatia, keeper of the fort
Mark Lewis-Jones	Melantius, brother to Evadne
Nicholas Le Prevost	King
Chris Porter	Diagoras / Servant to Amintor
Polly Pritchett	Olympias, Lady in waiting to Aspatia, plays sea monster in the Masque
Joy Richardson	Dula, Lady in waiting to Evadne, plays Night in the Masque
Anna Livia Ryan	Aspatia, daughter to Calianax
Jonathan Slinger	Amintor

The Rehearsal Process

Rehearsals for The Maid's Tragedy took place on days when the White Company was not performing The Winter's Tale, and very occasionally on mornings when they were. On day one, the director, Lucy Bailey, gave a quick outline of her conception of the play, presented the work on costumes and set of the designer, Angela Davis, and finally asked the actors for their feedback based on the experience of playing The Winter's Tale for several weeks on the Globe stage. The actors made different comments on their experience of the Globe stage:

- The audience in the Lords' Rooms feel like friends, though it can be odd.
- It's an amazing space for comedy.
- It doesn't tolerate any pretence. There is a need to get as clean and clear within yourself as possible. It's no place for "English" acting.
- The line between the pillars is death, or at least bad news.
- Too much bulk downstage hides the action in the centre.
- Asides become very personal.
- What lights would normally do has to be done physically - and it takes half the time - e.g. coming on and very suddenly turning to the audience.
- There is a big learning curve: it took them a few performances to learn for example to turn their head and take in the audience on the other side when they were playing in one corner.
- Scenes should be opened up as much as possible, by increasing the distance between actors.
- Vocally, you have to drive through right up to the end of every line. It's hard work.
- The sound is a lot more dead under the canopy, and you can be far quieter when you are playing on the fringes of the stage.

- Drifting about is very destructive of focus.
- David Freeman was very worried about handing over control to the audience.
- It is really necessary to rehearse on stage.

Main Features of the Play

Lucy Bailey told the actors how she felt the drama flies off the pages, how she was struck by the directness, power and intensity of the play. She insisted that the Masque is fundamental to the plot, because it makes you understand who the King is. She felt that it was there quite deliberately to hold up time. After the Masque, drama begins to roll out unflinchingly. The Masque represents as it were the façade, the scene cloth before the rigour of the inexorable end. There was an endless repetition of Masques at James I's court. Lucy Bailey explained that their whole purpose was to emphasise the divinity of kings, an argument most pertinent in a play which on the one hand sets out to show that the king is really the most immoral character in the story, and on the other hand has a hero who refuses to disobey or kill the king because of his superhuman status. The world the characters believe in is set out in the Masque: pagan gods are introduced to recognise the power of the King.

The staging was guided by the belief that in *The Maid's Tragedy* there is a lot that to be handed over to the audience, because it is so bold, because it is not a private play. Each character has a real existence and is there for a different reason: there is no padding.

Set and Costumes

The design was conceived to create an uncluttered space, intent on making the audience discover the play within the text and on stripping anything that could get between it and the performers. A black cloth was hung over the balcony and the central part of the stage, creating a stark and simple effect and making a gesture in the direction of authenticity, since we know that the stage was hung with black when tragedies were played. Director and designer felt very aware that the play was probably written for an indoor theatre, since there are many night scenes and references to lights.

It was planned from the outset that the central opening would be used for the King's entrances, for the Masque, for a tableau vivant after the ballet in the Masque, and to thrust the bed and the banquet table on to the stage. Otherwise, only the side entrances would be used.

The costumes were mostly monochromatic: the men in black trousers with white shirts, a sword and sheath, Aspatia and her maidens in white, like a trio of Greek wailers. The irruption of colour is brought by the blood of the first murder. Calianax wore a long cloak reminiscent of the traditional gowns of honorific functionaries. He and Diagoras, the stage-manager of the Masque, wore the happy and sad masques of comedy and tragedy. The four-poster bed that was thrust onto stage for the murder of the King was seen as a miniature of the

Globe theatre, with the black curtains drawn around the King reflecting the black cloth covering the *frons scenae*.

The Masque

In this production, the King would have the best view of the Masque, as he would have done in an Inigo Jones court Masque, and therefore would sit in the middle of the audience, on a little private stage or rostrum, painted with clouds². Boreas, the wind god who runs out of control, was initially to be played by Melantius, the outsider who has just returned from the wars, a man very removed from the court and peace. The contrast between court and soldier runs throughout the play, and the personification of trouble by the soldier seemed quite pertinent. In the end, however, the part was played in a more humorous vein and given to Diphilus, brother of Melantius. The general remained as spectator on the balcony, as befitted his earnest nature, and as is strongly suggested by the text, although after placing his lady on the balcony he actually tells her he will attend the King and return once the Masque is done.

Not all characters in the play take part in the Masque: the King and some courtiers are watching. But in this conception there was no doubling: the characters in the Masque were played by courtiers dressed up for a court performance. At the conclusion of the Masque, the courtiers playing the various parts of Greek Gods and Sea Monsters bowed quite self-consciously to the King sitting in the centre of the auditorium with Diagoras. Calianax and Aspatia stood on one side of the balcony, while Melantius and his Lady stood on the other. Prof. Chris Baugh pointed out that these characters were in effect excluded from the action, since no artistic lighting could pick out their probable inner reactions or the cruel irony of Aspatia's being obliged by her social position at court to observe the wedding of her betrothed to another woman.

The Masque itself was conceived as a baroque extravaganza: Night emerged from the stage trap, and her starry blue skirts covered the whole stage. The other characters in the Masque then emerged from under the skirt. Cynthia, the moon, descended from the Heavens trap and remained suspended in mid-air for the whole duration of the Masque. The costumes were Greek bodies drawn on body suits on the upper half, scales or feathers on the lower half. Sea monsters appeared with Proteus. Flamboyant brass instruments were played by musicians costumed as mermaids (one tuba, two tenor trombones, one trumpet, one French horn). In short, they were an attempt to reflect Elizabethan fantasy gone mad, based on Inigo Jones's designs.

Much rehearsal time was devoted to the Masque, because of the sheer difficulty of getting used to the massive cloth representing both Night's skirt and the sea. The actors practised running under the skirt in such a way as to suggest a playful sea or a storm. They learned how to pop their heads or other parts of their

² Inigo Jones built a "state" for the King and Queen in the middle of the audience when he transformed the Tudor Hall, Whitehall, for the presentation of *Florimène* in 1635. See R.A.Foakes, *Illustrations of the English Stage*, p.77

bodies through the holes. The instrumentalists thrust their instruments out, underlining the richly sexual suggestions of the lyrics.

Characters

Melantius and Evadne were seen as very similar characters: they share the same ambition, they idolise each other, and are obviously very close, as is demonstrated by the game of wit they have at the beginning of Act IV scene 1. It was very important to emphasise this closeness, as this scene brings about an incredibly rapid change of attitude in Evadne. Cuts were introduced because of the length of the scene, but they had the effect of making it even harder for the actors to make the change credible.

Selected Scenes

The Sewing Scene (Act II, Scene 2)

This scene poses two different sets of problems: the blocking is quite complex, because the three maids have to be sewing and having a conversation; and there is a temptation to play it very monotonously sad and miserable. In Lucy Bailey's mind, it was necessary to avoid extremes of emotion or heightened intensity, which might prevent the audience from going out towards the character of Aspatia. She made the actors practise as if the scene was all about beauty and ideal, rather than about how sad life is, in order to concentrate on the poetry and let the images just happen. They also tried playing around the sewing - starting and stopping according to the dialogue.

Another problem is posed by the fact that Calianax does not talk to his daughter, although she is still on stage when he arrives. It seems that he is so upset by his disgrace that he is unable to confront her. He cannot cope with his daughter's grief either. She, like an anorexic child, is unable to connect with him. But could he be talking to her as well as to the servants? One solution would have been for her to run into the house the moment he arrived, and let the servants face him. They then have to pack up the sewing during the whole time he soliloquises to the audience. Patrick Godfrey, who played Calianax, felt however that his lines should be addressed to the maids and not to the audience. A second solution, which was retained, was to have her sitting as still as a statue of Melancholy, far enough from the maids for Calianax to enter without even noticing her.

The scene centres on the grief of the rejected Aspatia, and her attempts to make her maids join into it. She becomes a stage director of the scene, explaining to the maids how they should express their shared sadness in their looks. This part of the scene was blocked with Aspatia facing the balcony and the two maids facing the audience, at the very front of the stage. In performance, it invariably elicited laughter from the audience. (See interviews of Polly Pritchett and Anna-Livia Ryan).

Killing the King (Act V, Scene 1)

Contrary to the stage direction, the Gentleman was on stage before Evadne, and she knocked on the door to gain admittance. This made her asking for the key more logical. Once she had entered, she rushed past him to hide her dagger, and advanced all the way to the pillar, which became a prop to her despair.

The four-poster bed on which this scene takes place was thrust forth during the interval, but the problem that had to be solved was getting the King to bed. Two solutions were tried: the Gentlemen puts the King to bed, or he is in it from the moment it is brought on. Evadne did not have to draw the curtains, as they were already open.

The stage direction "King abed" suggests that the bed was either in the discovery space, or on stage close to the audience with the curtains fully drawn. In this production, the bed was roughly in the centre of the stage, where most audience members could see it. Unfortunately, spectators on the sides and in the Gentlemen's Rooms could not see the King's face in that scene because of the bed posts! Various positions were tried in rehearsal, including one further back, under the Heavens trap, where the chair of state would have been. But the position further front was thought to help the actors play more intimately, with banter continuing quite late into the scene. It helped them resist the temptation of falling too early into pathos. It also made sense to hide the actual stabbing from the audience on the sides who might too clearly see that it was fake, since they are closer. The choreography of stabbing was quite tricky to work out, because of the length of the scene and the number of speeches. In rehearsal, the actors started by playing the scene in a rather exterior, aggressive style, then tried out a very intimate love-hate scene heavily loaded with sexual innuendo and danger. The final version retained more of this intensity than of the pathos, but audience reactions came as a complete surprise to actors and director. (See interviews with Gerry Alexander and Nicholas LePrevost).

The parts of the two Gentlemen were conflated into one, which opened different ways of playing the moment after the murder. Mike Dowling opted for playing it as a clownish figure, providing comic relief after the tragic scene. The tempo then had to be increased by a crescendo on the word "treason", and some of the gentlemen shouting their cues off-stage just before entering.

The transition to scene 2 was extremely quick: Melantius, Diphilus and Calianax appeared on the balcony while the bed was being carried off. The imaginative leap required of the audience was supported minimally by the actors: they simply raised their voices when addressing each other from stage level to balcony level, to suggest the distance between the characters in the fort and the characters below.

Blocking the Production on the Globe Stage

Almost every scene was re-blocked once the cast were able to rehearse on stage. Based on the director's instinct and the actors' experience in *The Winter's Tale*, which they felt had been blocked too strictly to enable them to open up to the

audience, most of the scenes were re-staged to increase distances and the broadness of gesture.

In I-1, Melantius arrived from the yard, giving Lysippus ample time to speak the 8 lines that separate the general's entrance from his first words while he made his way among the groundlings.

In III-1, the "morning after" scene, Evadne's aside to Amintor ("You do it scurvily, 'twill be perceived", l. 115) was spoken from the very centre of the stage, over his shoulder and directly taking in the audience, proving that it is not necessary to stand at the very front or side of the stage for direct address to work. Amintor has a long aside at the end of the scene ("A bawd! Hold, hold, my breast! A bitter curse / Seize me if I forget not all respects / That are religious" etc.). There was some question in rehearsal as to whether the King could hear Amintor's first words, considering the length of the aside, but this would have left the scene unresolved. Instead, Amintor signified by a gesture that he accepted the deal and the aside was solved by having him move away from Evadne towards the groundlings while the King walked back up to her to embrace her.

The king's banquet (IV-2) involved bringing on a table and chairs that were set under the Heavens trap. The king sat with his back to the front of the stage, Amintor and Evadne together in the place of honour, with their backs to the *frons scenae*. Calianax's frantic running around the table kept the scene dynamic.

Even some of the private scenes were reblocked in broader strokes so that it should be clear that private issues could not be dissociated from a political dimension: in the confrontation between the King, Amintor and Evadne (III-1), strong diagonals were introduced, with Evadne standing close to the *frons scenae* out of the way from the moment it becomes clear that the dilemma is Amintor's and the obstacle the King, while she is only the issue of the dilemma.

In the confrontation between Melantius and Calianax (III-2), the two characters each entered from a different side-door and found themselves at the greatest possible distance on the Globe stage, the one by the stage-right pillar, the other by the stage-left door. In this scene they could hear and see each other, and that is where the dialogue began. In the next scene, between Melantius and Amintor, the characters were in exactly the same positions, but this time Amintor could neither hear nor see Melantius, whereas Melantius could see but not hear his friend. The Globe stage will apparently not allow a fixed set of conventions, but requires them to change from scene to scene.

The taking of the fort (V-2) involved a confrontation between Melantius, accompanied by his brother Diphilus and his hostage Calianax, standing on the balcony which represented the battlements, and the new king Lysippus with his men, on stage level. As suggested by the text ("Ho, from the walls there!", l.22), the actors had to raise their voices both to be heard and to suggest the distance. But at the end of the scene, instead of throwing the "blank" that seals

Melantius's pardon³, Strato simply passed it to Diphilus who leaned forward as far as possible. Initially, Calainax was placed on the other end of the central bay of the balcony, which made the asides easier to speak, but was less effective in terms of comedy. After the technical rehearsals, he played the scene hiding behind Melantius and Diphilus, and spoke the asides between them. Over the fairly short run the pace was increased, and the actors learned to address the spectators in the galleries as well as the groundlings, partly because the yard was not always full (the play being relatively unknown and a tragedy), partly because many of the soliloquies were not comic but a genuine questioning of tormented souls. Added to that, their sheer length and the number of rhetorical questions they contain made it necessary to vary the directions of direct address.

Does Tragedy Work at the Globe?

In 1999, after an uninterrupted succession of comedies, the Globe presented Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Now that another tragedy involving murders and suicides has been staged at the Globe, it is possible to try and understand why audiences laughed at most of the deaths and suicides in Beaumont and Fletcher's play and not at Shakespeare's.

The murder of *Julius Caesar* was staged just outside the central opening, in front of Pompey's statue, under the newly created canopy of the extended balcony. No blood was seen during the murder, though the conspirators did indeed dip their hands into blood after Caesar was slain. If the bed in *The Maid's Tragedy* had been farther back, would the audience have laughed less? They would not have seen the false blood from so near, and the remoteness might have reintroduced some majesty. The naturalism of blood is less effective than its symbolism in a century that is used to endless gore on the screen but deciphers it too quickly as trickery on stage. The absence of blood except on Caesar's coat clearly did not affect the modern audience's belief in the characters' death, on the contrary. The Shakespearean stage required great efforts of imagination on the part of its audience, but also relied on crude methods which obviously need to be used more sparingly with a twentieth-century audience.

At the Globe it is likely that part of the laughter at the sight of blood and sudden death on stage stems from embarrassment, because people are aware that they are visible to each other. But the question of rhythm is also essential. Both the suicides of Cassius and Aspatia were received by the audience as deeply affecting partly because of the surprise effect, whereas the ones that followed on, respectively Titinius then Brutus and Evadne then Amintor created a cumulative effect that was diversely received. In *The Maid's Tragedy*, there was clearly a comic dimension - to the point that some actors felt that it was written

³ Lysippus says: "Throw him the blank", l.63

into the text⁴. In Julius Caesar, it increased the pathos to the point that the concluding jig came as a fully justified moment of comic relief.

Interviews

Geraldine Alexander (Evadne)

I was intrigued by the space. It's opened up incredible possibilities. When I knew I was working here, there was a mixture of awe and trepidation. I was as excited as when I went for the first time to the theatre. But that was mixed with fear.

What it makes harder is the subtlety of thought, the psychology. It grates not to play truth. We have audiences who are used to thought acting, and you can't leave that behind, But I'm learning that there's a way of making that journey on this stage. You learn that thoughts have to live in your body, they can't be confined to an idea. Otherwise a bit of the audience might get it, but some of them won't. That's the greatest challenge. Technically, it's a complete being one with the audience. I've always thought it should be like that, but somehow in our modern theatres you can lose that relationship very quickly: sometimes it can come as a shock at the end when they clap, because you're not quite sure who you've been doing it for. Telling a story is much easier here, because that is what people have come to listen to. That keeps you firmer on track. But they can control it too. Some moments aren't certain.

It's definitely a nicer place to be when it's full in the yard, just because they bridge everything for the people in the seats, they carry it over. And also, just as they can carry laughter, they can also carry the small (psychological) things. Some people are looking at you closer than you will ever, ever be looked at in any theatre you can play, even studio theatres. They've got a camera on you, and it's not a selective camera, because they can move. Somehow that gets carried out. You can use them or rather trust that they are seeing things that people at the back cannot, and somehow it gets transported. But you also have to think through your body.

I look out to the people in the galleries but very rarely. In the speeches I do, not in the soliloquies. I'm not on top of the relationship with the audience completely yet. I have not really done the play often enough, and also don't think it's Evadne's line: I might tip the play. If you had done the play more often, I might say to the people: "now look, I just want to try, experiment, to see what happens," but I haven't got the courage to sacrifice a performance.

But I think that's wrong, there are places where she does make contact with the audience. I re-staged some things that they were not picking up, and they became much easier: where I am taking things out. For instance, I'd be told something and I'd hide away from it. Now my instinctive reaction is to take it out so they know - the other character won't know what I'm thinking - but the groundlings are privy to it. That's really been helpful, especially in the scene with

⁴ See interviews of Nicholas Le Prevost, Geraldine Alexander, Polly Pritchett, Anna-Livia Ryan and Jonathan Slinger.

Mark (Melantius). It's such a switch: they can see that she has a history, and they can understand it better. I'm not mentally doing much different, but the effect is very different, by placing things on different parts of the stage. I'm still discovering things. I knew where she was at the first preview, but how and when it comes through has changed.

Audience reactions vary with each performance. I think the laughter is good in that Beaumont and Fletcher put it in. I think they laugh because they want it so much, and also because it's too shocking and sexy. There's a big challenge in the space, that actors may overcome in few years. But I wonder if it would happen in a smaller theatre, with a very tight and sharp production that would keep the horror of it? But I'm not criticising our production, I think it's right. Beaumont and Fletcher have actually written a joke in just before I come on, at the end. There's that accumulation of trauma, then I come on, and for me it's a very serious moment, and I feel maybe I should be coming on at a different moment. It's not like that in the "Killing the king" scene: there I feel that we're controlling it, it's more a laughter of defence. We did one performance where there was a sort of stunned silence. It might be the angle of my body. One night there were 6 men from one office stage right, leading the audience. The audience subsumed them, they disappeared into it. But they felt as if they had decided what they wanted to do.

Just above the trap is nice. I've got so fond of downstage right in front of the pillar, because that is why she has this great bridge. I like coming in though the middle [central opening], in some of the scenes - not the last one. Above the trap, that's where you feel you've got most control. Very downstage also feels right, but you are less able to talk to people on the side than when you are in the middle.

I've played the Royal Exchange a lot. It would be nice if you could even more in the middle of the O. I've also played out of doors in the tent of the Royal Exchange, but it's more intimate. The Swan - in retrospect it would feel rather phony, it's too neat, not rugged enough. Backstage is not neat here, like at the Swan. There's nothing like this. Actors can get a chance to become better here. My advice for future actors would be: Do ten minutes breathing every day, to remind your diaphragm what it's there for. Share your thoughts. The space could take much more athletics, more physical but completely body-oriented. You have to be quite fit. Use the stage as much as possible, because it's different from a rehearsal room. It has lots of possibilities that you want to be aware of throughout the rehearsal process. Stand everywhere, in the galleries, near the pillars etc.

Anna-Livia Ryan (Aspatia)

We haven't played The Maid's Tragedy enough to make any major changes [in response to audience reactions], but I don't think I would change Aspatia, because I am playing it for its sincerity. So if they laugh, they laugh. I'm not feeding that or willing them to laugh. I'm just telling it as it is. But I think it's perfectly natural for them to laugh, because it is funny. She's toff. She's suicidal, perfectly sincere, but her whole situation is funny. The whole thing is, in many

ways. I can't see it any other way. There have been references to Tarantino [in the press] - there really is the same kind of humour.

Playing both plays was the strangest experience for me because I felt it was two different spaces, because of the completely different relationship to the audience, and how they responded to these characters differently. It was very satisfying. We played *The Maid's Tragedy* to the front, almost like a proscenium arch, whereas in *The Winter's Tale* most of my scenes were to the sides. I am so aware [of being in a theatre in the round], I can see almost every face sitting in those side back seats. In fact, I can see almost everybody in *The Winter's Tale*, except the groundlings, whereas I really do see them in *The Maid's Tragedy*, so it feels like a different place.

In *The Maid's Tragedy* I discovered the very centre forefront. I just think it's a fantastic position. You've got the whole theatre, the three tiers, the groundlings, the sky, the stage. You're just at the tip of the sky: if you tilt your head back a little you can see and sense the people on the sides, you've got the whole of the groundlings.

In the majority of *The Winter's Tale* I had my back to the audience, so I was familiar with that area. In the sewing scene, where I face the balcony instead of the groundlings, I think: these people have not seen much at all because of the way *The Maid's Tragedy* is staged. I quite liked that, because they finally got to see me. In *The Maid's Tragedy*, the first few times we did it, I was conscious that I had my back to most of the audience, but I was really open to some of them. Is Aspatia a feminist? The audience see it like that, but it's not in the character. She's just broken-hearted. They're picking up on things she doesn't really understand.

Belinda Davison (Cynthia)

In *The Maid's Tragedy* Masque, I was suspended in air and had to sing with Polly [Pritchett]. She was facing the front, and because I was quite high, I couldn't actually hear her unless she turned to me [which she did for the final note]. That's why they had to bring in a trumpet line to double mine. But it felt right for Cynthia to be that high above Night, something very bright and a bit fickle.

Chris Porter (Diagoras)

I wanted to get an impression of what it would be like on stage, but you could not until the technical rehearsals. Then the whole play changed: everything was re-blocked, things were cut, others put in. Though it looked very small, you could see everything that was happening outside, and you thought: no one is going to hear a word of what I say. If you stand at the back of the yard and look at the balcony, it seems a long way, especially since it's all round - even if by comparison with other theatres it isn't.

It only changed when we started playing *The Maid's Tragedy*. Physically, I got used to it very quickly, I was very comfortable on the stage, but vocally I didn't

get the measure of it until *The Maid's Tragedy*, where I was on stage on my own for a very short while.

The greatest challenge is physical. The vocal part is easy: you just have to be clear, you don't have to project that much. It's a lot friendlier than some much smaller theatres that I've played in. But physically, you've got to take the stage and the audience. You must not let yourself be scared by them. You must let it inflate you, as it were.

Some things are easier at the Globe. The contact, and getting laughs is very easy to do. But when it first happened that I delivered a line to one person, making eye-contact, it was so scary having this person staring back at you just three or four feet away, in a completely different world - i.e. not in the world of *The Maid's Tragedy*! I'd done it a couple of times without focussing on one single person, but it was very different. I only did it if I was feeling bold and confident. If I wasn't, I'd just take them all in.

I certainly changed things over the season because of audience reaction, mostly in *The Maid's Tragedy*. At the end of *The Maid's Tragedy*, I came on and discovered the body [of the King]. We had done it very differently in rehearsal. In fact we didn't have a clue how to do it in rehearsal. Then we came to the first preview and it became immediately apparent that what we thought was right was wrong. We changed it to just walking on and finding the bodies, as opposed to trying to run through, not see them and then see them. I walked straight into the middle of them and said the line, then did a sort of cheap double take, but it seemed to work. I don't know if laughing is the best thing, but the way it was going at the end, it seemed to fit. And that was completely dictated by the audience. It's not particular to the Globe, but it's more apparent in the Globe, because you can see them and you can see the heads turn. If you're on one side of the stage and something is happening on the other side, and you say a line, you can see all the heads turn. It's like a tennis match! To know that people are actually listening to you is great!

The closest thing to it is TIE, touring schools, because there is no lighting, everything is blanket lighting. But normally in schools you can see that they don't care, except for the odd face, whereas in the Globe, it's the odd face that is not interested.

I do think the groundlings get the better share. About 70% of your energy goes down toward the groundlings. There was certainly a temptation to extemporise, to expand the double takes. I found myself responding to audience reactions. In I-2 of *The Maid's Tragedy*, with Paddy [Godfrey, playing Calianax], I ask him to stay, because all these people are trying to get into the Masque. I say: "stay, stay, your looks will terrify them", and he answers: "if my looks terrify them, I'll be judged by the whole company, whether or not thou hast a worse face than I". He says this to the audience. At the first couple of shows, this went without a response. On the third, it got a big laugh from the audience. It suddenly occurred to me that they were laughing because he was saying that I was uglier than he was. Their laughter was like an agreement and I started saying the lines as if saying: "what? How dare you?" to the audience. Because I'd done that,

they laughed again. But it wasn't planned. The second time, I milked it a little, but the first time everything went out of my head, even my next line, when I realised 1400 people were calling me ugly or having a laugh at my expense. It happened after that because we noticed it and expanded on it. But I never did it deliberately. Sometimes when someone would sneeze, I thought of saying "bless you" - in character, of course - but didn't because it felt against the rules. Then I saw the last night of Henry V, and Mark Rylance saying: "If anyone is scared, let them depart", throwing "go on, then", and I thought I could have done so too.

Jonathan Slinger (Amintor)

There was definitely an interaction between the work on the two plays. I was glad that it was that way round, because *The Maid's Tragedy* was the big one as far as I was concerned. I wanted to be familiar with the space and the actors before I started it. The shame was that I got to do far less performances of *The Maid's Tragedy* than of *The Winter's Tale*. But by the time I reached *The Maid's Tragedy*, I was feeling far better equipped vocally and freer physically. I had an awareness of the audience and their part, but it wasn't really until *The Maid's Tragedy* that I used it, because Florizel didn't really contact the audience, whereas for *Amintor*, there wasn't a single scene where I didn't address the audience. And when I went back to *The Winter's Tale*, I wondered why I hadn't done it, and then opened it out far more in the last performances. As a company, we'd all been very tense on *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Maid's Tragedy* relaxed us all, to the point that I felt a palpable sense of relaxation on *The Winter's Tale* which hadn't been there before, which loosened the production up. It didn't affect the blocking though. It just became freer.

I'm sure I will take that openness to whatever I do next: just because an audience is not visible doesn't mean that they become invisible. They are still there to be contacted. Any acting decision I make in the future will have that question over it. I'll be looking more for that opportunity.

In *The Maid's Tragedy*, where the contact was much more direct, I changed things in response to the audience - moments more than scenes actually. A lot of scenes were in danger of becoming pantomimic, and it was often difficult to stick to what we'd rehearsed because of the audience response. I didn't really take the laughter of the audience in the dramatic scenes on board. I did fight to try not to change too much. There were times when it irritated me or confused me, early on. I don't think we played for laughs - it's really due to the way the play is written. Part of the reason it is funny is because it is so serious and we were playing it that way. What I strengthened was my resolve not to allow them to make me to play to it. There was a temptation to do it - except in the last scene. It made me more focussed in fact, as I resisted the temptation to fall out of character or extemporise. I'm not quite sure how much I succeeded. I just got more belligerent ("shut up and listen to me!"), which may not have been the best way to deal with it. I could have relaxed it and allowed it to happen. On a couple of occasions, a small thing would take me somewhere else. In one, when Evadne says "'tis the King" [who was my lover] - there was a wave of sympathy for me in the audience, and I suddenly became a little boy, it almost overwhelmed me, and I felt really helpless. It informed that scene brilliantly. It

gave me a way of doing the scene which subsequently didn't rely on them -I just integrated it.

About laughter in the final scenes: I think there is the timing of Evadne's entrance. I can't help thinking that it was written that way, and that you'll always get laughs. That was the intention. Aspatia's groans, on the other hand, have a function: the audience is gripped into knowing that she's alive, and feels Amintor should stop talking to Evadne and deal with her. But we never really got that. Of course, we also gave them a lot of licence to laugh. They found the whole play funny. And once you do that in that space, they really enjoy laughing. That is their preferred state. The farcical edge of the play meant that the audience was always on the lookout for it. I could understand their laughing when Evadne came in covered in blood, and when Aspatia groaned, but not why they laughed when Evadne stabbed herself. I suppose it was just the cumulative effect.

Joy Richardson (Night)

With *The Maid's Tragedy* I thought I knew the space and could use it, but because it was a completely different character, that was witty in different ways, I had to relearn the voice and physicality. Having played *The Winter's Tale* didn't help me as much as I thought it would. But unconsciously it did: that fear was not there when I first came on for *The Maid's Tragedy*, which was when I first did *The Winter's Tale*. I learned a lot from *The Maid's Tragedy* which fed into *The Winter's Tale*. We tried very hard not to confuse the two worlds, because they are so different, but when David Freeman came back, he said that we'd picked up the energy of *The Maid's Tragedy* and not actually maintained the energy of *The Winter's Tale* - and he didn't think that was good. A lot of it was subconscious. But *The Maid's Tragedy* had another way of using your body and the language, which has fed into *The Winter's Tale*.

Mark Lewis-Jones (Melantius)

The Winter's Tale and *The Maid's Tragedy* are completely different parts, and *The Winter's Tale* is essentially much more difficult to do because it is far more complex. *The Maid's Tragedy* is a good story that pushes forward like a train, it's well written in that thriller sort of sense, and it's very macabre and dark in places, but essentially it's one plot, which is very different from *The Winter's Tale*, a hugely complex play. But having scaled that first, it helped enormously. We had that confidence to go into *The Maid's Tragedy* because we had a good stab at *The Winter's Tale*. The work on *The Maid's Tragedy* fed back into *The Winter's Tale* (we stopped for three and a half weeks) and when we came back there was a sort of ease to it. They're opposites but they do complement each other.

I feel that in *The Maid's Tragedy*, having had the benefit of *The Winter's Tale* and being able to see *Henry V*, one could already feel that there was a confidence, an awareness of the space that wasn't there in *The Winter's Tale* for obvious reasons. Already there has been some ground covered between just two

shows. For instance, the way Lucy [Bailey] has used angles helped overcome some of the negative points of the stage.

The uniqueness of the Globe is that it is so unforgiving about anything that is superfluous. Anything that you put in the way of the story is highlighted by the fact that it's on the Globe stage. In a sense you're watching people tell a story, and you've got nothing to help you. You've got yourself and the people on the stage. Anything that gets in the way is more apparent as an obstruction on this stage. It's all little things: in isolation, they would seem totally irrelevant. It could be physical things, or "don't chop lines up, just get to the end", paring away. In *The Maid's Tragedy*, because the play dictates that style anyway, because there is nothing else than the story, there is no subtext, you've got to tell the story, you have no choice.

Michael Gould (Diphilus)

I was a bit self-conscious in *The Maid's Tragedy*, running around the audience. On the first night, I didn't go straight to the King, but went up to various women, and they were rather shocked. On the last night, I lifted a child who was in my way, and he was absolutely terrified. On the whole, I didn't extemporise much⁵.

The Maid's Tragedy was simpler from the point of view of the plot. Sometimes the clarity of *The Maid's Tragedy* and Lucy's really fresh approach made me lose heart in *The Winter's Tale*. I really enjoyed *The Maid's Tragedy*. But it wasn't my real contribution to the season, so it didn't really affect my performance in *The Winter's Tale*. On the contrary, the experience of *The Winter's Tale* certainly benefited the rehearsals of *The Maid's Tragedy*. My principal reservation on *The Maid's Tragedy* was the black cloth that hid the lovely backdrop.

My main conclusion is that the Globe really empowers actors. I didn't feel remote at all on the balcony, or if I did, it was entirely appropriate to the scene. There has been a slight obsession this year with technical problems and issues. It's now time to focus on the scenes in the plays: being up there was absolutely necessary for that scene⁶.

Nicholas Le Prevost (King)

The Maid's Tragedy was a good choice for the space. It's not only what it means in itself, but the accumulated meaning. There's a general effect: in *The Maid's Tragedy* you get so isolated in your character. But all of us worked hard individually to make sense of our characters. So when we put it together, it had an accumulated effect. It's like cooking: you never realise the effect one single

⁵ At the end of the Masque, Michael Gould, who played Boreas and wore a very suggestive costume, ran amok into the audience, climbed onto the King's rostrum, then ran out of the auditorium.

⁶ In the scene where Melantius takes the fort, he is accompanied on the balcony by his brother Diphilus and by the commander of the fort, Calianax.

herb will have to the general taste of the dish. So the way the audience reacted was a shock.

What do I think of the fact the audience laughed in tragic scenes? It disappoints me: I think it means that we've failed. I don't believe the hoo-ha in the press about Beaumont and Fletcher. At that time there was a lot of cruelty and public executions, and you regularly saw death and mangled bodies, and slow death from festering wounds. What is now a minor accident could then mean death, so their perception of death and the way it came about is almost beyond our imagination. Laughter is wrong. In its day, I feel quite sure that they were overwhelmed by the tragedy. But then Beaumont and Fletcher brought in the comic relief to turn things on their head cruelly, to show that life goes on, that that is the way it is. But I think it's wrong, I don't like it when they laugh. We should have studied that culture, that violent society, to lift the performance to a level where it was absolutely as violent, cruel and unpleasant, because I think that's what they were saying. I don't think they liked the world they were living in any more than we like the world we're living in. They weren't saying: "this is how it should be, we approve of it". It was a political comment. It was a poetic plea. I think they would express it in a loss of pressure in the intensity of their view in a box theatre. They would be disappointed by the arousal of their disbelief. It's to do with the antiquity of the words. There's something there which is dead and gone and irretrievable, unless one worked really hard to resurrect that sense of violence and brutality and cheapness of life. This was a time where no one expected to live very long.

My view about *The Maid's Tragedy*, which I didn't feel was the same as Lucy Bailey's (whose work I liked much better than David Freeman's), was that it is much harsher and aggressive, so I decided to make the king as strong as possible. I didn't want him to be evil per se, a villain. I wanted him to be a perfectly acceptable man who like any other is corrupted by his age, his sexual decline, and his power. I also realised that you can stand very still on this stage, that there is an enormous power. You know the audience will find you if you wait for them. And if you give them the space to find you, they will find you. What I tried to do with the king, rather than demonstrate anything, was to make that clear. So I kept him much tighter, much more private and intense, less demonstrative. In fact I do almost nothing as the king. I don't go out to the audience.

Patrick Godfrey (Calianax)

It's interesting to see the difference between what happened in the rehearsal room and what happens on stage: in the *The Maid's Tragedy* technicals, Lucy was redirecting all the time, saying things like: "Don't bother to go round the pillar, you can go straight across". She very skilfully redid it all in a very short time, and it didn't make any big difference. It depends how well a production has been rehearsed. If it's been well rehearsed, you can do anything. You have to have your basics right, the building blocks in place.

I'm on the balcony during the *Masque*, but I've never thought of the audience looking at us. I find it very difficult not to enjoy the *Masque*.

Polly Pritchett (Olympias)

I definitely changed things over the season. In *The Maid's Tragedy*, in the sewing scene, Lucy and I knew we would get laughs, so we decided to be very flexible about it. If people laughed right from the start, we didn't play it up. But if they were very attentive at first, we knew we could play it up.

In *The Maid's Tragedy* we were much more confident, more comfortable on stage. You become used to a place. In *The Maid's Tragedy*, in the *Masque*, I felt very comfortable and never unnecessary. I knew exactly why I was there and what for, even though I had a small part. And that comes from just being there - not just doing performances, but also the warm-ups, being in the auditorium, feeling, for the duration that we were there, that it was our space.

The acoustics were lovely. During warm-ups, hearing the sound not echoing, but just undulating round the auditorium, just how beautiful the sound could be, I got carried away with it. The acoustics are so beautiful, quite seductive. I'd get behind because I was listening to it. When the auditorium is full, you have to work much harder, because the audience sucks up so much sound, and it's noisier. That's probably not as true of the singing. When the yard is empty, you have to colour the sound even more, because the sound has got much farther to go before it meets something to bounce off. It has to get over the yard.

When Belinda Davison was hanging above me in the *Masque*, I could not hear her, because she was so high, and her sound was going straight above me, and because the musicians were around me on stage, I could only hear them.

I don't think people would laugh in the last scenes of *Othello*. But *The Maid's Tragedy* really seems funny to us now, and I think *Aspatia* was set up to be funny by *Beaumont and Fletcher*. Jacobean plays always engender laughs when people die. We know these people aren't dying, and it's a hard play, because it's difficult to feel any sympathy with any of the characters. When they actually do die, you don't really react. Interestingly, when *Aspatia* threw herself onto *Amintor's* sword, the audience stayed completely silent. It was so unexpected! You expect the King to die, he's tied up, he thinks he's going to get something very exotic, it's set up to be funny, and then he's killed. But when it was completely unexpected, there were no laughs. Perhaps it has to do with the way we played it. There may be a way to do it which we didn't find. You don't find those things out. The character of *Evadne* is incredibly difficult, because she goes through such sudden changes. It's so unsubtle, and the story is repeated often enough for people to be able to go out and then come back and know exactly what is happening. And yet it's got beautiful things in it, for example *Aspatia's* speech on men in Act V, which is really modern.

***A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1997) – A Play by Thomas Middleton**

directed by Malcolm McKay, designed by Jenny Tiramani

Synopsis

Several plots run in parallel: the rich City merchant Yellowhammer wants to marry his daughter Moll to the noble Whorehound, unaware that he is a ruined rake. He has also promised his son Tim to Whorehound's Welsh mistress, presented as his niece and a gentlewoman. Meanwhile Touchwood Jr has fallen in love with Moll and secretly plans to marry her. His brother Touchwood Sr decides to live without his wife for some time because they have too many children and no money to keep them. Lord and Lady Kix are barren and both desperate for a child. Whorehound also keeps a mistress in London: Mrs Allwit, whose husband is her pimp. The plots cross as . Touchwood SR convinces the Kixes that he can make them conceive, Touchwood Jr tries unsuccessfully to elope with Moll, and Davy Dahumma and Allwit try to prevent Whorehound from marrying Moll. Meanwhile two promoters enforce the ban on flesh during Lent, a wench tricks Touchwood SR and the promoters with her new-born baby, Mrs Allwit's baby is christened, and Tim is introduced to his Welsh betrothed. After a duel between Whorehound and Touchwood Jr, the wounded rake recants and damns the Allwits, Touchwood dies and the Yellowhammers leave the town because Moll has died of grief, amid news of Lady Kix's pregnancy. The final scene brings the dead lovers together, but upon news that all agree to their union, they rise from their coffins and are immediately married by the parson. The Yellowhammers return and pardon them, all to their despair at having discovered Whorehound's real nature and Tim's wife's real identity. The concluding note is merry as Yellowhammer invites all to celebrate both weddings.

General Conception

According to Malcolm McKay, the piece is a scurrilous attack on the world Middleton was living in, characterised by greed, puritanism and hypocrisy. All the characters are unapologetic and callous: if they win, they laugh at the losers. Each character must therefore enjoy his corruption and villainy: the audience will only like them on that condition.

In this conception, the play needs an enormous amount of energy, which must be found through a relentless pace. This can only be achieved by increasing the speed in picking up cues and bouncing off one another, not by increasing the speed of the speech, which would make the plot too difficult to follow. The actors must enjoy their scheming. They were even encouraged to extemporise, although the timing of every event in all scenes was very carefully worked out.

During his preliminary work on the play, McKay had coined the concept of punk-Elizabethan. In the final product, pastiche (in the music) and authenticity (in the clothing) were mixed with anachronism (in the staging) sacrificing the serious and darker dimensions of the play to the pure fun of the comedy.

The Rehearsal Process

In the first rehearsal, the actors were asked to work out the pecking order in the society presented in the play, for Malcolm McKay felt it was essential for each character to know precisely where he or she belonged within the very hierarchical world presented by Middleton. The order reached after some discussion was the following:

- Sir Walter Whorehound (Rory Edwards)
- Lord and Lady Kix (John McEnery and Eve Matheseon)
- The Touchwood brothers - ruined gentry (Stephen Skybell and Christian Camargo)
- The Yellowhammer family (Matthew Scurfield, Amelda Brown, Katie MacNichol, Ben Walden)
- The Allwit family (Mark Rylance and Elizabeth Meadows Rouse)
- The parson; the tutor (Craig Pinder; William Russell)
- The promoters (Bill Stewart and Vincent Brimble)
- The porter; the wet nurse (Nick Fletcher; David Lear)
- Davy Dahumma - Whorehound's servant (David Fielder); Susan - Moll's maid (Toby Cockerell, the part having been turned into a male servant called Stephen)
- The Welsh whore (Jules Melvin)

The rehearsal room was divided into two distinct areas, one representing the Yellowhammer home, the other the Allwit home. It was envisaged that this distinction would be carried over to the Globe stage (see section on design).

The actors were then asked to each write a short text about their character's desires, on the assumption that if we know them, we can forgive them.

Malcolm McKay had originally completely rewritten the script to modernise it, but most actors felt they wanted to go back to the original as much as possible. So several rehearsals were spent studying the original text and introducing minor changes in order to make the plot and language more accessible to a modern audience. During the rehearsal process, other changes were introduced, such as updating or relocating topical allusions. Thus in II-2, "Lord Beggarland" became alternatively "Lord Aitken" or "Peter Mandelson", and the "Exchequer" was replaced by the "George Inn in Southwark".

A special workshop was devoted to the preparation of male actors playing women. Because the company had been playing Henry V in an all-male cast, there was an expectation that they would know how to play women, but the situation was actually different, since four women had joined the company for *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*. Malcolm McKay wanted to avoid having the audience think: "Oh, it's just another man dressed as a woman". The actors who had been playing female parts in Henry V testified to the difficulties they had encountered. Christian Camargo (Dauphin / Queen in Henry V, Touchwood Jr in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*) stated that the way you are treated is affected by the way you look, are dressed and made up. Things changed radically for him when his wig was replaced. He and Ben Walden revealed the rage they had felt when they heard audience members making obscene remarks. It taught them

about the vulnerability of women, and they integrated it into their acting. Ben Walden, for instance, held his head sloped as Alice, emphasising that her attitude was less direct than that of a man, but without reducing her to total passivity.

The actors worked in pairs, each man playing a woman being paired with an actress or female member of the artistic team. They observed each other, trying to take out all notions of sexuality or personality, the men in terms of becoming a woman, the women in terms of understanding why a man is not a like a woman. The women had to be particularly careful to simply be a woman, not to act one. The workshop continued with each woman teaching her partner to do a task, and concluded with each woman teaching a courtship dance to her partner.

In a later rehearsal, the actors improvised a day in Cheapside, working out the relationships within households. The director was surprised to discover that all the couples had a successful relationship, even though most of them had a corrupt basis. He felt it essential that each character should have a story and know where they were coming from.

Staging Choices

On the basis of Touchwood Senior's lines: "There has been more religious, wholesome laws / In the half circle of a year erected / For common good, than memory ever knew of" (II-1), Malcolm McKay added a brief prologue during which the two Promoters ("Wardens" in the modernised version) distributed and hung bills carrying a Lenten Proclamation on the prohibition of all flesh. The text of the Proclamation was written by Skip Shand, text adviser to the company.

In order to make the pre-history of the plot clearer, and also to signal the beginning of the play, a musical prologue was added. The street musicians, who had been playing on the piazza before the performance began, came onto stage after the distribution of the proclamations and started improvising a jolly dance. The servants joined in, then Touchwood Junior, then Moll. The dance therefore served to figure the first meeting between the lovers. The musicians and servants were simply having fun, but the meeting was about true feelings - the only ones in the play. The Promoters then interrupt the revelling which is naturally forbidden during Lent, so the musicians exit, and Maudline calls Moll from within, which prompts her to motion Touchstone Junior away and move into scene 1.

The interval was placed before III-3, at the end of the christening scene.

In II-1, the first scene involving the Touchwood brothers, Malcolm McKay inserted a squabble between the Kix couple during the brothers' dialogue. They appeared on the balcony already quarrelling before reappearing on stage level a few lines later for the actual scene. This successful trick was reused by Lucy Bailey in the 1998 production of *As You Like It*, where Silvius and Phebe ran

after each other on the balcony during the scene preceding their dialogue on stage⁷.

The balcony was also used to add credibility to Lady Kix's maid's conversion to Touchwood Sr's projects. Jugg (who was played in drag by Bill Stewart) stood on the balcony during her mistress and master's quarrel, and Touchwood Sr. came up to her after having heard the beginning, in order to gain admittance with them. The silent encounter made it clear that Jugg was charmed by the irresistible Touchwood.

In II-2, the Promoters surprise various characters unlawfully carrying meat during Lent. Contrary to what is now done most commonly on the Globe stage, the actors did not use the pillars or the hangings to hide, but were content to exploit the sheer size of the stage and tricks such as turning their backs on other characters so as not to see them.

In II-3 and 4, some parts were conflated or replaced in order to cope with the limited number of actors: Gossips 1 and 2 were replaced by Lady Kix and Jugg, while the concluding dialogue between Puritans 1 and 2 and Gossips 2, 3, 4 and 5 was slightly modified so as to be played by only two actors (John McEnery and Vincent Brimble in drag). The scene became a sort of crescendo interrupted by a sudden change of mood on the words "Come, sweet sister".

Because many of the innuendoes contained in the text were no longer clear for modern audiences, after the first runs and technical rehearsals, the acting was changed to make them more visually explicit, especially in the case of Tim (whose jokes are usually unwitting) and Touchwood Senior.

The staging was made imaginative through anachronistic use of the possibilities of the stage and auditorium. In I-1 (I.84), for Sir Walter Whorehound's entry, and again in order to clarify the plot line, Malcolm McKay staged a double entry from the yard. On one side Sir Walter, preceded by Davy Dahumma, pulling a cart carrying the Welsh Gentlewoman, on the other side, Lord and Lady Kix preceded by Jugg. The servants called out extempore phrases like "Make room for the knight", gradually changing to "make room for my knight" ... as if in a verbal duel, presenting the latent conflict between Kix and Whorehound. A few lines were added for Davy to explain the situation opposing the kinsmen: the one who cannot breed and the one who cannot stop, and the fact that a Kix child would deprive Whorehound of some land he stands to inherit. Thus, from some obscure allusions in the text, the director and his text adviser increased the emphasis on one of the many conflicts that underlie Middleton's plot, an intra-class conflict between two individuals who hardly ever meet on stage, as opposed to the conflicts that centre around status and interests.

In IV-2, in order to convey the feeling of time passing and to give more urgency to Moll's escape, a pursuit was staged throughout the auditorium: Moll (Katie

⁷ cf Globe Research Bulletin 10, Findings from the 1998 Season: As You Like It

MacNichol) climbed up one of the auditorium pillars all the way to the upper gallery, from which she ran into the attic, followed by the porter (Nick Fletcher). She then abseiled down the fishermen's ropes hung between the Heavens trap and the stage trap. Maudline (Amelda Brown) observed her from the balcony, then ran down (within). The comic effect was guaranteed when Touchwood Jr finally met Moll on stage and asked: "What made you stay so long?". Moll then followed the watermen into the stage trap that remained open throughout the act. Maudline arrived on stage to witness the comic abseil of the porter and welcome with an added line: "Why so slow?" to which the porter answered: "I'm 64". Minutes later, Maudline dragged Moll out of the trap, followed by the watermen.

In the final scene, it was originally envisaged that the coffins would come through the yard, but they were too heavy to be heaved onto stage with no steps. They were therefore simply carried in through the central opening and placed side by side on the stage.

Design

Malcolm McKay saw the Globe stage as a sort of beautiful Renaissance loggia in an Italian town, an old building which is part of the daily life of a modern city: bills are posted, cars are parked near it and goods sold under it. Initially, he had imagined the central opening to be the entrance to an inn, or to represent a market place, with the Allwit home on one side and the Yellowhammer home on the other. These concepts were dropped when it became clear to the director that the Globe stage is a public place par excellence. The only addition to the bare stage were the ropes borrowed from the Golden Hind (a replica of Sir Francis Drake's ship permanently anchored next to Southwark Cathedral). In the second part of the show, they were used to suggest the world of the watermen, and became props for the pursuit and the fight between Whorehound and Touchwood Jr..

The only major prop was the bed that was thrust on stage for the christening scene. The same bed was used - with different drapes - for the murder of the king in *The Maid's Tragedy*.

The costumes were in part straight copies from Jacobean originals: Yellowhammer wore a City Merchant's gown, the Welsh Gentlewoman a dress copied from a Venetian woodblock that was well-known in London as early as 1580. Jenny Tiramani chose to make it Venetian to introduce some exoticism, since the character is both foreign and a marginal. Maudline, the bourgeoisie with aspirations, wore a court style hooped skirt made of wool rather than silk, in keeping with sumptuary laws and her limited budget. Whorehound's one foot high wig was inspired by a description of the Jacobean dandy Greene's eccentric clothing and hairstyle. Jenny Tiramani stated that "we are still being very subdued in terms of stage practice and costuming", noting for instance that it was quite common to wear coloured beards in Jacobean London. To her, the costumes she designed were neither extravagant nor outrageous, and simply

took the lessons learned from the production of *Henry V* one step further. The actors already had the experience of authentic clothing, and it was now possible to have conversations with them, in order to fit the costume to the character. Her conclusion was that it was a case where the Globe had influenced the artistic team rather than a situation where the designer had brought her own preconceptions.

The wigs were very important, since the head is essential for caricature. The actors did not wear wigs in *Henry V*, but all did in *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*. This was very helpful for them in terms of characterisation. The wigs were based on real hair-styles, although there is far less evidence on Jacobean and Elizabethan hair than on clothing.

In a public interview, Jenny Tiramani stated that she is not worried about the stage because she knows it so well, whereas many designers are disturbed by its size and colours. Several have tried to cover it completely, but the Globe requires designers to reduce their ego. When you fix anything architecturally to the stage, it destroys the general effect. The Globe has made it possible to use costume as the prime way of telling a story by apportioning the major part of the budget to clothing. The set for *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* only involved proclamations posted on stage and in the auditorium, and hangings representing stone reliefs of Adam and Eve. These were essentially an experiment to see how actors in period costume stand out before grisaille hangings, since experience has shown that they do not stand out well in front of the trompe l'oeil stone background between the three openings.

Tiramani also noted that there is nowhere in the theatre where it is possible to take in the whole stage - in fact she wonders whether the stage in the original Globe may have been smaller. As a result, watching the action is more like creating a film: you naturally go to close-up, and have to follow people, sometimes physically (for the groundlings).

A Mad World, My Masters (1998) – A Play by Thomas Middleton

directed by Sue Lefton, designed by Kandis Cook

Sir Bounteous Progress	Jonathan Cecil
Mistress Harebrain	Tonia Chauvet
Lady Gullman, a Courtesan	Belinda Davison
Ancient Hoboy / Rafe	Michael Fenner
Lieutenant Mawworm	David Fielder
Gunwater	Leader Hawkins

Constable / Watchman	Martin Herdman
Possibility / Jasper / Knight	Paul Hilton
Dick Follywit	Wil Johnson
Master Shortrod Harebrain	John McEney
Inesse / Knight	Guy Moore
Penitent Brothel	David Rintoul
Mother	Maggie Wells, later Anastasia Hille

General Conception

In the first rehearsal, Sue Lefton addressed the question of the title of the play. What is mad about this world? Who are the masters? The answer may be that no one in the world of the play is what they seem: the courtesan is interested only in money, not in sex; the jealous husband (Harebrain) is not interested in sex at all, whereas the intellectual Puritan (Penitent Brothel) is obsessed with it.

Ironically, it is the over-jealous husband who brings about the adultery he so fears. According to Sue Lefton, the play is deeply moral, it presents a society whose status quo is off-centre, where revolution is about to happen.. The play was written two years after Queen Elizabeth's death, and nobody seems to know what to believe in anymore: law, religion, gender and marriage are all held up to ridicule, and things only get worse as the play unfolds. Order is only brought back in time for the final celebration. But this is not a weak play with loop-holes where things suddenly get right for no good reason (unlike *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*).

The whole structure of the play is ironic. It is about knocking the establishment much like in the *Carry On* films. The key to making it funny is therefore to play it straight, but it is necessary to find the truth of it first. For Sue Lefton, the message of the play is that you cannot control the world, however hard you try. Follywit and the Courtesan who have both tried to do so each end up tricked by a smarter trickster.

Design

When she designed the costumes, Kandis Cook was aware of a change in gender roles at the turn of the seventeenth century: men were very feminine and were losing confidence in themselves, while women were becoming far more powerful. Her concept was to apply modern fabrics and colours to period shapes and styles, the former to convey the decadent spirit of the sixties and seventies embodied in her eyes by Follywit and his gang, the latter to suggest the social yoke that still imprisons most of the characters in the play. She chose to concentrate on the quality of the making rather than on the fabrics, and

designed the costumes before the rehearsals began, after having discussed them with the director.

The set was minimal: a bright yellow floor-cloth covered the Globe boards, conveying the notions of earthly passion and subversion. This brightness was echoed by the strong lighting in the Tiring House and formed a strongly contrasted backcloth to the motley costumes.

The main prop was once again a bed that served in three different scenes, covered with different fabrics, since each scene took place in a different home (the courtesan's lodgings, Sir Bounteous Progress's country house, Penitent Brothel's lodgings). Another essential prop in Sir Bounteous Progress's country house was the organ - replaced by a harmonium in this production.

It was originally planned that the edges of the stage would be raised with spikes to form a barricade between the actors and the audience. This plan was dropped halfway through the rehearsal period, both for safety reasons and because of the sight-line problems it would have raised.

The Rehearsal Process

London in 1605 was seething with city life, and Sue Lefton was keen to have actors inhabiting the stage and balcony at all times in order to give the sense of life in tenement blocks. So one of the first rehearsals on stage involved trying out different uses of the space: doors vomiting characters out, actors running around stage and balcony etc.

As rehearsals proceeded, it became clear that stillness would not work for this play at the Globe: the tension of every meeting would have to be created and maintained through movement.

The society painted by Middleton is defined above all by its hierarchical quality. Thus the first task Sue Lefton gave the actors was to create a pecking order, much in the way Malcolm McKay had done for *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*. The improvisation involved playing a game of master and servant, where the servant followed the master and was ready to obey or even anticipate his/her master/mistress's every wish, almost to the point of exasperation.

In the second group rehearsal, the master-servant improvisation was carried one step further: the masters were now Puritans, and the servants developed an urge to be bad on the quiet under the pressure of the masters' zeal and the neighbours watching.

The master-servant theme is strongly suggested by the title, so Sue Lefton was keen to create a strong world of servants, where each servant, however small his part, would have a clearly defined personality. Thus Rafe (Mr Harebrain's man) was extremely well-spoken and displayed a strong sense of propriety, while Penitent Brothel's servant was city-wise and seemed to embody Penitent Brothel's "front". Sir Bounteous's servants, on the other hand, are numerous busybodies who generally seem to take advantage of their master's bounty.

Special sessions were devoted to the creation of the world in which servants move : the more loyal country servants, and the cynical city servants.

Very few props were used during the early rehearsal process, so that it became more and more difficult to bring them in the later rehearsals. The actors also knew, based on their experience playing *As You Like It*, that it is useless to fake eating and drinking on the Globe stage, because it is so exposed.. This was an important decision for the play, since there are so many scenes involving eating and drinking. The cast settled for really drinking fake champagne i.e., ginger ale. The fact that many scenes that seemed to cry out for props such as chairs or stools were actually staged without them was a result of the very physical work the actors were submitted to. The director found that every time she could do without props, it benefited both the dynamic of the play and the result on the Globe stage, which requires a great deal of motion.

One of the driving principles for the staging was that actors did not need to swiftly move off stage to make room for the next scene. On the contrary, the tendency was for the incoming characters to push the ones from the previous scene off. The decision was based on previous experience with the Globe space, where simultaneous action is made possible by the sheer size of the stage, by the openness to all sides, and by the neutrality of the locus, which only acquires specificity when the actors take possession of it. Although some actors were uncomfortable about this scheme, it conveyed a forceful forward impetus to the performance.

After the first weeks of rehearsing, and once the actors had begun to master their parts and movements, much work was devoted to a precise staging or even choreography that would make constant use of diagonals and curves, and avoid the "Valley of Death", as the line between the pillars at the front of the stage is commonly named by actors and directors working at the Globe.

Another new convention that was established by this production was that characters do not need to "see" the person coming on stage to greet them: both Penitent Brothel in I-1 and Harebrain in I-2 welcomed the Courtesan without having turned round to descry her arrival, simply by having heard her footsteps.

Characters

Frank Gullman, the Courtesan, was seen as a daughter growing weary of her mother's control over her life. The mother, on the other hand, is worried that it is time for the courtesan to get married before it is too late. There is a sense that both belong to fallen gentry rather than to the gutter. The mother is a bright and clear-headed businesswoman. Penitent Brothel is the only character in the play who knows the whole truth about the Courtesan and her mother. The Courtesan constantly tries to avoid lying. She always uses language to remain honest. She is not interested in stealing - much to Follywit's surprise, when he discovers that she has had access to his grandfather's jewels and never touched them (IV-3). In the final scene, she is as shocked to hear that her husband is a thief than he to learn that his wife is a whore.

Dick Follywit has an exquisite knowledge of that which is likely to most hurt his grandfather. His gang is out to get money for themselves as much as to follow him. In II-4 they even show signs of rebelling against their leader. Follywit lives by his wit and has probably never been to war, whereas Mawworm and Hoboy are former soldiers, stock characters on the Elizabethan/Jacobean stage. Their relationship is the same as that between Iago and Cassio: ancient and lieutenant. They live off Follywit's wit and hopes, but lack any discipline. Each of them cheats the others as well as their collective victims. Follywit is very much an adolescent: his humour is childish and he has no knowledge of woman at all - in fact it is hard to believe how easily he is tricked into marriage by the Courtesan.

Sir Bounteous Progress is described as "no knight since one thousand six hundred", a phrase so ambiguous that one editor claims that he belongs to the old gentry, whereas another takes it to mean that he is an upstart knight. The production chose to have him played as a "nouveau" nobleman, overeager to display his wealth and taste, and overanxious to mix with the higher nobility.

Inesse and Possibility are country boys up in town for a dirty weekend. They need each other to comfort and goad each other on, though it is not quite clear why they are pursuing the same woman. It is also difficult to guess whether they are after sex or marriage with the Courtesan, since she and her mother are playing up her innocence. Sue Lefton insisted that the two should always stay connected, not only psychologically, since they are dependent on one another, but also physically and visually, since they do not exist as separate entities, and could easily lose their collective identity on the Globe stage. The actors worked out a double act where there were constantly trying to get in front of each other, moving in curves and twists, and echoing each other's faces.

Sue Lefton was fascinated with the notion that Middleton was probably a Puritan, and was convinced that most of the characters, and essentially Penitent Brothel and Mr Harebrain, were Puritans. The hypocrisy of the world the characters live in stems directly from the new rules imposed by the rise of Puritanism.

The irony that underlies the play is apparent in the evolution of the characters: from the moment Mrs Harebrain has learned from the Courtesan, her husband begins to trust her. Mr Harebrain's obsessive jealousy encourages his wife to betray him. The tragedy of Penitent Brothel's repentance is undercut by his persistent desires: the moment he swears never to see Mrs Harebrain again, he has an erection (as testified by the unambiguous first words of the Succuba, "What, at a stand? The fitter for my company!").

For Mr Harebrain, John McEnery and Sue Lefton worked on a physical gait and appearance inspired by the character's name: a wild hare, stopping and starting, changing suddenly from very fast moves to complete stillness.

Penitent Brothel seems to inhabit two worlds simultaneously: the underworld he seems to know so well, and which fits in with his lustful obsession, and the world of the Puritans. However his Puritanism is not a mere social badge, it is a deeply interior, individual mode of being. He is not tricked by any other

character, unlike the Courtesan and Follywit, who are tricked by each other. In spite of his objections, he slips into the role of the fake quack doctor without any difficulty. He is completely dissociated from the mercantile interests of the other characters: he is the only one who does not need to play tricks to acquire money yet cannot be tricked out of his. In fact, he is only tricked by his own subconscious, as in the Succuba scene. The actors came to the conclusion that he had been one of the Courtesan's customers, which is why there is such a degree of familiarity between them, and a constant game of innuendo. The language she uses with him is very different from the one she uses even with her mother. In their first scene together she is constantly turning him on sexually while underrating her own work in order to increase his desire.

Mrs Harebrain is an empty vessel only filled by other people's energy. The first impression is that she is a breakable doll, a puppet manipulated in succession by her husband, the Courtesan, Penitent Brothel and her husband again.

Thanks to Sue Lefton's physical work, all the characters were defined by their silhouette and the shape of their spines. The director was also very careful to emphasise the transitions between prose and verse which are usually highly significant in terms of characterisation and changes of emotional register. There were however tensions between the need for movements to be organic and to derive from the necessities of the text, and the feeling that some actors had of movements imposed for the sake of keeping the performance active. Some of them felt there was a risk of distraction for the audience if there was too much movement, while others bemoaned the lack of heart that was induced by an approach that seemed to go from the outside in, as opposed to the more usual rehearsal technique of exploring the psychological motivation of characters before developing their stage behaviour.

From Rehearsal to Stage

One of the principles of the production was to allow scenes to overlap generously. Actors were told that they did not need to be helpful to their colleagues coming on for the next scene (i.e. to avoid pulling focus). On the contrary, the juxtaposition of situations and characters belonging to different story-lines was deemed necessary to establish the "madness" of the world portrayed.

Act I presents all the characters and plot lines, but Sue Lefton followed a now well-established convention of the new Globe: she added a musical prologue that introduced the story. The place is a tavern in London, where exuberant music and dancing leads into a fight and brawl. Follywit's chutzpah is immediately demonstrated as he takes advantage of the fight to pick a customer's pocket. The prologue made a logical transition into Act I Scene 1.

The time-scale suggests late afternoon for the first scenes. Night falls and the plots start unfolding: Follywit dresses up, the Courtesan sends her man out to Penitent Brothel. During the night, Follywit robs his uncle. The next morning brings Inesse and Possibility to visit first Mrs Harebrain, then the Courtesan, both

faking sickness. The Courtesan is also visited by Sir Bounteous, but above all, she harbours the meeting between Penitent Brothel and Mrs Harebrain. Meanwhile, Follywit prepares his next trick. The first part of act IV has an early evening atmosphere: Penitent Brothel is visited by the Succuba then rushes to the Harebrains' house, while Follywit tricks Gunwater then succumbs to the Courtesan's charms. Act V takes place on the following Tuesday, as specified in Sir Bounteous's invitation to the Harebrains⁸.

I-1 Introduction.

In rehearsing Act I Scene 1, it became obvious that the characters were carrying their private dealings in a public place. It therefore became necessary to establish this privacy spatially. Sue Lefton was keen to go beyond the simple movement of seeking the shelter of the pillar, which tends to exclude part of the audience. She suggested creating an inner and an outer space, to create an architecture by walking the corridor. She asked the actors to practise becoming private by being pulled, even sucked into the inner space when in need of secrecy.

Building up the relationship between Follywit and his accomplices involved several rehearsals where the past of the men was imagined, leading up the constitution of the gang. It was important to convey that Follywit has not fallen from grace, but that because of the hypocrisy of society, he has fallen into a form of grace which is the reality and directness of the gang. His life is dangerous but exhilarating, and he himself is a sort of firecracker, a combustible that feeds energy to his group. The actors felt that, at the end of the journey, the gang-members feel let down by Follywit's marriage and return to "good" society.

It took many rehearsals to draw a precise shape for their first scene together, the actors tending to stay together in a cluster that made it hard to see their faces from the sides. In the end, it had to be choreographed quite precisely, because of the sheer amount of information to impart, in a scene which was bound to command less attention from the audience because of the bustle created by the incoming groundlings.

During the improvisations in the early rehearsal period, the actors imagined the first meetings between the various characters, most of them seeming to take place inside or close to a church. This led quite naturally to having the first scene between the Courtesan and Penitent Brothel take place in an imaginary church created by their attitude (beating their brows, kneeling to pray, and whispering). Penitent Brothel stood quite a bit further upstage than the Courtesan, on a diagonal, as if pretending not to be talking to her. To complete the picture, a silent beadle walked past, forcing the plotters to be even more discreet. This detail was added following a rehearsal where Guy Moore had improvised the part of a busy church clerk likely to overhear the two plotters' conversation, an addition which considerably helped the actors in their search for the appropriate level of gesturing to suggest secrecy and intimacy. After several rehearsals it also

⁸ scene by scene : I-1 Friday mid-afternoon; I-2 very early evening, ie before dusk; II-1 evening; II-2 night (going to bed); II-3-4-5 middle of the night; II-6 Saturday morning; III-1 mid- morning; III-2 late morning, III-3 afternoon; IV-1 to IV-5 evening; IV-6 Sunday morning; V Tuesday

became clear that the Courtesan should stay behind Penitent Brothel because she is the one who has information to impart.

The scene was gradually choreographed around large curves, using diagonals and avoiding the line between the pillars (known as the Valley of Death, because it is so bad in terms of sight-lines).

Penitent Brothel's first soliloquy presents many of the characters and one of the story-lines. Since the plot is fairly complex, it was decided that it might be useful to have the characters mentioned by the narrator cross the stage as he named them, to the accompaniment of appropriate music. This was only necessary for Harebrain and his wife, since Follywit and the Courtesan actually meet and greet Penitent Brothel within the scene.

The scene between the mother and the Courtesan was worked up as a strong confrontation of clashing energies, the Courtesan taunting her mother with her dedication to pleasure, the mother's fear culminating in a slap on the line "hold thee there girl" which leads on to the long speech in which the decadence of London is ironically described. The scene turned out to be a mirror-image of the briefing of Mrs. Harebrain by the Courtesan, part of a long development on the real power of women.

The mother's long speech required an important decision: should it be entirely spoken to the audience, as if it was a political statement, or should it involve the daughter? The actors had a preference for bouncing off each other, since this is the crucial scene where the relationship between mother and daughter is presented, thereby providing the historical and social background for the character of the Courtesan. For Sue Lefton, mother and daughter were fallen members of the gentry, not children of the gutter, and therefore the mother is very anxious to keep a hold on her daughter and prevent her from falling any lower by playing dangerous games - which she continues doing throughout the play, in spite of her mother's pleas. But this particular speech is an important general statement on the decadence of London, and should therefore involve the audience. Both approaches were tried in rehearsal, but once the audience was present, it became obvious that the speech was made for them rather than for the daughter.

I-2 Harebrain and the Watchmen. In this early scene it seemed essential to convey the plot with the greatest possible clarity. The jealous husband motif was therefore made clear first by having the Harebrain couple cross the stage during Penitent Brothel's initial monologue, then by having Harebrain enter with his briefcase chained to his wrist. The problem of Harebrain's aside was solved by having the watchmen share the money he has just given them. There was a discussion as to whether the last lines of Harebrain's speech ("there is a gem...") were addressed to the watchmen or still part of the aside - initially John McEnergy spoke them as part of the dialogue, but the allusion seemed too clear, so they were reintegrated into the aside, which required the watchmen to continue talking and plotting. The watchmen did not exit at the end of the scene, but stayed on stage in front of the side doors, listening and watching, thereby carrying the tension of the scene into the dialogue with the Courtesan. Two of the watchmen were played silently by stage management.

The moment where Harebrain gives the watchmen the money was carefully calculated: in a first version, Harebrain held the coins for the whole duration of his aside, with the watchmen eagerly waiting for him to stop and give them the money. In another, both Harebrain and the watchmen held the coins together. The point Sue Lefton made was that every reference to money in this play is the occasion for a joke, and the same applies to jewels, with a more overtly sexual connotation. In fact, to make the point more obvious, John McEnery added a gesture to underline and explain the pun on the word "gem".

Once the Courtesan goes into Mrs Harebrain's room, Mr Harebrain becomes the watcher, so the watchmen have to "disappear" without pulling focus. There was an attempt in rehearsal to express the "madness" of the world by having the watchmen run off the moment the Courtesan entered the house and Mr Harebrain take the leading watchman's place by the pillar, but this solution was not retained. Instead, the three watchmen walked out slowly, crossing the whole stage along opposing diagonals, in order to establish the mood of suspicion and spying.

The section of the scene where Mr Harebrain spies on the two women was particularly difficult to stage because of the "non-literal nature of the Globe stage" as Sue Lefton put it. It was indispensable to introduce a strong physical dimension in order to bring out the irony of the dialogue. Early in the rehearsal process, Belinda Davison had tried circling around Tonia Chauvet like a spider around her prey, but that dimension was dropped in later rehearsals. Instead, the scene became a sado-masochistic ballet where the Courtesan used a stick or ruler and a book to admonish her pupil. The scene was also practised with Mrs Harebrain as the moving principal and the Courtesan trying to contain her excessive energy. But that version seemed to give too much control to Mrs Harebrain.

In a later version, Mrs Harebrain entered in a flurry, like a catherine wheel, which gave the Courtesan something to control. In fact, the Courtesan ended up slapping Mrs Harebrain, with the aim to startle her and make her come alive. It seemed clear that an excited and almost hysterical wife who then learns about cheating and manipulating would prove a more explosive and revealing character than one already poised and intelligent at the beginning of the play. The part, according to Sue Lefton, required more spontaneity than deep analysis. The Courtesan, on the other hand, has to deal with the tension of remaining very strict on the surface, yet giving a lesson in immorality. She does not allow herself to become friendly until the very last cues, with the gift of the jewel. As rehearsals progressed, less and less circling became necessary to establish the relationship. On the other hand, it was felt that the actresses should match the 'elaborate action' referred to by Harebrain with appropriate gestures. In early rehearsals, they ended up with an absurdly expressionistic show of religious zeal and passion, which they later used in a pared-down version for the final staging.

It was decided after a few rehearsals that the Courtesan should explicitly make Mrs Harebrain aware of her husband's presence behind the door - otherwise the continuous string of asides would have made less sense. In theory there was no need for the women to know the exact location of Mr Harebrain - only to make

the audience aware that they knew he was watching them. The problem was solved by having Mr Harebrain hide on the outside of the pillar by which the Courtesan stood. She motioned backward in his direction and Mrs Harebrain physically acknowledged his presence (by opening a very wide mouth).

It was up to John McEnery to make it clear that he could "see without hearing" from behind an imaginary door, in spite of the proximity: in order to do so, he used his hand to figure a keyhole, and leaned forward as if he was peeping through it, standing straight again and facing the audience when it was his cue to speak. As a result, the audience looks at the scene through his eyes, which justifies the excessive gesturing of the women, but may seem out of proportion with the contents of the lesson. In fact, on one occasion, in rehearsal, John McEnery forgot to hold his hand in front of his eye, and the audience members had the feeling that he must hear some of the conversation. On the other hand, when the two ladies moved to the opposite side of the stage for Mrs Harebrain to give the Courtesan a jewel for her lover, McEnery had to strain his body in order to show that he could no longer see them clearly.

Several rehearsals were devoted to the "lesson": for Sue Lefton, it was clear that the level of intensity should never fall, that no word could be thrown away, that the scene could at no point become confidential. She made Belinda Davison practice her lines with her, turning her face away as soon as she felt her attention flag, thereby forcing her to maintain variety and intensity in her intonation. Mrs Harebrain, on the other hand, did not need to be complicit in the dissembling at this stage, since she is there as child learning her lesson. It is only in a later scene that we see the change operated by the Courtesan's work.

II-1 Lord Owemuch arrives in the country.

The first lines of this scene involve two knights who are never seen again and have to be aptly portrayed within one minute. To Sue Lefton, the point of these few lines was simply that Sir Bounteous is proud to entertain aristocratic guests. The knights were played by the actors who doubled as Inesse and Possibility. This required a completely different physical characterisation, in addition to the depiction by costume. The "elder brothers" being young, very mobile and constantly imitating each other, it was decided that the knights should use a very low centre of gravity, a stately walk and almost no movement. The first line (Sir Andrew: "You have been too much like your name, Sir Bounteous") was divided between both knights, so as to confer more solemnity to their speech, and to make clear who Sir Bounteous is.

The stage direction indicates that the knights "exeunt at one door" while the footman enters "at the other". On the Globe stage, the choice was made to have Sir Bounteous and his guests enter through the central opening, and the knights withdraw again through that same opening. A pause was introduced, Sir Bounteous advancing all the way to the front of stage, hearing his watch ring and looking at it before the footman arrived (the point being to introduce the ringing of the watch for the much later scene in which it confounds Follywit).

The section involving Sir Bounteous and the footman was staged along a diagonal, the footman effecting false exits that took him farther toward the door at each cue, then brought him back to Sir Bounteous along an elegant curve.

The section with Gunwater was solved by having the two actors tread on each other's lines, in order to keep the sense of Gunwater trying to break into Sir Bounteous's instructions to tell him about Lord Owemuch's arrival. Most of the animal jokes being obscure and therefore lost on a modern audience, it was also the only way of keeping this dialogue lively and amusing.

One of the particular difficulties of the section between Sir Bounteous and Follywit is the irony of the dialogue where the grandfather (Sir Bounteous) talks about his grandson (Follywit) to his grandson (Owemuch), offering him as a sexual plaything (a Ganymede, a cup-bearer). The classical allusion is lost on a modern audience, so the witticism became a private joke between the two characters and simply informed the manner in which Wil Johnson played the character of Owemuch: effeminate and incorporating everything that Sir Bounteous expects of a Lord. Both actors found the scene quite difficult, especially the sudden shift in Sir Bounteous's discourse from general welcoming words to the particular suit about his grandson.

II-3 The Courtesan sends for Penitent Brothel.

This very short scene made apposite use of the balcony, which had the advantage of being lit artificially, an inauthentic practice that conferred more urgency to the dialogue, since the Courtesan had to lean forward to call the servant below.

II-4 The Robbery.

There was much discussion as to where the gold was hidden: in the organ, in a box or in a bag in the closet. For the shouting "within", there was disagreement on whether they should really be inside the Tiring House or involve actors bound and gagged running onto the balcony. Similarly, it was not clear whether it was a good theatrical idea to see Mawworm and the Lieutenant bound before the footman's jokes on their being "unbound already" in II-6. The final version involved seeing Gunwater shout then be bound on the balcony and the keys ostensibly taken from him by the robbers. The money was also hidden on the balcony, and was thrown down to Follywit on the words "better music", which he spoke from near the organ, directly below the balcony, playing a few discordant notes at the same time.

II-5 The Courtesan tells Penitent Brothel of her plan.

This very short scene involved two difficulties: creating a sense of urgency and one of "camaraderie" without sexual connotation between the two characters. The actors had to exit via the central opening in spite of the presence of the bed ready for thrusting out, because Sir Bounteous and the Footman required the side door for the following scene.

II-6 The morning after the robbery.

Sir Bounteous came on blindfolded and it was planned that he would stagger all

the way to the very edge of the stage where he would be caught by the footman. In the final version, however, for safety reasons, he stopped a couple of feet away from the edge.

In the first rehearsals, the bed was very close to the central opening, and Sir Bounteous had to walk backward toward it, hiding his face in shame. After the first run, however, it was decided that the bed would be pushed on by "servants" simultaneously with Sir Bounteous's blindfolded entrance. This made it possible to have the angry part of the dialogue with Sir Bounteous at a distance from the bed, standing transfixed by a pillar, then go up to the bed to unbind Lord Owemuch on the cue "This comes from keeping an open house", rather than having a long static dialogue by the bed.

With the bed once again occupying the centre of the stage, it was possible to make use of it for simultaneous action. When Lord Owemuch rose to get dressed, he did not exit or disappear into the discovery space, as the stage direction « curtains drawn » would suggest. This version was tried, but it was found to be more dramatically efficient to keep Owemuch on stage almost until the end of the scene. The "Lord" stood with his back to his host in front of the Tiring House with the bed. This forced Sir Bounteous to be "discreet" in handing the money over to the Lieutenant, while making explicit the complicity between the Lieutenant and Follywit. Lord Owemuch was dressed in very slow motion, emphasising the fact that the whole process was an "act". On the cue "should it come to his ear, I should hazard my undoing", Follywit and Mawworm exchanged a glance of acknowledgement. The staging was coherent with the sense of watching one another that pervades the play and this production in particular. Once Owemuch had left, the Lieutenant demanded his "double fee", thereby also cheating Follywit, which was coherent with the equally pervasive theme of the cheater cheated.

III-1 Mrs Harebrain begins to trick her husband.

In order to maintain the feeling of madness and speed, the brothers gave a loud knock on the door at the very moment when the Lieutenant left, simultaneous with Harebrain's entry, as if returning home. Rafe was therefore on stage from the very beginning of the scene (his entry is not specified), which was the pretext for a gag, since he was already standing behind Harebrain when the master called the servant.

When Inesse and Possibility come in, they press Harebrain out of his own space with the weight of their money. However, they are never really let into his world, while he soliloquises in their presence. The first aside ("I will observe her carriage...") is interrupted by Possibility, and Harebrain is so startled that he himself interrupts Possibility in return.

The joke in lines 36-40 had initially been cut, but it was reinstated for two reasons: in order to break the long soliloquy, and because John McEnery found a way of making it more explicit through his gestures. The very obscurity of the joke was a cause for discussion in rehearsal: were the brothers supposed to understand it, or merely to laugh politely, thereby displaying their stupidity or

Harebrain's obsessiveness? In the final version, they looked at each other in bafflement, as it were forcing Harebrain to change the subject.

The actors were all puzzled by the unexpected series of jokes made by Harebrain in connection with death and the ague, which he takes very seriously. Even more puzzling is the fact that, although a Puritan, he becomes a spokesman for a *carpe diem* philosophy ("Fools then are maids to lock from men that treasure / Which death will pluck and never yield 'em pleasure").

Once Inesse and Possibility are ushered into the other room, they are forgotten in the text, no exit is specified for them. This was used to create a comic effect: they ran up to the balcony and eavesdropped on the Harebrains' conversation, then ran out in order to arrive before them at the Courtesan's house.

The actors assumed that Inesse and Possibility had come to visit the Harebrains at the Courtesan's suggestion, and/or to find out whether the Courtesan has the pox or the plague. They are presumably reassured by Harebrain's many references to her as a virgin. But the staging did not lose sight of the latent fear of disease that is apparent in much of the dialogue in the play: from the moment the "ague" was mentioned, the brothers seemed to have only one desire: to flee contagion.

III-2 The lovemaking scene.

The bed was brought on by the Courtesan herself, with Penitent Brothel in physician's costume but out of character. In order to establish character, David Rintoul used a pestle and mortar and wore spectacles. He also spoke with a Scottish accent when playing the physician.

The stage left door was used to figure the door of the Courtesan's lodgings: all the visitors arrived and left through that door. The energy of the asides was increased when David Rintoul swept across the stage to speak them. This involved quite a lot of circling around the bed for all the characters. David Rintoul also used the device of removing his spectacles for some asides.

For Inesse and Possibility's arrival, two tricks were tried out: in one, they marched in taking no notice of the doctor, in the other, they were not allowed in, and tried with all their might to pass the door. The second solution was the one retained, because it created more tension once they were finally allowed in. The first lines, with the reference to blood and scabs, were deemed too obscure and were eventually cut. This had the advantage of shortening the holding back time at the "door".

In the course of rehearsals, gestures underlining the sexual innuendoes present in the dialogue were added both in the section with Sir Bounteous and the section with Inesse and Possibility, especially for the lines associated with money. In several improvisations the actors had poured money onto the Courtesan's bed, most aptly Jonathan Cecil, since it is clear from the text that, as in the case of Jove with Danae, his money is a substitute for real sex. However, the classical allusion was dropped in favour of more spectacular throwing around of leather purses, that seemed both easier to handle as a prop and more suggestive to modern audiences.

For the lovemaking it was clear that the sounds accompanying the Courtesan's monologue could not be improvised and needed careful orchestration. Claire van Kampen suggested that the Courtesan's words all echoed a homonymous word or sound uttered by Penitent Brothel or by Mrs Harebrain. As a consequence, Belinda Davison also changed the pitch of her voice in order to alternately match the voices of David Rintoul and Tonia Chauvet. Once the sounds had been orchestrated, it became clear that it was not necessary to see anything: a canopy was placed over the bed, and once the lovers had entered it, all was concealed save some suggestive movement. The Courtesan sat at the front of the bed, while Harebrain stood on the outer side of the stage left pillar, this time making clear by his body language that he could hear but not see.

At the conclusion of the scene, the Harebrains met by the side-door that figured the entrance to the Courtesan's lodgings, then circled the whole stage, passing in front of the bed, as if they were now outside the house. Even before they had left the stage, David Rintoul reappeared for his last lines, then picked up a trombone and joined the musicians for a boisterous act-closing jig that had the Courtesan dancing on the bed as it was removed from stage.

The interval was placed after III-2, in conformity with the structure of the play, and in order to allow some time for the psychological progression between the lovemaking scene and the apparition of the succuba. Initially, there was some discussion as to whether the interval should come before or after II-3. The constraints of the Globe however soon made it clear that the lovemaking scene should close part 1, since it had such a boisterous dimension. It would also have been very difficult to begin with the soul-searching of Penitent Brothel, for the beginning of the second half at the Globe is always very noisy. Therefore III-3, which brings very little new information in the first twenty-five lines, provided a better means of recapturing the audience's attention.

III-3 Follywit dresses up as a woman.

The scene begins as a recapitulation of the robbery, a moment in which Follywit once again needs to reassess his authority over his accomplices. In rehearsal the gang sat on the floor around the bag, which felt wrong, because the scene is clearly indoors. This was the first time that the actors felt the need for more props in the space, such as stools. In order to compensate for this, they briefly considered whether to create the feel of a tavern, by introducing "whores", stools and bottles. The actors invested the space by one of the pillars to make a more intimate space, which worked well in rehearsal. However, this version was dropped because it was lacking in dynamic, especially once it was decided that the scene would mark the beginning of part 2. Instead, Follywit use the ledge of the pillar to raise himself above his gang and chant his own praises, then launch into a "political" diatribe. The main difficulty of the scene was the change of mood in Follywit's speech from gloating to worry about his grandfather's "quean". This was acted out bodily, with a sudden drop of the actor's upper body on the word "o", then a very slow rising up on the following lines.

IV-1 The Succuba scene.

The scene starts with a long speech where Penitent Brothel goes through the different stages of repentance. The speech was left uncut, as both director and

actor were convinced of its importance for the character and the moral message of the play. David Rintoul noted that the Succuba is conjured up out of the character's own mind, as is made clear by the stichomythia: they are one single person. He also pointed out that after the first few cues the Succuba stops speaking in iambic pentameter to move into the devilish 8-beat, into which she draws Penitent Brothel too, thanks to the stichomythic dialogue. The apparition is in fact conjured away through his return to iambic pentameter.

In the original staging, it is likely that the Succuba would have emerged from the stage trap amid a puff of smoke. But in accordance with the idea that she is a creature of Penitent Brothel's imagination - his nightmare, as the word suggests - it was decided that the scene should take place in bed, and the Succuba would emerge from under the covers. In fact, after several attempts to stage the throwing off of the blankets, it was decided that the Succuba would appear with her head between Penitent Brothel's legs. The finale of the scene had both characters dancing on the bed, before the Succuba danced her way off stage.

By the end of the scene Penitent Brothel is not sure whether he has been visited by the Devil or by the real Mrs Harebrain. In fact, it gradually became clear to the actors that the Succuba is a representation of Mrs Harebrain's hysteria: it materialises Penitent Brothel's fears but it also expresses the suppressed desires of "honest" women in a Puritan society. The devil can only take on Mrs Harebrain's shape because of her desire, as is made clear by the lines in IV-4:

Mrs Harebrain: What shall become of me? My own thoughts doom me!
Penitent Brothel: Be honest; then the devil will ne'er assume thee.

Because of the difficulty of the scene, for several rehearsals and some of the early performances, Tonia Chauvet played the part of the Succuba in French (using a translation written ad hoc by Chantal Miller-Schütz). The idea was to use the seductiveness of the foreign language while at the same time creating distance and strangeness. Penitent Brothel kept his lines in English. Once the atmosphere had been established and the character more clearly defined, the English lines were reinstated, for the benefit of the audience.

During the first half of the scene, Penitent Brothel is clearly still under temptation: he does not immediately reject the Succuba. On the contrary, he embraces her, then suddenly realises what he is doing and pushes her away.

After the Succuba's exit, Penitent Brothel summons Jasper and lectures him energetically, hammering on his chest. Sue Lefton felt that it was necessary for him to exit slowly and solemnly, in contrast with the fast running off of the Succuba. In order to increase this effect, he took the long way off, crossing the whole stage to exit via the opposite door.

IV-2 -3 Stealing Sir Bounteous's jewels.

Cushions were laid on the floor to figure the boudoir in which Sir Bounteous receives his lady-friend. After he discovers the theft, Sir Bounteous throws himself on them, in a tantrum that Gunwater mistakes for sexual action.

Creating the intimate space involved a ballet of the servants, sending naughty glances to one another and placing the cushions on the part of the stage visible to the greatest part of the audience, since most of the scene is played very close to the floor.

IV-5 Penitent Brothel and Mrs Harebrain repent.

The part of Servus was conflated with Rafe, played by Michael Fenner. This meant that being Harebrain's man, rather than an anonymous servant of the household, it would be very unlikely for him to leave Penitent Brothel and his mistress alone. In fact, the stage direction "exit Rafe" is not present in the original. Nor does he re-enter when Mrs Harebrain arrives, so that the staging was changed to take these difficulties into account: the servant went out to get his mistress through one door, and she entered simultaneously through the Discovery Space, as if alerted by the loud knocking at the beginning of the scene.

Mr Harebrain later entered through the central opening, walking almost all the way up to the repenting lovers before they noticed his presence, yet seen by the audience from the very beginning. This was a remarkable example of the use of the depth of the stage for dramatic irony.

Towards the end of the rehearsal period, some stage gesturing was added to suggest that in fact this was a sublimated sex-scene. The scene ended to the sound of organ music, as the two men solemnly left together, leaving the sobbing Mrs Harebrain to follow them out.

IV-6 Follywit meets the Courtesan.

This is one of the longest and most detailed scenes in the play, and it reveals both the weaknesses of Follywit and the new power of women. The trickster is tricked by mother and daughter because he is only an adolescent braggart who understands very little about women, and openly confesses his fear of the Amazonian type that is gradually replacing the docile wives embodied by Mrs Harebrain. His diatribe against the new woman could well be spoken by a twentieth-century man, and it was decided that Wil Johnson would address to the men and women in the audience. To the actor, this was the first scene where the naiveté and earnestness of the character is revealed. Yet, in spite or because of his fears, he is tricked into a "modern" marriage, one where the wife has an equal power and even brings a dowry she has earned rather than inherited.

Belinda Davison and Maggie Wells were interested in the prehistory of such a scene: it is not clear whether the Courtesan and her mother were playing a usual game, with the intention of selling yet another maidenhead, or whether it was a set-up to catch a husband from the outset. It is surprising that they should not know Follywit since they live in the same underworld, but the dialogue suggests that they were not aware of his identity before he offers marriage.

The mother-daughter "act" provides a mirror scene for the lesson given by the Courtesan to Mrs Harebrain in Act I, being also a sham and a display of power and female solidarity. In rehearsal, Maggie Wells used a whip to establish her authority, and in early rehearsals the pitch of violence became quite high, and

Belinda Davison had to find a level of acting that made it clear for the audience that she was not broken, that it was an "act", while remaining believable (and seductive) for Follywit. However, after Maggie Wells was replaced by Anastasia Hille (following an accident after the first preview), the scene became less physically violent. In fact, Anastasia Hille confessed that she hates being violent on stage, and always apologised to Belinda Davison after performances⁹.

V-1 Guests and actors arrive in Sir Bounteous's house.

One important decision regarded the type of actors that were to be satirised: early modern actors (about whose technique and idiosyncrasies very little is known) or present-day actors. The choice was to target modern actors for their general behaviour. However, for the play within the play, Wil Johnson chose to use camp, old-fashioned acting, making lavish use of pseudo-baroque gestures.

The main difficulty of this act is the sheer number of characters on stage. For the greetings, it was decided to make use of the movements of the hay, a Renaissance dance which the actors had practised in rehearsal.

For the play within the play, it was finally decided that the "audience" would sit in chairs at the very front of the stage, with their backs to the yard. As a result, Follywit had to stand on a chair for most of his extemporised "play" in order to be visible from the yard. The acting space, or inner stage, was delimited by the pillars. For their asides, the "audience members" (e.g. the Courtesan) were able to stand and turn to the real audience.

The difficulty for Belinda Davison was to determine which face of the Courtesan she should play, now that she was presented with an assembly comprising people who knew both her identities.

The scene culminated in a general outbreak of laughter when Follywit presented her as a virgin, because everyone else on stage apart from Mr Harebrain knows that she is nothing of the kind.

The laughter was orchestrated by Jonathan Cecil (Sir Bounteous), who began it, then made it stop in order for the dialogue to continue.

Runs, Previews and Performances

The first full run took place on 12 July in the rehearsal room. It lasted two hours twenty-two minutes without music, but Sue Lefton felt quite confident that the running time could be brought down to under two hours. She noted that some scenes were too dark and deep, and that it was necessary to find more lightness. She felt that the exploration of all the characters' passions had been useful in that it was now possible to follow everyone's journey through the action of the play.

⁹ See Interviews of the Red Company actors in the 1998 season

The links between the scenes needed to become stronger and stranger, with less and less concern for the need to make way for the incoming characters. The servants' world still needed some building up, because it is the reflection of the world of the masters. At this point, only the more substantial characters (Jasper and Rafe) were well drawn, and the other (anonymous) ones needed more filling in.

It became clear that each part needed to begin and end with a musical piece involving dance or group movement. Some more *mise en scène* could be introduced, e.g. with characters appearing as observers on the balcony at eloquent moments in the score. The following two weeks before previews would be devoted to balancing the scenes against each other, with particular focus on the fine-tuning of the acting. The final scenes especially required more precise shaping.

Claire van Kampen, who was still an observer at this point, since the music was not integrated into the first run, was impressed by the way the actors had managed to create a hard, bad world with a dangerous edge to it, in stark contrast to the amiable romp that *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* had become the year before.

After the run on 21 July, Sue Lefton noted that the actors were still finding movements that needed to be preserved, but that only the ones that tell something really work. Pure gags, disconnected from the text and the story, were sure not to work on the Globe stage. Movements need to be bold and generous. The actors also needed to remember the choreographed movements, for naturalistic movements cannot work once the mannered style has been established.

After the run on 23 July, Sue Lefton asked the actors to keep a distance towards their parts, in a quasi-Brechtian approach, especially Penitent Brothel, who has a sense of humour and an objectivity that make him akin to the Medieval "Vice". She added that they needed to stay in control rather than yield to the hysteria, madness and wildness of the play.

In response to this, Tonia Chauvet noted how each character's first line defines their nature, almost like a Brechtian banderole (e.g. Mrs Harebrain: "fain would I meet the gentleman"; Follywit: "call me your forecast"; Mr Harebrain: "She may make nightwork of it").

The music cues were practised on 28 July. The band comprised three trombones, one tenor saxophone and a trumpet. The music was a humorous jazz score with a number of references, such as tritons (the interval from hell) being played when the Succuba appeared, some Wagnerian chords before Penitent Brothel's repentance scene, harmonies close to Kurt Weill, the composer who collaborated with Brecht on the transposition of *The Beggar's Opera* into the twentieth-century *Threepenny Opera*. A harmonium figured the precious organ in Sir Bounteous's house, but the music for the scene where Lord Owemuch arrives was played on authentic instruments (sackbuts, a cornet and a drum). Later, the servants sang a four-part pseudo-Hollywoodian romance to

accompany Lord Owemuch in the goodnight scene. The transition from Act IV into

Act V involved a can-can danced by Belinda Davison, expressing the Courtesan's joy at having caught a husband. Claire van Kampen compared her approach to Kandis Cook's: buried in the music were themes from Playford's *The English Dancing Master*, which had been used in rehearsal, just as doublet and hose, corset and bum formed the sometimes invisible structure beneath the outrageous fabrics of the costumes.

The band mostly played from the central bay of the balcony, and the musicians took part in the action when they were not playing, mostly as active onlookers. In the lovemaking scene it was originally planned that they would stay on as "voyeurs", but they needed the time to come down from the balcony and prepare for the finale, so they withdrew as soon as the canopy came down and covered the bed.

The fact that the band was composed of five brass instruments (i.e., very loud instruments) sometimes made it hard for actors to hear their cues. As a result, some music cues had to be shortened. In the few scenes that were spoken to an accompaniment of music (e.g. the moment where Penitent Brothel and Mrs Harebrain finally meet), the actors had to speak at the top of their voices.

During the technical rehearsals in the week of 30 July, a number of points became clearer thanks to the time spent on stage. Penitent Brothel, who is a character derived from the *Vice*, at least until he repents, was originally played on the front fringe of the stage in order to make contact with the groundlings. But David Rintoul and Sue Lefton felt that he needed to involve the whole of the audience, since he is the character who has information on all the members and levels of society. Therefore, during his first soliloquy, he ended up moving from the front to the "power position" under the Heavens trap, following a circular route that made it possible for all audience members to see him well at one point of the speech. After the dress rehearsal, it was decided that it would be more efficient to interrupt the soliloquy while the Harebrains crossed the stage, which gave Penitent Brothel an opportunity to come back to the front of the stage and hide behind a pillar to observe them.

Much of the technical rehearsals was devoted to timing music cues and entries - usually to make them earlier, so that the pace became faster and images preceded text, in order to enhance comprehension (e.g. when the Harebrains cross the stage as Penitent Brothel names them in Act I Scene 1). The general shape of the choreography was moved more upstage and onto diagonals, so that sightlines were improved. Some scenes were completely re-staged into the central area rather than on the fringe, others shifted out of the all-protecting line between the pillars.

In the Succuba scene, the staging had to be changed because Tonia Chauvet became visible from the sides when David Rintoul got into bed. She no longer emerged from between his legs but on the side, and rose up over the bed-post like a snake. Finally, for the dress rehearsal, the scene was re-centred to become

more his dream than hers, and the original text was reinstated so that the audience could understand what the scene was about. Instead of appearing from the side, the Succuba was concealed under the pillows, where she was least visible. Her apparition was preceded by her hands emerging like snakes from under the sheets.

Another important addition was a silent cue in IV-6, the scene where Follywit is seduced by the Courtesan. In order to make it clear that the whole scene is a set-up, mother and daughter each appeared simultaneously at one of the side doors and made a sign of complicity. Each one was accompanied by a musician (the saxophone for the Courtesan, a trombone for the mother). Then, during the first part of the scene, the mother appeared in the Discovery Space, as if spying on the scene and preparing to enter at the appropriate moment.

Act V became easier to stage in the vast space of the playhouse. During the part of the scene where the guests arrive, the actors were instructed to keep moving "viscously" throughout, so that the tableau should remain alive. However, it also became clear that none of the tricks that had been thought of to simulate the ringing of the watch in Sir Bounteous's and then Follywit's pocket would work: if something rang from the balcony, the distance was too obvious; if it was really in a pocket, it was not audible. The problem was solved by having a stage manager playing a servant with a broom come close to the actor in whose pocket the watch was supposed to be ringing, sweeping the floor behind them, while activating a bicycle bell.

During the play within the play, the stage audience had to learn to physicalise their participation and enjoyment of what they think is the show, rather than vocalise it, so as not to cover the dialogue. This involved acting with their backs, since they were all sitting facing the *frons scenae*, all the more so after several asides were cut to improve the readability of the scene.

After the first previews, work was devoted to getting the actors to bounce off each other more, and generally to making movements bigger and more generous, especially in the gang-of-four scenes.

The major change, however, was the need for Anastasia Hille to take over the part of the mother, following Maggie Wells's accident in rehearsal.

The director's notes after the first previews were that each actor could take some of their lines out to the audience - she likened it to a flower opening, in spite of the hard, unfamiliar language. She reminded the actors that we don't always gaze at each other in conversation, so that sharing with the audience is not even anti-naturalistic. She warned them against falling into proscenium-stage acting, and encouraged them to be bold and come forward, and go upstage and play to the sides.

Because of laughter and applause, some cues had been lost. Sue Lefton advised that there is no room for being tentative in this space, and that it would be better to wait a few beats and come on when the applause had stopped.

Conclusion

In one of my final discussions with Sue Lefton, we came to the conclusion that this production, though ostensibly modern and iconoclastic, shared many features with baroque and Renaissance shows, because it placed so much emphasis on movement and dance, on stylised gestures and curves. Although the actors were mostly reluctant to keep in perpetual motion, the production showed how much movement the Globe stage can take without generating an impression of too much movement and consequent messiness.

The play was well received, although some critics once again pointed out that the darker sides of Middleton's satire were sacrificed to the more farcical dimension. Most, however, agreed with Robert Butler, who wrote in the *Independent on Sunday*, "Here verbal comedy joins hands with physical comedy in an unpompous way that seems not to have dated".
