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"The Sense of An Ending": The Destabilizing Effect of Performance Closure in Shakespeare's Plays

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in English

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Abstract

What makes a good ending? How do we know when something ends? In performance, it is difficult to characterize that nebulous and highly subjective — yet nonetheless theatrically powerful — “sense” of an ending. Previous scholarly work on Shakespearean endings, even when emphasizing performance, has largely focused on understanding endings from a narrative viewpoint, questioning how endings reach textual closure. These works examine the lingering questions or problems at the end of Shakespeare’s texts, and discuss how performance tackles these issues.

This dissertation takes performance as its starting point. It argues that Shakespearean performance endings naturally trouble textual conclusiveness, as Shakespeare’s endings are generally open to new analysis. Thus, this dissertation analyzes ten Shakespearean productions to demonstrate how aspects like performance ephemerality, textual adjustments, or affectual signifiers can change the meaning of closure — textual or performance — and disrupt the sense of a play’s ending.

Chapter One sets out my methodology, drawing upon Susan Bennett’s inner and outer frames and Hans Robert Jauss’s range of expectation. Chapter Two tackles four individual outlier performances with endings that deviated significantly from the rest of their respective productions, creating an altered experience for the audience in attendance that night. Chapter Three examines three productions which textually modified the expected or established ending in order to pursue a particular political or social message. Chapter Four analyzes three productions by director Des McAnuff whose endings attempted to evoke an emotional response from the audience through the inclusion of a visual or auditory stimulus, while interacting with the political, racial, or gendered questions of each play.

Through the analysis of these ten productions, this work concludes that due to the nature of performance, performed endings of Shakespeare's works can destabilize the established or intended readings of a production. Thus, the closing moments reinterpret the rest of the play according to the images, sensations, or questions brought to the forefront. Within a performance's final moments, any presumption of a static nature of the text — of an "authentic Shakespeare" — is fractured so that new meanings, new ideas, and new "senses" can be found onstage.

Keywords

Renaissance drama; early modern; theatre; performance theory; spectator response; audience; endings; closure; Shakespeare

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Preface

Helen: All's well that ends well; still the fine's the crown.

Whate'er the course, the end is the renown.

(All's Well That Ends Well 4.4.35–36)

1 Introduction: What's in an Ending?

Endings hold a particular point of privilege in literature. In the foreword to his special issue on Narrative Endings in Nineteenth-Century Fiction, Alexander Welsh explains that “Endings are critical points for analysis in all examinations of plot; ... any action is defined by its ending ... unless we study endings, we cannot understand how our own assumptions about human life and social change differ from those of the past” (1). For Walsh, realism and narrative diverge precisely because while realism echoes “the ongoing life of society” (1), narrative requires an ending. Thus endings “are haunted by the possibility that the language and logic in which they are posed dictate conclusiveness where none may really exist” (Walsh 1). As a result, the ending says more about the assumptions and desires of those who create it than any other part of the play. Endings are, arguably, the most fictional part of any fiction and thus can be analyzed in a singular manner. But endings are not isolated events. How an ending is received, created, or interpreted reflects back on its inception. Endings are one means through which one can understand a culture’s desires, expectations, and outlooks on life. This becomes even more evident through the reception of an ending, whether it is considered especially meaningful, is rejected outright, or some variation in between.

Scholars can analyze a play as literature from modern perspectives, and this labour leaves unchanged the words on the page; the words connect with modern preoccupations but the play as literature remains the same. Editing and performance, in their different ways, allow for more textual intervention. While my work discusses textually altered endings in performance (and sometimes heavily altered plays) and how such changes affect the meaning of closure, what I am more specifically tracing in this

dissertation about endings is the heightened fluidity that performance provides even when textual adjustments seem insignificant.

Before engaging more fully with a play's performativity, I want to first explore the relationship between text and performance, and to set out some of the current research in Shakespeare studies relating to endings. A published edition of *Hamlet* without the final scene would widely be regarded as incomplete. A performance, by contrast, that chose not to deliver this material may simply be viewed as a successful production of *Hamlet*. Both text and performance, however, contribute to the dynamic and shifting understanding of what we call any single Shakespearean work. In understanding the term *work*, I follow Margaret Jane Kidnie's discussion of the term in *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation* to suggest that the play is a dynamic discourse or process, influenced by both printed text and performance text, but not identical with either. This work "evolves over time in response to the needs and sensibilities of its users" (2). Kidnie later argues that, "while a dramatic *text* might be considered an 'artifact' ... what directors, actors, and editors generate through print and performance is indeed something rather more like an idea" (13). A theory that insists that the core of a play is something other than a tangible object — although it is always informed by multiple physical iterations of itself — accounts for how the meaning of, or collective consciousness about, a play can change over time and location.

Kidnie goes on to discuss various performance adaptations of Shakespearean plays, noting that the present understanding of what is or is not "Shakespeare" is a culturally specific, ever-shifting concept. Kidnie explains that, "The identity of the *work* of dramatic art ... [is] continually constructed in response to production by users as varied as theatrical practitioners, spectators and readers, and publishers and editors" (32). Thus,

performances have the ability to change a work's identity — sometimes dramatically — to reflect new and often fluctuating concerns of a present moment. It is by marking how the narrative shifts, especially in relation to performance endings, that scholars and viewers can analyze the current and changing perspectives on each particular play. The reception, creation, and interpretation of endings reflect back on the potential of performance to reconceptualize the ending, and so the “work.”

While there have been in-depth studies of how endings in individual Shakespeare plays are staged for performance, these studies are few, and focus mainly on performance problems that spring from textual indeterminacy. *Troilus and Cressida*, for instance, with its double ending, has been discussed in detail by both David Bevington and Roger Apfelbaum. Isabella's seeming lack of a response to the Duke's marriage proposal at the end of *Measure for Measure* has likewise received intensive analysis by performance scholars, including Edward L. Rocklin, Michael D. Friedman, and Daniel Salerno. These studies tend to tackle how performance changes Isabella's final moment, either by enriching it, or further problematizing it. *Taming of the Shrew* is another of Shakespeare's plays which has attracted discussion of the problems that its ending poses in performance. The focus has often been on how to interpret Kate's final speech in relation to modern gender politics. Each of these discussions demonstrates that some Shakespearean plays immediately present difficulties concerning performance endings. However, I argue that all Shakespearean endings contain different kinds of lingering questions or types of silences which can be explored through performance. How a performance chooses to answer these questions or unveil these silences, however, can provide unexpected forms of analysis, at times even disrupting other potential readings of the text.

Most discussions of Shakespeare's endings view the productions purely through the lens of text, asking how Shakespeare's text is adjusted in performance and with what authority. For example, Alan C. Dessen's book-length analysis of performance modifications in Shakespeare, *Rescripting Shakespeare*, takes its cue from textual resketching, exploring how directors modify texts into playtexts. While my work also examines how textual adjustments can complicate notions of endings, I am equally concerned with how performance itself is a medium which troubles the boundaries between conclusion and closure. There have been relatively few texts that have discussed performance and closure within Shakespeare studies as a whole without simply targeting specific plays or genres. Paul Prescott's recent article on endings in *Shakespeare & the Making of Theatre* has opened the field to some of the larger questions surrounding this topic in Shakespearean performance. Prescott discusses textual adjustments alongside peculiarities of Shakespeare in performance — such as how long an ending lasts, and how we can recognize endings in performances. Prescott asks if we might find a “DNA of stagecraft” (53) to Shakespeare's endings. His work is especially helpful in moving from textual-based study to performance study on endings, as he reminds us that when it comes to endings “performance always exceeds the text” (65). But his essay is just a beginning to this topic; there has yet to be a full-length discussion which focuses on the way that performance elements can impact Shakespeare's endings, rather than a focused, but generally text-based analysis of particular endings to individual Shakespearean plays.

My research investigates the potential of performance to disrupt the stability of play endings and to enhance and deepen a play's narrative trajectory, often by reflecting or challenging current social and political concerns. My project's objective is twofold. First, in the tradition of Shakespearean performance criticism, my work pulls together

particular performances to explore and analyze how performance mediates Shakespeare's drama in a present moment. My work interrogates political issues of appropriation and culture, and investigates how modifications to Shakespeare's endings shape a performance's projected concept. Secondly, my research builds on recent initiatives in performance theory that resist the assumption that performance derives from text, and so my dissertation includes analysis of performance moments that do not have a clear textual parallel. I explore how manipulated endings imbue plays with meanings that speak to the culture, location, or creative team that appropriates them. This chapter will first briefly discuss how endings and closure can be understood and analyzed in terms of performance. I will then turn to the methodological approaches relating to performance theory and audience reception theory that have shaped my own particular approach to the productions discussed in this dissertation.

In his seminal book on narrative structure, *The Sense of An Ending*, Frank Kermode focuses on how the concept of time is imperative to any form of literature. According to Kermode, humans categorize their lives through mini-narratives in a way that is analogous to the sound of a clock. He suggests that fictional plots — the ones we read, create, and even live — are how we organize and understand time and, by default, how we organize and understand the narrative of our lives. The creation of narrative in our lives is, according to Kermode, “a duration (rather than a space) organizing the moment in terms of the end, giving meaning to the interval between *tick* and *tock* because we humanly do not want it to be an indeterminate interval between the *tick* of birth and the *tock* of death” (57). Kermode's argument is that humans narrate these created units of time in terms of beginnings and endings. This is how we make sense of our world — we are always discerning (arbitrary) beginnings and endings, in order to understand what

falls between. J. David Velleman, in his article “Narrative Explanation,” pushes Kermode’s idea even further, suggesting that humans mark with their very bodies the necessity for beginnings and endings:

we understand the cadence of *tick-tock* with the muscles of our face and mouth, which are tensed for the first syllable and relaxed for the second. ... The cycle of tension and relaxation is built in to the very nature of muscle, and it’s what leads us to perceive *tick* as the beginning and *tock* as the end. In much the same way, we understand the cadence of a story with the natural cycles of our emotional sensibility. (13)

Velleman argues that not only do we determine each individual moment as a small narrative, we condition these moments so that the narrative plays out on our bodies.

There is a subtle difference, however, between closure and endings, and they function differently in text and performance. David Kaufmann, in his essay, “Closure as Covenant: The Means Justify the End,” suggests that the point of narrative is to transform an audience’s participation of the event into received meaning, and he argues that this is done through the experience of closure (96). For Kaufmann, closure operates on a different time schedule from the actual end of the fictional text: “the meaning [of] the narrative occurs after closure but narrative can be experienced only before closure. Thus, for many critics the force of closure defines narrative” (89). Kaufmann’s analysis indicates that receiving closure is the core force behind the kinds of endings that are created. He describes the process as teleological. Closure and endings are simultaneously the goal we strive for and the validation of our expectations (93). But it is closure, not endings, that provides the transition from what is happening to what has happened. While he is mainly speaking about narrative and literature rather than performance, Kaufmann’s

work, like Kermode's, exhibits how closure has been largely discussed and understood.

Kaufmann states that:

closure acts as signified. It is here that the transformation from never-ending — the immanence of narrative — to already-ended — the transcendence of narrative — occurs. During the telling, the process of emplotment, the audience (receptor) exists only within its own becoming *qua* audience, unable to separate itself from the process by which it is created, and thus unable to evaluate narrative's significations. At closure, because the now structurally complete narrative is itself unitary, a self-defined whole, the audience, at last distinct from its own emplotment, exists *qua* audience as well. (103)

Thus, the closure of the narrative directly impacts the understanding of the performance's ending. Kaufmann argues that closure must occur after the ending — although they may appear to run very close together — and thus they remain distinct from one another. He further states that because closure exists after the ending, closure, by necessity, re-informs an audience's understanding of the narrative. That is, the way an audience interprets closure determines how they understand what has been presented before them: “the meaning creates the events *and* the events determine the meaning. The tension occurs, though, precisely at the point of climax, so that the resolution does not conclude the narrative, but invites instead a reversal, a movement back into the narrative” (99). Thus, closure provides the work with a reinvestment of significance, potentially modifying an audience's understanding of it.

My dissertation builds on the work presented by Kaufmann, Kermode, and Velleman, in order to move the discussion on endings and closure from text-based analysis to performance-based analysis. My dissertation is not looking specifically at

narrative, but rather at the (harder to document) effect of endings on audiences. My work aims to characterize that nebulous and highly subjective — yet nonetheless theatrically powerful — “sense” of an ending.

Defining endings can be difficult, even in text. Generally speaking, the end of a printed text is the final black type on the last white page. In a play, this would usually be the last stage direction, the final “Exeunt.” Textually, this is usually the best indication that the narrative has concluded. However, the printed book may have other components that relate to the play’s narrative — such as scholarly introductions — while also containing elements that are entirely external to the play, related only by their packaging — such as notes on that particular publisher or author. The text can be further complicated by additional scenes which might appear after the final stage direction. For instance, the Oxford Shakespeare edition of *Hamlet* (Oxford World’s Classics), edited by G. R. Hibbard, uses the Folio version as its base, but it separates out and prints in Appendix A the passages peculiar to the Second Quarto. Jill L. Levenson’s edition of *Romeo and Juliet* (Oxford Shakespeare) is based on the Second Quarto of the play. However, following this text, the edition also reproduces the entire First Quarto version of *Romeo and Juliet*. Most editions of Shakespeare’s play, unless they are facsimiles, will produce a list of textual variants at the end. All of these passages and materials are a part of the book of the play, albeit not part of the play as showcased by the editor. Whether or not this material is read in relation to the play (or even read at all) is determined only by the individual reader. These seemingly “optional” parts are presented as supplemental to the text, rather than necessarily imperative to the narrative.

The material that exists outside of the playtext within a container such as a book has been discussed in great detail, largely thanks to Gerard Genette’s *Paratexts*:

Thresholds of Interpretation, and the many theorists and scholars who have taken up Genette's work. Genette's book outlines a paratext's relationship to the main text, and what paratexts mean to a reader. His definition of paratext is also useful when one switches medium, from print to performance. The paratext is "a *threshold* ... that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back. It is an 'undefined zone' between the inside and the outside, a zone without any hard and fast boundary on either the inward side (turned towards the text) or the outward side (turned toward the world's discourse about the text)" (2). Because the paratextual threshold applies to both the fictional and non-fictional worlds, it is often impossible to designate paratextual material as belonging to simply one or the other. They are bound through a condition of opposition. Paratexts are the doorway between inside and outside of the play.

Before turning to what performance paratext at the end of a theatrical production may look like, I want to briefly discuss dramatic paratext, more generally. In *Narrative Beginnings*, Brian Richardson turns to this question when discussing the problems that occur when defining the beginnings of dramatic texts. While Richardson is looking specifically at beginnings, beginnings share with endings a number of similar issues, especially in terms of discerning the edges of a play:

Performances of dramatic texts, unlike novels, do not have a first page to easily identify a narrative beginning. If we choose the first line of dialogue, we ignore stage directions that indicate action crucial to the plot. The first printed words in the dramatic text rarely appear in the performed narrative, yet expositional cues in the opening of a dramatic performance may begin even before the audience enters the theater. This absence of a clear-cut "opening" for a performed narrative means

that “beginning” must be thought of as a process rather than as a single originary moment. (167)

Richardson’s argument that performance beginnings are not a moment, but a process, usefully complicates notions of closure. Richardson further asks us to question what constitutes action. If something occurs in performance before the first words — such as an actor walking onstage — has the play begun with that first step, the first movement? Or does it begin with the first sound, either music or words? In her article on early modern performance events and modern print conventions, Tiffany Stern tackles this very topic, asking, “why do editions not draw attention to the rich and complex playhouse procedures that signified the start and end of plays, and that can, like act-breaks, make a claim to be interpretatively significant?” (168).

The stage directions at the end of a playtext can be just as important as those which set the scene at the beginning of the play. Consider the final stage direction in Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*: “Beckett’s stage directions [undercut] the dialogue that precedes it, for Vladimir and Estragon have once again decided to leave: Vladimir asks, ‘Shall we go?’ and Estragon replies, ‘Yes, let’s go,’ but the stage directions note that ‘*They do not move*’” (Gatewood 62). Without this stage direction, the entire meaning of the play is different; the dialogue suggests an action which is negated by the stage direction. An audience’s sense of closure is changed dramatically if this final stage direction is ignored.

Similarly, even though the final words usually lead to a blackout, this is not necessarily the case, and the final lines may instead imply some continuing action. The end of *Hamlet*, for instance, has an additional implied action embedded in the last lines.

Fortinbras's final words serve to dismiss his guards and suggest that Hamlet's body should be carried offstage in a march:

Let four captains

Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage,
 For he was likely, had he been put on,
 To have proved most royally; and for his passage,
 The soldiers' music and the rites of war
 Speak loudly for him.
 Take up the body. Such a sight as this
 Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
 Go, bid the soldiers shoot. (5.2.339–347)

Stage directions in Shakespearean plays are complicated, however, by the fact that many of the stage directions in modern editions are added by editors. Consider, for instance, the final stage direction to *Love's Labour's Lost*, after Armando proclaims, "You that way, we this way" (5.2.904). The stage direction directly following in the Norton Shakespeare edition reads, "*Exeunt [severally].*" The added word *severally* suggests that Armando's lines are addressed to the women and the men on stage, and indicates that the parties depart in different directions, not to see one another again for a year. This interpolated editorial stage direction precludes the possibility that Armando is speaking metatheatrically, telling the audience they are to leave the theatre while the actors depart offstage. The Norton edition has a footnote that suggests the line separates actors from audience, aristocrats from peasants, and even Winter from Spring, but choosing to add the word "severally" positions one interpretation over these others. The editorial stage direction conditions the previous lines, insisting on an invisible barrier between stage and

audience. In other words, this added word closes off at least one possibility for performance. Printed editions are thus malleable in a manner that is not dissimilar to performance. Both forms contain paratextual elements which can affect the reader/audience's interpretation of the material.

The question of performance paratext, however, raises problems concerning audience reception: what constitutes paratext for any one production and how can it be tracked by researchers in order to gather a full image of the audience's expectations and responses? In *Analyzing Performance*, Patrice Pavis remarks on how performance paratext shapes audiences:

The paratext of a *mise-en-scène*, which should not be confused with the paratext of the dramatic text (stage directions, didascalía), comprises everything that a spectator might have read in the press about the production: announcements, interviews, the previews just prior to the premiere, any other print or electronic media publicity. However much one resists the brain-death induced by exposure to advertisements, one never emerges entirely unscathed — even in theater. (42)

Most theatrical paratext does not follow a specific order of delivery. Just as a reader can peruse the description at the back of the book before or after the novel, so too can an audience member read the programme notes or the reviews before or after watching a play. Prescott comments on how leaving the theatre does not mean that the performance experience is over: “We might also choose to read reviews on posters outside the theatre, or write our own, or ... have more talk of these sad or happy things — all of these activities help stay the moment of performance while also retrospectively recalibrating our thoughts and feelings about what we have just experienced” (66). These activities, which I include in the category of theatrical paratext, are largely optional for the viewer.

Some paratextual elements within a production, however, are controlled by the creative team, not the audience. The curtain call, for instance, occurs after the final lines of the text. It is set in that particular position, and while audience members may choose to avoid it, they cannot choose to experience that moment at an alternate time. The same can be said of many of the ending moments that I want to discuss. As such, they exist in a place that straddles the lines between paratext, playtext, and production choices. These aspects of performance are situated in a place that is not exactly paratextual because they cannot be retrieved at a separate time, like reviews or promotional materials, yet they have no matching moment in the printed playtext.

A number of elements can constitute the ending in performance: there are epilogues which straddle the theatrical world and the fictional world; there may be added scenes, glances, and actions which tantalize the audience with unscripted information; there are curtain calls which are seemingly attached to the world of the play, yet are also a part of the present moment; there may be music — either recorded or live — which plays while the audience leaves the theatre; there may be after-show discussions; or there may be nothing after that final line but a final blackout. The particular shape of any play's ending is entirely dependent on a particular performance or production, but what these multiple moments (some of which may usefully be described as paratext) provide is a deepening understanding of that space, unique to performance, which straddles reality and the play. The lines between playtext, performance, and production become indistinct or so nuanced as to make it impossible to ever fully discern where the boundaries lie. For this reason, the play becomes subject to new ideas, new endings, and new senses of closure. I will be directly examining performance endings which close down the text — or, rather, which imply a certain type of closure — as well as considering how

performance endings can open the text to larger themes and questions, allowing the audience to consider new avenues of exploration.

In his essay, “Endings in Drama and Performance,” Brian Richardson lists a number of questions that can be asked about a play’s ending in order to move away from simply viewing each play as open or closed. With his final query he asks us to consider “whether the story and the performance are largely coextensive or whether one exceeds or transgresses the boundaries of the other” (195). This distinction between story and performance gets at the argument I am trying to develop about endings in performance: endings have the ability to intervene with what might be called the idea of the play by exceeding the playtext and so opening the boundaries of the play. Various kinds of stage business at the end of a performance, for example, can rewrite or challenge the story of the play as we thought we understood it. Such moments stretch or even transform the play’s confines, changing the end in sometimes unexpected ways. Endings allow for new ideas and new perspectives to become ingrained in the larger idea of the play, or, to return to Kidnie’s term, of the “work.”

Endings draw attention to theatrical paratexts such as post-show music or the curtain call, highlighting the space between playtext and performance, while simultaneously demonstrating how this threshold is constantly displaced, moved, erased, or questioned from production to production, and performance to performance. Endings allow both the director and the audience to experience or experiment with something new, something different, and still retain and maintain a stable sense of Shakespeare’s play.

Thus far, I have only briefly mentioned how performance endings might be construed as further opening the playtext to new ideas or, instead, closing the playtext by

limiting present unknowns. A performance that closes the play's narrative drive may take an unresolved issue, such as Isabella's silence in face of the Duke's proposal of marriage at the end of *Measure for Measure*, and bring it to conclusion, by having Isabella, for example, reject or accept the Duke's offer. A performance that keeps the text open, by contrast, may underscore her silence by insisting on the ambiguity of her lack of verbal reply. An open ending may alternatively provide new information — the silent return of a missing character or new lines for a present character — or it may shift the focus to something entirely unexpected. A small toy or a cloak may remind the viewer of *The Winter's Tale*, for example, of Mamillius' death, so disrupting the happy ending. I will turn to examples of both forms in later chapters.

Many Shakespearean plays have endings which, to a modern audience, seem incomplete or to have leftover loose ends, so to speak. There are further questions which can be asked about the world of the play, the characters in the play, and the message or meaning one is to take away. Like any fictional world in which readers or audiences have become invested, the lives of these characters can sometimes seem to extend past the boundaries of that fiction — at least in the minds and imaginations of those readers or audiences. Famously, Queen Elizabeth I seems to have enjoyed Shakespeare's Falstaff character so much that she requested to see him in further adventures. As A. C. Bradley tells it,

not very long after [*Henry IV* and *Henry V*] were composed, Shakespeare wrote, and he afterwards revised, the piece called *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Perhaps his company wanted a new play on a sudden, or, perhaps, as one would rather believe, the tradition may be true that Queen Elizabeth, delighted with the Falstaff

scenes of *Henry IV.*, expressed a wish to see the hero of them again, and to see him in love (112).

Even if this legend is a fabrication, the notion that an audience member (in this case the Queen) desired to see the world of the play or the life of a specific character expanded further is suggestive. Keir Elam argues that “The fact that our interest in a particular play or performance is not exhausted once the actual ‘intelligence given’ has been acquired suggests that there are other informational levels on which theatrical messages work” (37). The play — especially in performance I argue — creates a space where directors, actors, and most importantly audiences can continue to explore the ramifications of the narrative and answer questions that perhaps in previous performances did not even exist. All of this will add to the larger idea of the play that is always being created and recreated with each edition, performance, and conversation surrounding it.

In *Adapting King Lear for the Stage*, Lynne Bradley argues that focusing on the idea of a play as something distinct from text or performance, “usefully draw[s] attention away from the unresolvable dilemma of an unstable original, focusing instead on the existence of a conceptual composite ... an entity made up of a variety of textual and performance sources, cultural images and associations, and critical debates, all of which help to shift and define the parameters of the play” (30). As a play continues in circulation, the number of editions and staged productions of it grows, and thus, the larger the corpus of the play or work becomes. While it forms a much different perspective on the play, scholarly material, including this present work, also further adds to the conversation surrounding each play. An analysis of each text or production may inspire certain political or social angles within future productions. With all of the performances, editions, and scholarly articles, each Shakespeare play takes on a life of its

own. *Hamlet* has entered into the fields of psychology. *King Lear* has a place in medical discourse. *Othello* is discussed in sociology and racial studies. *Taming of the Shrew* has been turned into a teen romantic comedy, and *Romeo and Juliet* has inspired a musical about gang tensions in New York. Every production — critical, theatrical, or editorial — adds to discussion about the play as a whole. It opens up and extends the material in new ways and, in turn, becomes attached to that play.

This dissertation, then, will examine performance endings in relation to tensions between endings and closure. In particular, it explores how forms of theatrical paratext bridge the play's world and the audience's world, and analyzes the social, political, or critical issues raised by particular theatrical instances in specific production contexts.

1.1 A Methodology for Performance Analysis, Audience Reception, and Spectatorship

The live experience — or liveness — of performance is a fundamental aspect of one's experience of it. The communal energy created between audience and stage creates a sense of immediacy. The instantaneous feedback from the audience drives the show forward, innovating the material and separating any moment in one performance from the same moment in any other performance of the same production. It is actors and audience members existing in the same space in a specific moment in time that creates the opportunity for performance. Liveness thus creates a sense of community. Jenny Spencer notes that most contemporary performance theorists and practitioners “assume that the vital force of live theatrical performance is unavailable to audiences of other media ... that there is something about the live event that does, in itself, create community. Indeed, the idea of community ... offers one of live performance's most politically promising

effects” (21). The notion of community is vital to understanding an audience’s often unified reaction to a certain event. Yet reception theorists also recognize that each individual audience member will have a singular response to a performance. As Eli Rozik explains, “The general appeal of a performance-text lies in its potentially being meaningful for each and every spectator” (123).

Whether or not theatre holds exclusive rights to liveness over other forms of mediatized performance — such as television or film — is debatable. Philip Auslander disagrees with the idea that theatre holds a unique status over other media forms. In *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, Auslander focuses on the “liveness” of mediated events such as sporting events, concerts on television, or radio broadcasts that would often not be considered the same kind of live event as theatre. Most performance theorists, however, agree that the audience’s participation in creating the performance is particular to the live conditions of theatre. The connection between audience and actors during a performance, although often expressed in ambiguous terms, typically describes a kind of reciprocal emotion and energy. Numerous stage actors have commented that an audience determines the relative success or failure of any particular performance. The audience’s very presence is a determining factor in the performance’s end result. But while they are active participants, the specifics of the spectators’ role remain highly indeterminate at any stage of performance analysis.

In *Studying Shakespeare in Performance*, John Russell Brown argues that while critics often analyze single moments of performance, audience reception is shaped by the entirety of the theatrical experience. Brown suggests that more attention should be paid to how the conditions of an audience’s experience intensify over their time in the performance space:

the continuous building of a response towards the play's conclusion ... gives attention not only to meaning and intention but also to underlying sensations, changes in the focus of attention, recurrence of ideas, physical gestures or groupings, to moments when silence is more dominant than either verbalised meaning, conscious intention or physical effort, and to times when clarity, strength, ease, wonder, simplicity, pleasure, fear, laughter, grief, pride and many other spontaneous effects and reactions are introduced, established or withdrawn.

(44)

For Brown, the end of a performance represents not a singular moment, but the culmination of the experiences of the whole of the performance. My project is specifically concerned with the ends of performances, and the relationship between endings and closure. As such, Brown's suggestion that an audience's response builds throughout the performance is crucial to examining how endings and closure provide meaning for those audiences. My work focuses on endings as a way to understand the invisible — and sometimes indivisible — line separating paratextual material from that of the performance. But it is only when the ending is understood as a part of the whole that the impact of that ending can be interpreted.

Yet while scholars such as Brown call for further investigation into audience reception, such an objective faces many challenges. An individual's subjective interpretation of the material is shaped by many variables, including other productions of the same play the viewer has seen, the viewer's familiarity with the actors in the production or the theatre, the economic, educational, and social background of the viewer, the impetus that caused him or her to buy a ticket to the production, and so on. Attempting to list even the most general variables that may shape a viewer's reception of

the performance would be daunting. Spencer, for example, notes that the problem of audience reception theory resides in “the impossibility of ever fully predicting or controlling audience response. Not everyone goes to the theatre (or reads a script) for the same reason, nor is everyone equally experienced, competent, or attentive. ... The ‘problem’ rests, in part, with our understanding of how audiences *should* respond and how we understand the relationship between stage action and audience” (22). For Spencer, the main problem with interpreting an audience’s reception of a show is that each performance is an uncontrolled test environment, filled with uncertain variables. Prescott usefully clarifies that reception is partially shaped by prior experience: “Before encountering a work of art, the reader-spectator will have internalized a framework of ideas and values ... against which the new art work will be judged” (370). Spencer focuses on the *response* of the audience, a term which suggests a more open-ended and perhaps passive reaction from the audience. Prescott, on the other hand, examines the audience’s *judgement* of the material, which suggests a more active and conclusive reaction. While both words (response and judgement) represent similar ideas regarding spectatorship and how audiences assess a work, the subtle differences in the words *response* and *judgement* highlight the problems with current definitions of spectatorship. An audience’s role is varied and indistinct. The problem resides even with the word *audience* itself. *Audience* derives from the Latin verb to *hear*, which implies that the role of the audience is primarily to listen. *Spectator*, on the other hand, is more focused on looking, deriving from the Latin word for *sight* or *gaze*. Yet it is not simply sight or sound which makes up a theatre experience; both together, working in tandem, provide the full experience for the audience/spectators.

Helen Freshwater's *Theatre & Audience* presents a concise look at the questions surrounding audiences and their relationship to the stage. Freshwater specifically comments on the ways that language can be employed when discussing the audience's role in the theatre: "take the word 'spectator' ... Do spectators simply watch? Or are they gazing, or gawking? ... The terms employed to describe audiences and their relationship to performance are laden with value judgments" (2–3). Freshwater focuses on how the audience's role is encoded with negative terminology, language which implicitly insists that the only important role in any performance belongs to the performers. She views the current terminology as potentially limiting, stating that there is a "tendency to confuse individual and group response. ... The common tendency to refer to an audience as 'it' ... as a single entity, or a collective, risks obscuring the multiple contingencies of subjective response, context, and environment which condition an individual's interpretation of a particular performance event" (5). Freshwater's discussion of the problems with conceptualizing the audience only as a group foregrounds many of the assumptions that theatre scholars make when using a single viewpoint — whether it is a reviewer's or their own — as the basis for the entire audience's perception of events.

The word *audience* refers to an entity which is both singular and plural. It also contains a tension between activity and passivity. An *audience* describes passive listeners but also implies presence (and thus active and live members). Susan Bennett remarks that both active and inactive audience behaviour are necessary for the relative success of a production: "Spectators are thus trained to be passive in their demonstrated behaviour during a theatrical performance, but to be active in their decoding of the sign systems made available. Performers rely on the active decoding, but passive behaviour of the audience so that they can unfold the planned on-stage activity" (206). Because audience

members are actively decoding the production they help to create, it becomes exceedingly difficult to evaluate any individual audience member's experience. Any experience will be unique to that audience and that spectator alone and cannot be replicated outside of that single experience.

While there is usually at least one audience member who communicates his or her individual response to a performance — the critic — there is an inherent danger in equating that particular response with that of the whole of an audience. Critics have a very specific objective when viewing the production. Their reviews may also project a political perspective that aligns with their newspaper's political leanings. A critic's review also comes from a different level of theatre experience than that of many other audience members. But while a critic cannot represent the audience as a whole, he or she often provides useful mention of particular theatrical choices within each production. Reviews are often excellent at pointing out elements that may warrant further investigation, especially problematic moments within the performance or distinctive features of a particular production. Theatrical reviews must therefore be looked at in tandem with other (and occasionally conflicting) information such as recorded performances and stage management or production notes to recover the fullest image of the production possible.

In the last half-century, reader response theorists such as Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser, Hans-Robert Jauss, and Roland Barthes have outlined some determining factors of the reader's experience in creating meaning. They have also provided groundwork for determining how researchers can analyze that response. For purely text-based work, their analyses have proven both challenging and rewarding. They have opened the text to new interpretations and freed the work from the constraints of its historical position. Within

performance studies, reader-response theory has provided a constructive avenue for further analysis of audience reception. The issues surrounding audience reception are important to my dissertation because my work examines how the ending moments within productions can shape and reshape an audience's perception of the event.

In the remaining pages of this chapter, my goals are twofold. First, I will set out some current and past research and theories surrounding audience reception. I will discuss some of the conflicts, problems, and interrogations which are ongoing in the field of audience reception and how they relate to performance analysis. Secondly, this chapter will house my own methodology for interpreting audience reception, or spectatorship, in relation to performance studies. My methodology utilizes much of Jauss's "range of expectations," especially as interpreted by Susan Bennett, while also incorporating other elements of performance analysis, which are specific to my project. I will furthermore engage with scholars' sometimes provisional solutions for discussing and analyzing audience reception, including some techniques which are not relevant to my own work but are a part of the conversation surrounding performance studies.

The problems with understanding and utilizing audience reception within performance analysis are manifold. It is not possible to document every audience member's response to each separate performance within a production run, let alone try to extend this analysis to multiple productions of the same play. There will always be unknown outliers. The methodological difficulties inherent to this sort of investigation have led many scholars to posit that performance analysis and audience response analysis should remain separate fields of inquiry. Before turning to my own methodology, I want to briefly outline some of the other models currently in existence.

1.2 Talking about the Audience: Performance Analysis Theories

Both Marco de Marinis in *The Semiotics of Performance* and Eli Rozik in *Generating Theatre Meaning* posit fictionalized spectators as a way of engaging with performance analysis. De Marinis's early work utilizes a Model Spectator "who *recognizes* all the codes of the performance text in question" (167), privileging idealized spectators rather than engaging with actual individuals. The Model Spectator fulfills the missing half of a performance text — the role of the audience — to provide a full idea of the performance for the scholar to analyze. De Marinis is careful to position the Model Spectator as a tool to be used mainly in interpretation, distancing the model from its mold. The Model Spectator, however, is not formulated out of the experiences of actual audience members but rather the performance text's needs. Thus, de Marinis's stand-in has very little relation to actual spectators. In his later work, de Marinis shifts his argument, utilizing a "less totalized, more pragmatic 'Viewer'" (Carlson 520) instead of a Model Spectator. This re-envisioned model provides a "highly complex and concrete anthropological category" (Carlson 520), in which "socio-economic, psychological, and biological parameters, [and] cultural factors [were] taken into account" (de Marinis, "Sociosemiotik der Theaterrezeption" 51), drawing on aspects which might impact on an actual audience. While de Marinis's Viewer is a marked improvement from the Model Spectator, it is still set apart from the experiences of actual audience members.

Similarly, for Rozik, performance analysis requires a form of imagined spectator: "the implied spectator reflects by definition all the competences and functions needed for the complementation of a performance-text ... the role of the implied spectator is characterized by framing, reading, interpreting and experiencing a performance-text"

(161). Indeed, in Rozik's view, the implied spectator is a necessary conception due to the instability of an actual audience's reading: "the contribution of real spectators is limited to various extents, reflecting various handicaps, such as partial knowledge of the theatre medium, incomplete cultural baggage and psychological biases and inhibitions" (162, emphasis removed). The elements that make every audience unique, are, to Rozik, empirically problematic as they formulate a limited, and so for his purposes, erroneous reading. For Rozik, performance analysis is a mental exercise, consisting of not only an implied spectator, but also an implied director. Like the implied spectator, the implied director can be found in the clues left by the live performance: "departures from a source play-script are the main clues for revealing implied directorial intentions" (147, emphasis removed). In the fictionalized versions of both figures, Rozik finds an analogous connection between the ideal and the real: "there is an implied dialogue between an implied director and an implied spectator, which reflects a directorial intuition of the expected real dialogue between a real director and prospective real spectator" (161). However, it is evident that, perhaps more than de Marinis, Rozik is studying not the performance itself, but the idealized or unrealized performance. The Implied or Model Spectator cuts a methodological Gordian knot, but it seems impossible to divorce the responses of actual spectators from performance analysis while still suggesting that it is live performance that is being analyzed. Yet in instances where real spectators are not available, or an actual performance is unable to be studied, as with historical performances, both de Marinis's and Rozik's models are worth serious consideration.

Susan Bennett, in *Theatre Audiences*, takes a more nuanced approach than Rozik or de Marinis. Her methodology assumes a range of spectator expectations which replaces actual spectators. In tracing the movement from the cultural context of the

theatrical event to the audience's experience of that event, Bennett's work demonstrates a working model for audience reception. Bennett outlines how reader-response theories, which are usually applied only in textual work, can also be used in a performance setting. By drawing attention back to audience reception, Bennett's work provides a politically grounded — although Western-based — system of understanding how the audience interacts with the performance.

Bennett outlines the flaws and benefits of a number of reader-response systems, analyzing each from a performance standpoint. The section of Bennett's work, however, that I find most relates to my own system of audience reception theory is her analysis of the work of Hans Robert Jauss. Here, Bennett discusses how texts are inevitably mediated by the reader's horizon of expectations. For Jauss, certain horizons of expectations are suggested by the text. That is to say, there are certain realms of possibility that are supported over other ideologies because of the narrative structure and "rules" set out by each text's world. This range of expectations must be measured against the reader's own horizon of expectations. The reader comes to the text with a socially developed understanding of how the world (or the text) might function. Ultimately, the text can suggest a number of possible readings and the reader can — according to his or her unique background — bring to the text a number of expectations. It is the meeting of these two points that forms the reader's individual interpretation of the text. But as Bennett points out, using Jauss's theory for theatre audiences is problematic because it "fails to deal in any depth with the sociological underpinning of [the audience's] experience" (51). It is Bennett's appropriation of Jauss that moves the theory from being strictly concerned with reader response to audience reception theory, and from the "dead" artifact of the text to the live experience of theatre.

Bennett adapts Jauss's theory to create a methodology that consists of a merging of two frames: an inner frame that represents the event itself and the spectator's experience of a fictional stage world, and an outer frame that contains the cultural elements which create and inform the theatrical experience:

The outer frame is concerned with theatre as a cultural construct through the idea of the theatrical event, the selection of material for production, and the audience's definitions and expectations of a performance. The inner frame contains the event itself and, in particular, the spectator's experience of a fictional stage world. This frame encompasses production strategies, ideological overcoding, and the material conditions of performance (1–2).

Bennett states that it is the interactive intersection of these two frames that create the experience within the theatre and gives the audience the role of interpreter (139). While these frames are constantly meeting and informing the other, it is the separation of the two systems of knowledge that allows Bennett to locate pressure points within the production. By separating the external or outer factors from the inner experience, Bennett suggests a means by which scholars can analyze and interpret a performance using the audience's perspective. Furthermore, Bennett places a stronger emphasis on the inner frame, suggesting that "While the outer frame (cultural background, audience and production horizons of expectations, social occasion) will always mediate and control receptive strategies available, an audience's conscious attention is to their perception of the physical presence of a fictional world" (145). For Bennett, the play itself and the messages that it promotes will have a stronger impact on audience reception than the theatre building or the audience's background. The audience proceeds through "the construction of hypotheses about the fictional world which are subsequently

substantiated, revised, or negated” (140), in response to elements from the external frame and the rules and arguments presented in the world of the play. Bennett does, however, mention that “the audience’s freedom to select quite different processes of reading, or even to ignore the play entirely, must not be discounted. Similarly, members of an audience may resist focal points” (150). Thus, she returns to the horizon of expectations in order to build a system, which is inevitably built on better informed suppositions.

Bennett’s system also points out many of the concrete factors that influence audience reception, such as “set, props, lighting, sound and music ... language, voice, movement, and physical appearance (including costume, make-up, and facial expression)” (140). The more specific the details about both the production itself and the social occasions that conditioned that production, the more precise scholars can be in attempting to determine the range of expectations of the audience. Bennett asserts that there is a

necessity to view the theatrical event beyond its immediate conditions and to foreground its social constitution. The description of an individual response to a particular production may not be possible or, indeed, even desirable. But, because of that individual’s participation in a given culture and the importance of his/her culturally constituted horizon of expectations, and selection of a particular social event, it is important to reposition the study of drama to reflect this. (211)

Thus, Bennett’s work examines both the theatrical event itself, as well as the conditions which might impact an audience’s understanding of the piece.

My own methodology begins with Bennett’s work and modifies it slightly to suit the conditions of my analysis. Thus, if one can identify a range of expectations — or the conditions of each frame — and the circumstances which have bearing on those horizons,

then a credible audience response to the event can be articulated without utilizing actual audience members. While this will never encompass all possible responses or all possible audience interpretations, it will form a cohesive understanding of the ways the production might make meaning for the audience. I will examine the performance (or production) elements of what Bennett calls the inner frame; I will also interpret potential perceptions of the event (the outer frame) by examining the cultural landscape of that production alongside available reviews. My analysis pursues the most likely and interpretively interesting readings of the performance in order to combine audience reception with performance analysis. As reviews of Bennett's book have highlighted, using textual-based reader-response theories to determine audience response is challenging because the scholar must consider not an individual, but collective, audience experience. Criticism of Bennett's book and its focus on reader response as a way into performance response has been voiced by some scholars (Copeland 1992; Jones 1993). However, Bennett's groundbreaking work on how reader-response theory can be utilized in performance is imperative as a base to further work in the field. Thus, instead of attempting to analyze any particular spectator (or group of spectators), my work examines what opportunities for analysis the potential performance (or production) creates, while remaining grounded in the cultural, historical, and social environment in which the production was staged.¹

¹ Bennett's book has also made a large impact on the field of cultural materialism. Ric Knowles's exploration of the kinds of cultural work that theatre can accomplish is outlined in his book *Reading the Material Theatre*. Knowles's materialist performance analysis moves beyond Bennett's focus on the internal frame to understand the difficulty of charting audience reception. This difficulty stems partially from the fact that audience members have varying political, geographical, and cultural backgrounds, especially when productions are remounted or go on tour. Knowles's work pays careful attention to the semiotic signs that build theatrical systems and how they are received and interpreted by audience

Chapter Two of my dissertation will tackle individual outlier performances which deviate significantly from the rest of their respective productions. These performances are drawn from Tyrone Guthrie's *Hamlet* (1937, Old Vic), Antoni Cimolino's *The Merchant of Venice* (2013, Stratford Festival of Canada), Richard Monette's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1999, Stratford Festival of Canada), and Steven Pimlott's *Richard II* (2000, Royal Shakespeare Company). Each of these specific performances changed the production ending dramatically so that an altered experience was created for the audience in attendance. Chapter Three examines three productions which textually altered the expected ending in order to foreground a particular political or social message: Gregory Doran's *Titus Andronicus* (1995, National Theatre), Trevor Nunn's *Troilus and Cressida* (1999, National Theatre), and Sidney Berger's *The Taming of the Shrew* (2004). The textual adjustments made for each staging will be analyzed in relation to the conventional ending, and also in terms of that particular show's other production choices. Finally, Chapter Four will analyze three productions by director Des McAnuff during his tenure as Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival of Canada: *The Tempest* (2010), *Twelfth Night* (2011), and *Henry V* (2012). McAnuff's endings attempted to evoke an emotional response from the audience through the inclusion of a visual or auditory stimulus. How these moments impacted the rest of the production will be my object of study.

members. Both Knowles and materialist performance analysis help to develop a system by which performance theorists can understand the sociological, political, and historical factors which inform productions.

1.3 Between Actor and Character

Before concluding this chapter, I should like to turn to the way that audience, actor, and character interact. This connection, I feel, has a direct bearing on how an audience interprets a production. A curious relationship exists onstage between the actor, the character he or she portrays, and the audience. In theatre that utilizes a naturalized performance style, the actor is supposed to fade into the background while the focus is on the character. He or she re-emerges as the actor only once the performance ends. Yet there is always the possibility that the audience will suddenly remember the actor during the production. Anthony B. Dawson, in “Performance and Participation: Desdemona, Foucault and the Actor’s Body,” states that “The audience ... [is] encouraged to read past the body, to recognize literal falsification, on the part of the actor, of his own person, its transferral to some-body else. ... But at the same time it cannot forget the actor” (38). This dual vision of character and actor remains with the audience throughout the piece, constantly in flux.

In *Distance in the Theatre*, Daphna Ben Chaim concretely outlines how the spectator’s own personal involvement correlates to the distancing effect he or she can achieve from the production. Building on Sartre’s work on the imaging consciousness, Chaim suggests that “when faced with a live performance in a theatre whereby human beings are representing nonexistent characters ... we must shift back and forth between perceiving and imaging” (13). At the same time that a spectator sees an actor, he or she can also see the character being portrayed by the actor. Chaim recognizes that the human mind is capable of juggling these two thoughts, two identities, at once, but further questions, “what role does our awareness of the objects in the theatre as ‘real’ play in our

psychological distance from the event? And how does this awareness interact with our imaginative experience of the unreal?” (21).

The continual presence of both actor and character in one body provides a sense of shifting semiotic signs. In *Stage Fright, Animals, and other Theatre Problems*, Nicholas Ridout suggests that when the audience recognizes the character as the actor who actually is, then the audience member experiences a “semiotic shudder”: “the audience has no way of knowing whether they are seeing an actor making themselves into a sign or an actor failing to do so” (60). The relationship of onstage bodies to the audience and the characters the bodies represent is an important aspect of performance studies. Peggy Phelan asserts in *Unmarked* that “Performance implicates the real through the presence of living bodies” (148). It is the breathing of the bodies, the actual movements, which indicate that a form of reality is taking place onstage, even as it references fiction. Carol Chillington Rutter, in *Enter the Body*, confirms that bodies are the key to a successful performance: “In the theatre, the body bears the brunt of performance. . . . No body in the theatre is exempt — least of all, the spectator’s” (xii). While the bodies of the actors are the vehicle through which the production takes place, the audience members also go through a transformative experience. The shift from actor to character, I would argue, mirrors that of the audience’s understanding of their own role within the production. As spectators become more aware of the actor standing onstage delivering lines, so too do they recognize themselves as audience, as participant. The “willing suspension of disbelief” does not merely apply to the world of the play but to their own position within that play. The shifting inside and outside the play is important to my discussion of audience reception, and to my discussion of endings, because it

demonstrates the fragility of the line between the inside and the outside of the performance.

This chapter does not prescribe best practices in terms of audience reception studies. Rather, I hope to have foregrounded some of the questions and issues that currently exist within performance studies around the topic of spectatorship. I hope, furthermore, to show how they have previously been dealt with as well as to have discussed my own methodology for tackling performance analysis. Foremost among my concerns for this dissertation are transparency, responsible interpretation of the material, and a careful understanding of the relationship among audience, actor, and character. There is a delicacy that is required when analyzing the play's final moments. What spectators see or interpret, and how they react to, and reenact, their role are all unknown elements. By analyzing these moments in terms of a range of expectations and through careful consideration of the psychological relationship among character, actor, and audience, I hope to better understand how endings function within a performance — how they have the potential to disrupt expectations about the play, about the performance, and about what constitutes an end.

2 One Night Only!: Unique Endings in Outlier Performances

While the terms *performance* and *production* are occasionally used interchangeably, there are important differences between the two. Theoretically speaking, each performance is the tangible representation of a production. It is performances which are experienced and analyzed by an audience on any given night. A production, on the other hand, is the creative process. It is more idealized than concrete and it is built of the perceptions of what can be achieved through performance. A production has tangible elements: the stage manager's prompt book, the costumes, and the set, to name a few. However, in relation to a performance, a production is more accurately described as a concept shared by the theatrical practitioners involved in that production. It is both the design itself and the creative process which generates the design. Each performance thus strives to fulfill a representation of this production. To put it simply, performances attempt to embody the concept of the production on stage. However, because theatre is live, every performance will invariably vary from the scripted and rehearsed production in some form. Simply looking at the runtimes for individual performances reveals that they do not all play out the same way. A comedy with an energetic and engaged audience might add a few minutes to the show length. A forgotten line or a rushed scene might shave off time. Indeed, it is the element of liveness which defines performance and ensures that each performance is unique.

According to Peggy Phelan, "Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations *of* representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance" (146). Once recorded — even in the prompt book —

performance becomes something akin to a memory. It can be “viewed” any number of times, but it no longer has the same immediacy. Furthermore, not unlike a memory, the only changes that can occur to a recorded performance result from editing and erosion. The copy — whether as a recording or as a memory — is a dead object. It cannot be affected by the viewer. In live performance, however, marked by the presence of individuals who come together as a group, a certain transference can occur between audience and performers. This transference, on occasion, can be unexpectedly volatile.

While it is true that each performance varies in its representation of a production, certain instances present notable outliers from what might be considered the standard range of variation. These particular show nights constitute extreme aberrations or oddities, either because their differences mark them as somehow exceptional or, as I argue, because they are categorically different from the rest of the production run. These specific performances — which I designate as performance outliers — are set apart from the rest of the production run because their variances modify one’s perception of the production; they present new interpretations of the production for the viewing audience. There are four such irregular performances that I will discuss in this chapter; each of them varied from other performances in the same production specifically in terms of their endings. Ultimately, the new endings allowed these outlier performances to create an experience for that audience which was radically unlike performances on subsequent or previous nights.

The first production I will analyze is the 1937 Old Vic production of *Hamlet* starring Laurence Olivier and Michael Redgrave and directed by Tyrone Guthrie. On 30 January, Olivier interrupted the curtain call to announce to the audience that Laertes (Redgrave) was now a father, merging Redgrave with the character he performed, well

after the play ended. The second production deals with a one-day event at which “Shylock” appealed the results of his trial. Because this “extra ending” was performed alongside the regular run of the 2013 production of *The Merchant of Venice* at the Stratford Festival of Canada, directed by Antoni Cimolino, it served as a potentially disruptive coda to the play. A single performance of the third production, Richard Monette’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1999), again at the Stratford Festival of Canada, ended with a poem, thus enabling one audience member’s marriage proposal. The additional poem was crafted by the cast and crew, and presented on stage by Oberon, Titania, and Puck. Finally, the Royal Shakespeare Company’s *Richard II* (2000), directed by Steven Pimlott, performed different endings on a nightly basis depending on the inclination of David Troughton, the actor playing Bolingbroke. The play was part of a cycle — “This England” — and the various endings either reinforced the idea of a larger cycle, or emphasized key themes within *Richard II*.

These four performances disrupt the usual ending to create an altered experience which marks these performances as distinct. Yet each performance differs from other incarnations of the aforementioned productions in more than simply a matter of degree. These nights were designed to project a new perspective on the drama, to create an exclusive theatrical experience for those audience members present. Even Olivier’s announcement, which could not have been planned prior to that night, was deliberately added, and Olivier’s phrasing connected the birth announcement to the world of the play. These outlier performances might have radically altered their audience’s perception of that performance while providing an experience exclusive to that night. Each disrupted ending invited the audience to experience a particular sense of community, and even modified the sense of the performance so that it was, arguably, no longer strictly in line

with the rest the production. This is not to say that these unique nights did not represent the essence of the production, but rather to insist that, through their difference, they also created something new.

An audience's experience of a production, primarily by means of the performance they witness (although some spectators might also be influenced by such factors as the program or reviews), can be understood as a theatrical event. The theatrical event is, in many ways, akin to Susan Bennett's outer frame. While the inner frame is equally important in developing a sense of audience response, understanding the theatrical event helps develop a sense of an individual performance apart from the production. The theoretical framework for my interpretation of what constitutes an "event" is largely inspired by Willmar Sauter, and the applications of his ideas by Vicki Ann Cremona. Cremona's edited collection, *Theatrical Events*, presents a group of essays prompted by Sauter's notion of theatre as a social event. Seeking a more pragmatic application of Sauter's theory, each of the scholars writing for *Theatrical Events* tackles and discusses Sauter's division of the process of communication into three component parts: the sensory, artistic, and symbolic levels. Cremona analyzes Sauter's work in her introduction to Part One of *Theatrical Events*. Here, she posits that

The term 'theatre' which focuses on the act itself — the elements situated at the core of the performance — is juxtaposed to that of 'event', which shifts attention from the performance to different elements around it, such as 'cultural contexts'. The focus of study becomes the situation of performance, where emphasis is laid on the different types of interaction, related to theatre, providing new perspectives that allow social and cultural contexts to come to the fore. The social process is

laid at the core of the event, and all theatrical elements are examined through this perspective. (29)

Cremona's analysis of the theatrical event demonstrates that the context surrounding a production is an interpretively important factor. When one witnesses a theatrical event, the core theatrical production is merged or blended with the surrounding contextual circumstances, thus creating a holistic experience. Cremona further suggests that her study of the theatrical event goes beyond "the notion of theatre as a predefined situation marked within a limited time and space and shows how through the concept of 'theatricality', the idea of an 'event' can be expressed, evolve and change in time, space and meaning" (29).

Because these events happen in real time, the theatrical event embodies an intersection of the theatrical moment with the creative process: "The theatrical event viewed as a cultural happening blends the creative process with the experience of that process. The focus of interest becomes the cultural and social contexts that generate the event, intervene in it, tamper with it, and may even ultimately suppress it, transform it or allow the event to survive in time" (Cremona 31). Cremona's theoretical explanation of how an event functions in dialogue with a social environment is particularly relevant to my analysis of the four outlier performances in this chapter. I argue that the community experience — among spectators, and between spectators and performers — is enhanced by the performance's creative process, alongside its new ending, to create an exceptional theatrical event. In essence, reading an experience as a theatrical event blurs the "defined lines" surrounding the performance. While the events I am analyzing are different from those described in Part One of *Theatrical Events* — these essays focus on ceremony, festival, and, for Cremona specifically, carnival — the effect is similar: the blending of

the creative process with the experience of that moment creates a singular theatrical event.

The present chapter reflects on how these four performances introduce an element of chaos into the production, allowing for variations to arise in new and unexpected ways. These deviations produced alternate endings that allowed audience members to reconceptualize their understanding of that production. Furthermore, each of these performances invited the audience to become a part of an exclusive event. In creating these new endings, the theatre professionals shaped a new reading of their production. The final moments of these performances created a separate kind of community space within the theatre for discussion, innovation, or celebration. These events are more than simply notable, they create a shared community experience insofar as the audience becomes a part of the event by witnessing it. In *Immersive Theatres*, Josephine Machon discusses the way that immersive theatre functions to enhance the relationship between audience and performance. While the examples I focus on are not categorically immersive, the heightened relationship they create by building a community between actors and audience functions in a similar way to Machon's examples. Applying Machon's arguments to these four theatrical performances demonstrates how these kinds of events can "enhance the live(d) audience-performer-participant interaction and exchange that occurs within the event. The live experience of immersive performance colludes in a continuing, immediate and interactive exchange of energy and experience between the work and the audience" (44). In re-scripting the ending for one night, these performances reinvented the production, investing it with an ostentatious perception of spontaneity and liveness, and demonstrating the elusiveness of endings in performance.

2.1 A Daughter is Born: A New Addition to *Hamlet*

When a performance differs from the ideal for that production, it is often because lines or cues are missed, or props are misplaced. These internal glitches are not wholly unexpected over a theatrical run, especially early in a production or during a long run. Nightly alterations are often noted in the stage manager's performance notes and, depending on the impact of the misstep, minute tweaks might result. Occasionally, however, forces from outside of the theatre (or of the play's narrative) work their way into the performance and, as a consequence, into the world of the play. Famous examples of this phenomenon include the cannon misfire during *Henry VIII* that led to the burning of the original Globe Theatre in 1613, or the Bottle Riot in 1822 Ireland when chaos erupted during a performance of *She Stoops to Conquer*. One could even number among these examples Abraham Lincoln's murder during *Our American Cousin* (1865). These are extreme cases, but they gesture to how external forces sometimes enthusiastically breach the world of the play and playhouse. These instances obviously halted production rather than simply augmenting it, but initially some audience members would have been unsure if fiction was taking a strange turn or if reality was breaking through.

On 30 January 1937, during the curtain call of the Old Vic's *Hamlet*, Laurence Olivier famously declared that, "tonight a great actress has been born, Laertes has a daughter" (qtd. in Deeney 187). Olivier's impromptu announcement referred to Michael Redgrave's newborn daughter, Vanessa Redgrave, and the latest to join the illustrious Redgrave acting family. Olivier's prediction — that Vanessa Redgrave would become a great actress — was, of course, quite true. However, perhaps the more intriguing and perplexing feature of Olivier's proclamation was that Olivier did not announce the birth of Redgrave's child; he announced the birth of the fictional character Laertes's child.

Furthermore, this announcement occurred during the curtain call, a moment when the distinction between actor and character is uniquely conflated or blurred. Olivier referring to his close friend as the character Laertes, rather than calling him by his actual name, demonstrates the potential confusion between actor and character that exists within the curtain call.

I will begin my examination of this moment in theatre history by analyzing how Olivier's statement may seem to provide additional information about the play's narrative. In declaring that Laertes (as opposed to Redgrave) has fathered a child, Olivier offers something new about the character, about the play, and about the future anticipated within the world of the play. The audience on the night of Vanessa Redgrave's birth was given a particular trajectory about the life of the characters during and after the play that is not mentioned in the text. With this new information, Polonius's projected fears about his son's behaviour in Paris — "I saw him enter such a house of sale', / Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth" (2.1.60–1) — take on new meaning.²

Olivier's words may also reflect back upon Laertes's advice to his sister about men and their "unmastered importunity" (1.3.33). If we subsequently learn that Laertes has fathered a child, then one might retrospectively understand this statement as the wisdom of personal experience. It seems that Ophelia may have been quite right to warn Laertes about being hypocritical in his advice:

but, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven

² All Shakespeare references, unless otherwise stated, use the Norton Shakespeare 2nd edition.

Whilst like a puffed and reckless libertine
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads
 And recks not his own rede. (1.3.46–51)

Olivier's announcement that Laertes has a daughter gives further evidence of Laertes's oft-cited hastiness. It is no wonder then that Laertes's "thoughts and wishes [would] bend again towards France" (1.2.54) in the opening act of the play. Olivier, presumably unintentionally, has suddenly extended Shakespeare's narrative to include the fruit of Laertes's extracurricular activities.

Only a single piece of new information about Laertes has been put forth in this alternate ending. Yet this single detail reflects back on the play in a number of different ways, not only changing how this character could be interpreted, but also changing an analysis of the world of the play. All plays have an afterlife suggested or described by the play's text. The final lines of many Shakespearean plays directly state where characters are headed when they leave the stage and what they will do when they get there. Most audience members could describe in a fair amount of detail what they believe will occur to the characters or in the world of the play after the curtain falls, whether that concerns an impending marriage or a new reign. However, performance choices in the final moments can defer closure and/or privilege new afterlives above others. It is in this respect that the world of the play in performance takes on a very different life than that which exists in text alone. Olivier's announcement is part of what Baz Kershaw calls "ecologies of performance" (136). These ecologies are shaped by "the complicated and unavoidable interdependencies between every element of a performance event and its environment. These interdependencies ensure that the smallest change of one element in some way, however minutely, effects change in all the rest" (Kershaw 136). Certainly,

this singular performance differed significantly from the rest of the production. Laertes only has a daughter in the 30 January production. Vanessa Redgrave's birth announcement, however, has become a noted, frequently-told moment of theatre history. This is not only because of Vanessa Redgrave's later acting prowess but also due to the particular wording of Olivier's announcement; it declared Vanessa's father to be a fictional character, and this future great actress, the daughter of Laertes.

The birth announcement constructed a moment of community for everyone in attendance that night, actors and audience alike. Olivier was sharing with his audience the evidence of a collective humanity and the promise of future shows, perhaps with Michael Redgrave's daughter in a lead role. He created an emotional bridge between the audience and the stage, granting them privileged access into the private lives of the actors. But because of the slipperiness of language and of endings, this community event becomes entwined with *Hamlet* and its characters, creating an interface and point of exchange between the offstage and onstage worlds.

It is possible that Olivier referred to Redgrave by his character's name so that a larger portion of the audience would be able to grasp to whom Olivier was referring, and so join in with the congratulations that Olivier was offering. After all, the audience had just spent four hours viewing Michael Redgrave as Laertes. Yet this seems like an over-justification of his word choice, and it also downplays the tension which exists in the curtain call. For some of the audience, Redgrave would be enough of a celebrity, even as early as 1937, for the audience to readily recognize his name. Besides, this announcement was made at the moment when the character has been left behind and the actor is stepping out to receive the audience's "appreciation." Indeed, Laertes was killed on the stage just moments before. He died as Laertes, but he rose again as Redgrave. There is an

assumption that by the time the actors are ready to take their bows, the character has been (or should be) left behind. Some directors' handbooks — such as the *Play Director's Survival Kit* — even make this point explicit: “The actors should take their calls as themselves, not in character. The play is over. The audience is acknowledging the actors, not the characters. Don't worry about maintaining a mood. The audience breaks it the moment the applause begins” (Rodgers and Rodgers 197). Even British stage actor Simon Callow in his book *Being an Actor* notes that while the actor is perhaps not quite himself, he should certainly not be presented as the character: “Most actors of my acquaintance find the call embarrassing. One doesn't know what attitude to take. Who is one? Clearly not the character. Is it me, then, bowing in this servile fashion?” (208). But as Callow hints, the actor/character divide is equally not entirely clear cut. Martin Revermann calls this the “paradox of the curtain call,” and notes how, “while celebrating closure [the curtain call] emphatically resists it. That is to say that as much as the curtain signals closure, the actual performance continues to linger ... resulting in a perception that the curtain call is a performance that is both new and at the same time the continuation of a previous one” (Revermann 193). The figure on stage is neither simply the character nor simply the actor. Thus, while the premise of the curtain call may be a marked out space for the actors rather than the characters they played, in practice this moment holds both actor and character together, deferring the ending and closure and therefore potentially impacting the narrative of the play.

To take this moment down a different path, if Olivier were still in character, on some level he would identify as Hamlet, who has been talking and fighting with Laertes. Thus, Olivier's own association at this transitional moment might have been with the character, not the actor. While on stage, it might have seemed more natural to refer to the

man before him as Hamlet's rival, Laertes, not as his friend, Michael Redgrave. But again, unless we interpret Olivier's function here as a kind of actor-playwright, deliberately extending the narrative of the play, Laertes has no daughter.

What I am attempting to chase down by means of a famous moment in Shakespearean theatre history is that the curtain call always exists as a space which is both inside and outside of the play. It is occupied by both the characters and the actors. How much the overlap between character and actor is present and recognized at the curtain call depends on the production, the actor or actress, and the audience's perception of the moment. This confusion between actor and character is most palpable to audiences, since they have spent a considerable amount of time perceiving the actors as specific characters. This conflation of actor and character, however, also potentially exists for the onstage performers. The curtain call is not just the moment when Redgrave and Olivier take their bows, but also when Hamlet and Laertes join together one last time. The lines between character and actor have been blurred and any attempt to categorize the figure on stage as either actor or character alone is unduly limiting.

Thus, Michael Redgrave was both himself and Laertes in the moment that Olivier/Hamlet declared aloud that Laertes was now a father. The real-world event of Vanessa Redgrave's birth was announced at the same time that the narrative of the play was unexpectedly extended to include a surprise child which Laertes begat (presumably in Paris). The audience celebrated both a living and a dead Laertes, and a living and a dead Hamlet, as well as the actors who portrayed them — Olivier and Redgrave. Curtain calls are inherently troubling moments on stage. They straddle the lines between what constitutes the play, the performance, and the production, and obscure the boundary between fiction and reality. While curtain calls always hold the potential to shift, change,

or amend how closure and endings can be viewed and interpreted, moments such as Olivier's announcement clearly demonstrate the breakdown between fiction and reality. Curtain calls create a shared experience between the audience and actors/characters, which can become fused to the material of the play, especially when notable events occur. The cast bow — something not noted textually — insists upon new means of sensing the ending, providing closure, and enhancing the overall experience.

Aside from the curtain call announcement, Vanessa's birth caused a few other minor adjustments to the play — particularly the pacing of the performance. Guthrie's production was a long version of *Hamlet*, and the runtime was nearly four hours. Most reviewers applauded the choice. The reviewer for the Times stated,

The play begins at seven and, excluding intervals, occupies less than four hours, and this without a sign of rush or gabbling. In fact the effort of response is less now than it is when *Hamlet* is cut, for the stress of bridging gaps is absent and Shakespeare, who as a craftsman knew when to ease and when to tax his audience, is allowed to tell his story in his own way. The consequence is a feeling of spaciousness and of being led, not driven. ("Hamlet in Full", qtd in Morgan 190)

Unlike previous renditions of the character, Olivier's Hamlet was energetic, even manic, rather than brooding and morose. Anthony B. Dawson comments that "Olivier was unsurpassed in the flow of brilliant energy, the physical power, the bite and harshness of the part" (Dawson, "Hamlet" 116). This character interpretation was enabled by the set, which "was comprised of a series of ramps leading to platforms, up and down which Olivier moved with a 'frenetic vigor' making a 'tremendous leap' from the throne down onto the makeshift stage after the play scene" (Rokison 74). Olivier's Hamlet was a man

of action, not inaction, except on the one front he most desperately wanted to breach, that of killing his uncle.

While Olivier's intensity and physical force might have carried the play through nearly four hours of material, it also came at a cost. Some reviewers felt that the play was *too* animated. James Agate describes Olivier's "pulsating vitality and excitement" as a positive factor, but further suggests that while it was an excellent performance, it was not quite a performance of *Hamlet*:

After Claudius has left at the end of the play scene this Hamlet acts literally all over the stage, his "why, let the stricken deer go weep" being accompanied by a tremendous leap from the perched-up throne on to the mimic stage below, and thence down to the footlights in an access of high hysteria. That is matter for the most compelling admiration. The jauntiness complained of occurs in the philosophical passages, which too often take on a note approaching pertness. This is due to, I will not say a fault, but a characteristic of Mr. Olivier's playing which prevents him from being Hamlet. ... To sum up, this is obviously a performance carefully thought out, constant with itself, and taken at admirable speed. On the other hand, it is not Hamlet. (qtd. in Stokes 139)

Olivier's dynamism was especially evident in the duel with Laertes. According to Francis Beckett, Olivier maintained that the performance was worth more than his personal safety: "More than once he was hurt in the duel with Laertes, played by Michael Redgrave, for he had typically insisted that Redgrave should lunge violently at him" (46).

While there is no documentation to suggest Olivier was injured the night that Vanessa was born (obviously he was well enough to make the curtain-call birth announcement), the pacing of the final scene was notably different. In a biography by

Dan Callahan, Vanessa Redgrave claims that Laertes found out he was a father while fighting for his life:

While they were fighting a duel, someone signaled to Michael from the wings and said, “It’s a girl.” ... All of the stories come from the people who were in the company at the time, that there were actors in the wings signaling boy, girl, this, that. And I think it’s very typical of Larry Olivier that he’d say some extravagant, warm-hearted thing for Michael. They certainly fought the fastest duel Hamlet and Laertes have ever fought. (19)

The birth announcement thus affected not only the final moments of the play, and one’s interpretation of the character of Laertes, but it also shaped the events leading up to it. The last onstage sequences were frenzied with a different energy. Laertes even had an altered motivation in his fight against Hamlet; he was now a father. Of course, Laertes must lose, as he is scripted to do so, but the addition of the new life — a new character — into these final moments subtly altered how both the actors, and eventually the audience, were able to interpret the play. On this night alone, Laertes fought harder and faster than on any other night, and with one very particular reason: to see his child.

The final point I briefly want to discuss is the Freudian or Oedipal reading that both the director, Tyrone Guthrie, and Laurence Olivier drew on for this production. It is well known that the pair went to see Ernest Jones prior to production: “[Guthrie] adopted the Freudian thesis of a recently published book by Dr Ernest Jones that Hamlet had an Oedipus complex and was almost incestuously in love with his mother. ... [Olivier and Guthrie] went to see the doctor to hear him expound his theory” (Coleman 87). The portrayal of parents and children is a core aspect of *Hamlet*. Although the mother-son relationship would be more intensely analyzed after the release of Olivier’s film version

of *Hamlet* in 1948, at the time of the stage production, very few critics commented on the dynamics between Hamlet and Gertrude. Coleman, for example, notes that the “Oedipal treatment of the play, though faithfully followed, went almost unnoticed by the audience and critics” (88). Those who did potentially notice it, like the *Times* reporter, seem to avoid analyzing it: “the Queen, for reasons not to be defined except at length, seems often to be consciously outside the play as though she were aware of being in costume” (“6 January 1937, *The Times*” 191). I mention this point because of the dramatic shift that Redgrave’s birth announcement provides. It alters a production that is intended to be about sons and mothers into one about fathers and daughters. Hamlet’s fixation on his mother is supplanted by a father’s affection for his daughter — a priority duplicated most clearly in the play through Laertes’s sister, Ophelia, and their father, Polonius. By tying Vanessa’s birth announcement to Redgrave’s fictional counterpart, Laertes, Olivier effectively heightens and shifts a potential reading of the play by focusing on a different familial unit through Vanessa’s birth.

The birth announcement may seem insignificant or even unrelated to the production as a whole. It occurs after the formal “ending” of the text, and clearly references outside events. This one-night event was probably not intended to create an alternate version of the play, but simply to invite the audience into the joy of Redgrave — or/as Laertes — at the birth of a daughter. And yet Olivier’s postscript did create, for one night only, a new way to understand both Guthrie’s staging and Shakespeare’s tragedy, disrupting and intervening in the production to create a possible fictional back-story that ripples back into the staging from the curtain call. Whether intentionally or not, the actors retained some element of their characters mapped onto their bodies. This is always true of actors and their behaviour during the curtain call; the curtain call is a transitional moment

that augments the production's narratives. This particular instance is especially remarkable, however, because its interpretive effects are so immediately perceptible. The cast bow insists upon new means of sensing the ending, providing closure, and enhancing the overall experience.

2.2 Overturning the Ending: Shylock's Appeal and *The Merchant of Venice*

Defining specific moments positioned at the end of a production as paratextual depends largely on how one sets parameters. Printed text has more rigidly defined lines and spaces than theatrical productions, and the former allows one to limit, reasonably concretely, text and paratext. For the purposes of this project, performance paratext is defined, very broadly, by the audience's ability to determine their interaction with the material. If an audience member can choose whether or not they engage with the material, then it is paratextual. If the action or image occurs within the space of the production and the audience cannot escape it other than by disrupting theatrical conventions — the unspoken agreement that spectators will watch the entirety of a show to which they have bought tickets — then it exists as a part of the performance. But although paratext exists outside of the performance, it can still be considered a part of the theatrical event if the audience member chooses to participate in it. Thus, paratext has the potential to radically alter one's understanding of a play. This is especially the case if the material is created or sanctioned in advance of the start of the show by the theatre or production team.

Productions sometimes extend the narrative of a play by creating images or events which are thematically in harmony with the show, but remain optional additions for an audience. This next production is one of these examples, and its related event is a

paratext that connects back to the production in a way that allows for the formation of new interpretations. The Stratford Festival's 2013 production of *The Merchant of Venice*, directed by Antoni Cimolino, added a one-day-only final act simply titled, "Shylock Appeals." This event in the Festival Theatre began by staging an excerpt from the main-stage production of *Merchant*, the trial scene. Lawyers from the Canadian Justice system then argued out the results of Shylock's trial under the pretense that Shylock had appealed the verdict.

The event was widely publicized as a part of Cimolino's new Forum series, created to complement the season's plays (as well as directing this production of *Merchant*, Cimolino was Artistic Director of the Festival): "Two prominent lawyers argue Shylock's sentence before a panel of judges including Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of Canada. With actors in the other roles, this day in court will be as entertaining as it is judiciously sound" (Stratford Festival, *Join us for our Shylock Appeals Weekend*). The Forum was created to supplement an audience's experience of Shakespeare, of theatre, and of the Stratford Festival.

Notably, the mock trial was not the only Forum event connected to Stratford's production of *Merchant*:

The question of whether or not *The Merchant of Venice* is a great play or an anti-Semitic play is still up for debate.

However, some theatre patrons may have come closer to forming an opinion after the issue was discussed from all angles Wednesday by three scholars — Len Rudner from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Holocaust historian Frank Bialystok and Shakespeare expert Vivian Rakoff — at a Forum panel called Anti-

Semitism and *The Merchant of Venice* put on by the Stratford Festival.

(Cudworth, “Stratford Festival Forum Panel Talk”)

During this event, Len Rudner stated that the entire play is a trial and the audience members represent a modern day judge and jury. The Forum conversation in both events demonstrates the Festival’s willingness to interrogate the continued staging of *Merchant* in theatres, as well as the play’s potential role in maintaining anti-Semitic ideas. Each event indicates that the Festival was aware of the play’s problems and controversies, yet sought to address them head-on by presenting Forum events that dissected these very problems. While both Forum events engaged with the material, “Shylock Appeals” delved not only into the themes of the play but the play itself, forming a link between modern perceptions of the play, the world of the play, and Cimolino’s production. Thus, like the other outlier performances discussed in this chapter, “Shylock Appeals” provided an opportunity for the audience to recognize itself as a part of the theatre community, to enhance and deepen the experience for those audience members who were present, and ultimately to open the production to new interpretations, revitalizing both the controversy and interest surrounding the play.

Before analyzing this extra ending, I will examine how Cimolino’s production, set in 1930s Fascist Italy, navigated the difficulties of staging *Merchant* for a modern audience; some of Cimolino’s cuts and choices around the staging of its closing moments are especially relevant to this analysis. I will then turn to the “final act” Forum event to understand more completely what was at stake with this added ending, and the potential effect of “Shylock Appeals” for members of the audience who chose to experience it.

The Merchant of Venice is a problematic piece for modern production. One of the challenges for directors is to decide whether to play it as an early modern comedy, as a

modern tragedy, or to find a compromise between the two. Some performances of *Merchant* try to downplay the elements which are perceived as inherently racist and anti-Semitic. In his review of Cimolino's staging, Richard Ouzounian succinctly points out the divergent opinions which surround this play: "Let's be honest: *The Merchant of Venice* is not an easy play to produce or even to attend. Is it a romantic comedy with the venomous serpent of racism hidden coiled in its centre? Or is it a melodramatic saga of ethnic hatred run rampant, which happens to have a series of love plots swirling around it like satellite moons?" (Ouzounian, "Stratford Festival's Merchant of Venice gets a lot Right: Review"). There are many who decry *Merchant*'s continued presence onstage; Marxist critic Ernst Schumacher noted at a public seminar staged at the Young Vic in 1988 that the play should no longer be performed, arguing that, "Hitler used it, Goebbels used it, and it contributed directly to the extermination of the Jews, the 'final solution' of 1943" (qtd. in Elsom 143). Despite this, the play is produced with astonishing frequency. The Stratford Festival has staged the play nine times since the Festival's launch in 1953. Clearly, despite the criticisms that have often plagued productions, audiences keep attending.

In Cimolino's production, long-time Stratford veteran Brian Bedford was originally cast as Shylock. However, Bedford withdrew due to a medical condition a few weeks before opening night. Scott Wentworth was the actor chosen to take over the role. A press release announcing the cast change stated that, "The Festival has the great good fortune to have a superbly well-suited replacement within its own ranks: Scott Wentworth. Mr. Wentworth will assume the role of Shylock in addition to playing Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*" (Stratford Festival, *Brian Bedford Withdraws*). This was not Wentworth's first time performing in *Merchant*. In Stratford's 2007 production, starring

Oneida actor Graham Greene as Shylock, Wentworth portrayed Antonio. That production was a critical failure. Casting a First Nations actor in the Jewish role of Shylock was, for many reviewers, an inspired but poorly executed choice:

One might have thought there was a point to casting Graham Greene as Shylock. When his Shylock speaks of “my tribe” it does take on a different meaning and when we see how the Christians break his bond, or we might say “treaty,” parallels with North American history come to mind. Rather, they would come to mind if Rose laid any emphasis on them, but the ahistorical costuming and placing of Greene in skullcap and prayer shawl work against them. (Hoile, “The Merchant of Venice”)

Cimolino, by contrast, decided to focus on and grapple with, rather than shy away from, the anti-Semitic elements of the play, using those elements to inform his interpretation of Shylock’s motivation. The prompt copy specifies that this play is about “NEED There is a void at the heart — they get what they want + are still empty. The essence of the play is of people trying to get something they don’t have” (Duncan, *Merchant of Venice*, 2013: *Prompt Copy*).

Of the many notable performance choices in this production, I will focus on those that deal with racism, and that change the portrayal of Shylock into something more “human.” This was achieved through the cutting of a few important lines, the recontextualization of Shylock’s oft-repeated word “gold” to allude to his daughter, and added stage business in the play’s final scene. After understanding more concretely the effect of these production choices, I will then turn to the “extra ending” and examine what was gained or lost by means of this one-time event.

Perhaps one of the most important cuts in this production was the removal of Shylock's lines, "If I can catch him once upon the hip / I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him" (1.3.41–2). These lines are often cut in performances that seek to present a sympathetic Shylock. Alan C. Dessen makes this point in his discussion of *Merchant* in performance, stating that, "a viewer should not be surprised to find some or all of Shylock's aside in his first scene ... gone in production" ("Teaching What's Not There" 107). These lines indicate that Shylock's desire for vengeance is consistent with the murderous intent that later emerges. Graham Holderness remarks that, "The vindictive malice that comes to the surface on Antonio's entrance ... forms the subtext of the 'merry bond', and hints at the Jews' legendary reputation for cannibalism" (68). Cutting these lines allows for the conditions of the bond which Shylock puts forth to be offered in jest (or half-jest), without their constituting a secret plan to murder Antonio. Without these lines, Shylock is driven to extreme hatred through the combination of the mistreatment he suffers on stage, and the pain of losing his daughter and his hard-earned money. The audience is witness to this more gradual transformation. In Cimolino's production, Shylock had no love for Antonio, but nor did he have a grand plan to kill him: "Scott Wentworth begins by playing Shylock in an almost jovial mood, but when he loses his daughter Jessica ... to a gold-digging gentile named Lorenzo ... this seemingly impervious moneylender starts to lose it" (Ouzounian, "Stratford Festival's Merchant of Venice gets a lot Right: Review"). His metamorphosis from "jovial" moneylender to vicious outcast is enabled by cutting Shylock's aside.

The removal of these lines, however, has thematic consequences. Dessen addresses these in his article, reflecting on the compromised patterning of language, which, in turn, hampers the depth of imagery built upon repetition:

how does the loss of “feed fat from the ancient grudge I bear him” affect “to bait fish withal” ... or other feeding imagery that permeates the play up through the trial scene? If the line referring to the hip ... is gone from the aside in 1.3, what effect does that omission have on our understanding of Gratiano’s line after the reversal in act 4 (“Now, infidel, I have you on the hip” — 4.1.334)? (“Teaching What’s Not There” 108)

Removing these lines also suggests that Shakespeare’s text needs to be edited to present a more balanced version of the play. Chet Greason of the *Stratford Gazette* states that “Supporters of the play argue that, despite being born of an anti-Semitic culture, it contains themes that are universal. With careful tiptoeing, the anti-Semitism can be dealt with in a manner palatable to modern tastes, although it takes some liberal adjustments” (“Despite additions, Merchant still a Controversial Play”). Removing this pair of lines, in particular, admits that *Merchant* contains anti-Semitic elements. This cut often coincides with other alterations suggesting that to “save the play,” *Merchant* must be edited, the comedic tone shifted into tragicomedy, and either the villain must become a victim, or the Christians must be as villainous as the Jew.

This production staged the latter option. Most of the characters show evidence of racial hatred, discrimination, and xenophobia. The one exception was Bassanio (Tyrell Crews), who seemed genuinely good-natured and bewildered by racism in general. Early in the play, when he invites Shylock to dinner (1.3.27), the prompt copy insists that Bassanio’s offer is genuine and made with “no guile” (Duncan, *Merchant of Venice, 2013: Prompt Copy*). When Shylock upbraids him for an offer which he considers insulting (1.3.28–32), Bassanio is dismayed to realize his mistake. The rest of the Christians, however, are presented as fairly appalling. Martin Morrow remarks that,

“such an interpretation has a price in tainting the play’s comedy. Its fun-loving young Venetians, whom audiences were meant to identify with, are now unpleasant racist louts. Only Tyrell Crews’s callow Bassanio remains likable — he’s so in love with Portia (Michelle Giroux) that he doesn’t have time for racism” (Morrow, “The Merchant of Venice’s Shylock is Realigned”).

A second notable passage which is often cut to downplay the racism in the text is Portia’s couplet about the Prince of Morocco: “A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go. / Let all of his complexion choose me so” (2.7.78–9). Indeed, Dessen remarks that in Shakespeare’s canon, these are perhaps the lines most often cut because they are deemed racially offensive (“The Director as Shakespeare Editor” 183). Leaving these lines intact is problematic since they have the potential to corrupt Portia’s role as an impartial, merciful lawyer. If she proves herself a racist early in the play, her “quality of mercy” speech lacks sincerity. But rather than take the easy route by cutting or passing quickly over these lines, Cimolino directly drew attention to them. As Robyn Godfrey describes the moment, “Even [Portia’s] most blatantly racist line ... is changed from a light-hearted jest to a commentary about thoughtless discrimination, as her companion Nerissa (Sophia Walker) is herself black in this production. Ms. Walker’s look of hurt and Ms. Giroux’s face-palming touch of apology speak volumes in a second” (Godfrey, “Cimolino Knocks it out of the Park”). By keeping these lines, Cimolino allows Portia to be a flawed character who learns from her previous racism. To show her transformation, Cimolino cuts some of the later indications of Portia’s anti-Semitism. In her lawyer guise, Portia no longer refers to Shylock simply as “Jew” but calls him by his name. This emendation mitigates Portia’s later racism during her most important scene while not ignoring the fact that, like almost all of the Christians in the play, she initially considers Shylock, and

anyone of a different race and religion, beneath her. Cimolino's interpretation gives characters such as Portia the opportunity to develop away from their previous racism.

The third textual adjustment I want to discuss is Shylock's application of the word "gold" to refer specifically to his lost daughter, Jessica. This was emphasized through textual cutting and through the photo prop that Shylock carried around with him. The lines, "Justice! The law! My ducats and my daughter! / A sealèd bag, two sealèd bags of ducats, / Of double ducats, stol'n from me by my daughter!" (2.8.17–19), which Salanio claims he overheard Shylock saying, were removed. Cutting the emphasis on money refocuses Shylock's main loss as his daughter. But it was really the photo which served to reinterpret in this production Shylock's perception of his loss. Godfrey keenly links the two together in her review, noting that presenting the loss of his daughter as the reason behind Shylock's vitriol humanizes him:

Above all however, he is a doting — if overprotective — father, who sings tenderly to his daughter Jessica before embracing her as he goes to supper; a father who carries her portrait with him after she elopes with Lorenzo, referring to her as "his gold" he will never see again. Shylock's villainous behaviour in the courtroom scene is therefore given greater cause in this production, in that his hatred is born out of love for his daughter. (Godfrey, "Cimolino Knocks it out of the Park")

In this production, the transformation from "gentle Jew" to vengeance personified is identified as occurring in 3.2, directly after Shylock realizes Jessica has sold the ring, given to him by his wife, Leah, for a monkey. Here, the prompt copy states, "Shylock is a wounded animal — a different man now — Antonio is responsible for Jessica's runaway" (Duncan, *Merchant of Venice, 2013: Prompt Copy*). The loss of Jessica haunts

Shylock and he keeps her photo as a reminder of this loss. Shylock even brings the portrait to the trial, brandishing it as the reason he so dearly craves the bond.

Portia's role in the trial scene plays upon these previous textual adjustments, and she is portrayed as a character who has grown in integrity and understanding. In the guise of the lawyer, Portia *must* side with Antonio, and she finds the loophole by which she saves his life. However, by the end of this scene, her actions towards Shylock demonstrate that she does not feel hatred towards him and perhaps even suggest that she pities Shylock now that he is so utterly destroyed, having lost his daughter, his money, his religion, and his livelihood. After the trial, Shylock endures one final torment from Gratiano, played by Jonathan Goad. With his lines, "In christ'ning shalt thou have two godfathers. / Had I been judge thou shouldst have had ten more, / To bring thee to the gallows, not the font" (4.1.394–6), Gratiano takes it upon himself to visually mark Shylock's impending (and forced) conversion to Christianity. Robert Reid remarks that here, "Gratiano pulls Shylock's yarmulke off his head and throws it on the ground in utter contempt" ("Merchant of Venice is Stratford at its World-Class Best"). It is in this moment that Portia understands her previous racism and the effect of the racism displayed before her. When Shylock falls to his knees after the verdict, declaring himself unwell, Portia comes to his aid, helping him to stand. She also, when the other characters are not looking, picks up the discarded yarmulke from the floor and places it in her pocket.

This silent gesture plays into the final scene. After the last line in the production, there were two moments which added a combination of optimism and misery to the production's overall interpretation. The *Beacon Harold* particularly noted this fusion of bleakness and hope: "When Portia returns home after delivering the quality of mercy

speech, and after having herself shown Shylock none, she gives Shylock's yarmulke to Jessica. As Jessica stands there holding it, with Antonio off to the side, we hear warplanes overhead. A reminder of what's to come" (Cudworth, "Thoughtful Direction from Cimolino"). The warplanes were foreshadowed earlier when Jessica and Lorenzo listened to the radio and heard speeches by Hitler and Mussolini. If Portia's delivery of the yarmulke functions as an apology, it remains unclear if this action is irrelevant given the coming horrors of the Holocaust, or more important because of it.

Of course, not all reviewers saw the silent gesture in a positive light. Greason, of the *Stratford Gazette*, found the action threatening, especially given the play's time period and the oncoming Nazi forces:

At play's end, a well-cast Portia (Michelle Giroux) gives newly Christened Jessica her father's yarmulke, which was stricken from his head upon the court's decision to force him to forfeit Judaism.

Personally, I thought the gesture was more of a subtlety [sic] made threat from Portia to Jessica, saying "Call yourself Christian all you like, Jessica... I know where you really come from." (Greason, "Despite Additions, Merchant Still a Controversial Play")

I disagree with Greason's interpretation of the moment and it seems to be an outlier from other reviews of discussing this moment. In light of Cimolino's textual adjustments and Portia's previous actions in this production, I interpret the action as an apology rather than a threat. However, Jessica's former religion and culture are still a risk to her safety due to the impending war. Her recent conversion and marriage to a Christian may not be enough to save her from hardship, especially since her new husband, Lorenzo, was portrayed as a gold-digger rather than as a man genuinely in love. The impending war,

located within the action of the production, along with the audience's knowledge that nearly six million Jews were killed in World War II death camps made the ending all the more poignant, but it also made the stakes for Shylock's appeal all the higher.

What is most remarkable about the mock trial, "Shylock Appeals," is that it was a live event. Thus, like all court cases, Shylock's innocence or guilt could not be predetermined. Unlike the end of Cimolino's production of *Merchant*, the ending of the new trial could have any outcome. It held the potential to disrupt or support the ending of Cimolino's play, making this Forum event of supreme interest to those who attended on 5 October. Placing this event late in the season ensured that many in attendance had the opportunity to see the main-stage show beforehand. Furthermore, with digital technology, audience members did not even have to be in the theatre to witness the appeal. Like many Forum events, it was broadcast live with links to the video stream on the Stratford website and on their Twitter account. Those who had seen the play months before and could not return to Stratford in person could still enjoy "Shylock Appeals," and access this final ending. It created a space in which various audience members across multiple nights could come together in this "sixth-act" exploration of the play.

The "Shylock Appeals" mock trial was an academically motivated experiment; the judges admitted that many scholars and lawyers have studied this case. However, it was also a kind of play. Indeed, the CBC Radio version of the production, recorded and aired with permission of the Festival, dubbed it "the unwritten final act of Shakespeare's play" (CBC Radio, "The Appeal of Shylock"). The radio program played upon the comedic value of the event as well as its academic credentials. Stratford's press release describes the "Shylock Appeals" event as follows:

This mock trial is one of a number of events being held to shed light on *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare's most controversial play about intolerance and vengeance ... "The case against Shylock has been hotly debated for years," says Artistic Director Antoni Cimolino. "As you'll recall, his last trial didn't go very well for him, so we have gathered some of the most distinguished members of the Canadian legal community to settle this dispute over a loan default once and for all. For those able to witness this appeal, Shylock's day in court promises to inspire entertaining discussion." (Stratford Festival, "Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin and Other Legal Luminaries to Hear Shylock's Appeal")

The Forum production was not the first in Canada to stage an appeal to Shylock's ruling. A similar event occurred just a short distance away at Western University in 2010, and almost certainly inspired Stratford's own law case. This event was a part of Western Law's 50th anniversary celebrations. Notably, a few of the same judges were also involved in Stratford's later appeal, including Justice Ian Binnie, Antoni Cimolino, and Earl Cherniak who represented Shylock (Chiodo, "Shakespeare in Court").

A prominent difference between these two events is that while Western Law cast actors to play Shylock and Portia — Irfaan Premji and Kaitlyn Rietdyk respectively — the law proceedings were not a part of a larger production. That is, the outcome of Western's court case had no direct impact on anything outside of the case itself. In contrast, members of the audience at the Stratford appeal may have seen Stratford's *Merchant* as recently as the previous day, and the appeal had the potential to have an impact on their understanding or analysis of that production. Furthermore, this connection to an actual production reinforces the performativity of the appeal event. Not simply an academic exercise, the appeal discussed these characters as though they were

real, at times merging actor and character. For instance, Sheila Block defended her client's absence from the proceedings under the excuse that he was "getting ready to lead a shtetl in Russia" (Stratford Festival, "Shylock Appeals"), eliciting a laugh from the audience and clearly alluding to Scott Wentworth's performance as Tevye in *Fiddler* later that afternoon.

This extra ending poses questions about the potential interpretive consequences of a successful appeal. While the relevance of the event rests in not knowing in advance whether or not the judgement should be overturned, certainly some aspects of the punishment dealt to Shylock in the original play would not be permitted under Canadian law today. If the members of Canada's Supreme Court upheld Shylock's sentence — namely the punishment requiring his conversion to Christianity — it would present an entirely new battle over the question of religious persecution on Canadian soil. However, if Shylock managed to overturn his sentence, then the production's most important scene would be undone. Judging Shylock as the wounded party ultimately vilifies Portia. Shylock's lawyer, Shelia Block, was quick to point out Portia's flaws, including Portia's racist remarks; furthermore, Judges Earl Cherniak and Ian Binnie made passing reference to Portia's conflict of interest — not only because her husband's best friend and financier is on the block, but because the latter's financial state directly impacts her own since the money to pay Shylock would ultimately come from Portia's inheritance. If Portia's verdict is overturned due to her conflict of interest, then not only is her "quality of mercy" speech and judicial sentence undermined, but the entire final scene, and the possibility of future happiness for any of the Christian characters, is undeniably compromised. If Shylock is permitted to extract his pound of flesh, then Antonio dies, Bassanio lives with the guilt of his friend's death, Portia must live with the knowledge

that it was her lie (of pretending to be a lawyer) which might have enabled a successful appeal, and Jessica and Lorenzo must return the money awarded to them through the court's decision.

Either way, the result of the appeal would develop (and perhaps complicate) Cimolino's ending of *Merchant*. But any formal court appeal requires careful deliberation of the facts. Following modern judicial format, the judges chose to defer their formal verdict until a later time. Karin Wells noted that, "Anyone expecting a learned ruling from the judges on an issue that has split theatre-goers and legal scholars for 400 years was out of luck. This is a decision that would take time to work out — perhaps another 400 years" (Wells, "Shakespeare in Court"). Indeed, maintaining the illusion of the mock-trial proceedings, the judges freely mentioned how they would later spend time in deliberation, as though it was an event that would actually occur off stage. They suggested they might be sequestered away to decide Shylock's fate, or continue deliberating in their own chambers. Some reviewers took the lack of decision rather negatively: "For now the orders to abandon Judaism for Christianity — effectively robbing Shylock of his livelihood as a money lender, a profession forbidden to Christians — still stands" (Cudworth, "The Wheels of Justice Turn Slowly").

However, while legal procedure demanded deferral, the Forum event required results. Thus, despite these complexities, the judges were not shy about voicing their opinions, and there was extensive feedback before court was adjourned. These "preliminary comments" even bordered on actual verdicts from the respective judges. At one point, Chief Justice Beverly McLachlin interrupted Justice Ian Binnie to remind him that the comments were supposed to be preliminary as he seemed to be siding rather staunchly with Shylock, incidentally revealing what his verdict would be. At this

moment, Block, the lawyer for Shylock, coyly addressed the audience in an aside: “I think I’m winning” (Stratford Festival, “Shylock Appeals”). On the other hand, Judge Patricia Jackson bluntly stated she would reject the appeal outright, citing the problems with hearing a case in another legal system, on another continent: “She said in her view Shylock was out of luck. Waiting 400 years for the development of a more welcoming legal regime on another continent was taking things too far” (Wells, “Shakespeare in Court”). Jackson further remarked that “she would likely void the contract and give Shylock nothing” (Cudworth, “The Wheels of Justice Turn Slowly”).

By having different judges support different outcomes in their “preliminary comments,” this final act allowed both prospective endings to co-exist without formally declaring for one side or the other. The effect was to throw the process of judgement back to the audience, positioning them as a kind of informal jury. This was supported by the actions of the whole cast. Early in the appeal event, Block turned to the audience to make a larger claim. Justice Binnie asked why Block was acting like the audience was a jury, and Block retorted that she thought they were a jury. Block further stated that she had been instructed to “turn around when possible,” presumably by Cimolino or the stage manager of the event, in order to address the audience. The audience’s laughter at her retort insinuated that they recognized and acknowledged their role as a jury in these proceedings. This extra ending provided a way for the audience to deliberate the questions that were first raised by Shakespeare and consider how they should read this court case 400 years later. Audience members who extended their performance experience by attending the mock trial could interpret the production through a Canadian context and further their understanding of their own judicial system in light of issues of anti-Semitism which still exist today. The court appeal may not have “changed” the

ending formally — Shylock’s appeal was not rejected or accepted by the entire panel — but it did deepen the experience for each audience member as part of a theatrical and national community, ensuring that the themes of the production carried on well past the curtain call. It allowed Cimolino to present not only the play itself, but the consequences of the play, and allow his audience to understand the world of the play a little better.

In the end, this production offered a unique opportunity to see a live “final act” addressing what is often considered one of the major injustices of this play, the treatment of Shylock. But while this event was paratextual to the main-stage production, catering to the theatrical and scholarly community, it firmly spoke to themes already present within this particular staging. By adding this final opportunity to overturn the production’s result, the appeal demonstrated conflicting notions — even within the Canadian legal system — about how this play should be presented, and whether or not justice was (or could be) served for any version of Shylock or Antonio.

2.3 Her Dream Proposal: One Night at *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

Many of the outlier performances that I am analyzing contain some aspect of the real world imposing itself on the play, radically separating these particular performances from the rest of the production run. The production to which I will now turn, the Stratford Festival’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in 1999, directed by Richard Monette, offers a clear example of the outside world permeating the play. On 28 July, 1999, the Festival Theatre was packed with a 94% capacity, and the performance of *Dream* seemed to end as it had on all previous nights of the run. However, one audience member — “Peter” — then took to the stage, and, with a little help from Shakespeare’s fairies, proposed to his

future wife. Records on this event are scarce, but it is clear that long before the 28 July performance, Peter must have approached the theatre and requested permission to propose to his girlfriend, Maggie, at the performance of *Dream* they were attending that summer.

Theatre reviews usually mark only one particular performance. If the play changes dramatically from the opening night or the designated press night (when most reviewers attend) there will often be no public record of the modifications. The stage manager's prompt copy, on the other hand, will generally show a production's transformation over the entire run. Certainly if major edits or emendations are introduced, the prompt copy will list those edits, occasionally making note of how or why the production changed. But nightly hiccups and slight deviations from the scheduled course of events will often only be noted in the stage manager's show reports. Depending on the stage manager, these reports might be highly detailed or exceedingly sparse. These notes reflect the liveness of the event — its ability to change on a nightly basis — and chart the history of any particular production. It is here that remarkable performances can be found. Without show reports, a production is only knowable through its ideal state, what the prompt copy says it should be, and in single performances, either through reviews of a certain night or a video recording of one night's performance. Because the engagement of Peter and Maggie was a one-off event that occurred midway through *Dream*'s run, it was not noted in any stage reviews, and this added ending is absent from the stage manager's prompt copy. There are only three physical traces in the Stratford archives that make note of this event: a stage manager's note to the cast, a poem, and the stage manager's show report from that evening. But the three of them together demonstrate just how invested the theatre company was in creating this outlier performance.

The proposal was the explicit subject of a letter from stage manager, Stephen M. Grasset, to the rest of the company for that night's performance. In it, Grasset outlines how the marriage proposal will be staged. The letter is worth reproducing in full:

Dream Company,

Tonight is the proposal night.

Immediately following this evenings [sic] company bow Jordan, Seanna, and Juan will recite a short verse to "intro" the event. At this same time those of you that do not wish to be part of this, can exit as per the regular ending.

Those that want to stay are asked to move UR & UL, Fairies in the gutter are asked to sit down on the third step.

Peter will enter from UC.

David & Jackie will go up aisle #7 to escort his girl friend to the stage.

Lighting will X-Cross fade [sic] into a nice cue on stage.

The proposal will take only a matter of a minute.

Once she says "I do" the company will exit and the houselights will come up.

Both Peter and his fiancée will also exit up centre.

If you have any questions, please ask me.

Thanks,

Stephen. (Grasset, "Dream Company")³

It is clear from this letter that some forethought went into planning the proposal event, both from the groom-to-be and from the Stratford Company.

³ I have edited the all-capital letter document to use standard capitalization.

The language of this note provides clues about how the scripted ending was supplemented by the marriage proposal. The note suggests that the poem, spoken by cast members, will “intro” the event. The word “event” indicates, of course, the proposal itself. But by suggesting that the event has an introduction, the letter separates the proposal from the play. It implies that the performance of the play was one event, while Peter’s marriage proposal was another. Yet the very next line merges the two events into a single overarching episode by stating that “those of you that do not wish to be part of this, can exit as per the regular ending.” By suggesting that cast members can leave at the “regular ending,” Grasset implies that the proposal is an “irregular ending.” To put it another way, this moment represents a different or an extended ending. Thus, the proposal is not simply a separate event but rather an added section to the whole.

The production’s standard ending followed the text of Shakespeare’s play. All of the final lines are accounted for, Oberon sings his closing song, and Puck bids the audience good night. Furthermore, there was no doubling of characters or unusual casting choices in this production. Later productions by the Stratford Company would double Oberon and Theseus, and Titania and Hippolyta (2004) and cast a female Lysander and a male Titania (2014). Director Richard Monette, on the other hand, set out to create a production to compete with the much-beloved 1993 production starring Colm Feore and Lucy Peacock. Reviewer Melissa Fox was quick to compare them, stating that “The current production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* ... is quite good, even stacked up against the delightful 1993 production with Lucy Peacock and the much-missed Colm Feore as Titania and Oberon” (Fox, “Midsummer Night’s Dream”).

Of course, this production was not merely the written page come to life. The score of the final song was created especially for Monette’s *Dream*, as was much of the music

that ran throughout the staging: “Richard Monette uses this popular classic to showcase his impish sense of humor, and his big-budget production provides strong visual appeal in costuming, lighting and the theatricalized forest scenes. Melodic original music and original songs create effective fantasy scenes to this highly-entertaining production” (Raeburn, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”). Yet, for some critics, this was not enough to wholly recommend the production:

A Midsummer Night’s Dream was effectively designed and competently acted, though it had few surprises, apart from some of the comic business in the Pyramus and Thisbe play-within-a-play. Brian Bedford gave the audience what it came for with his enthusiastic Bottom-Pyramus, and Michael Therriault performed hilariously as Flute-Thisbe. Juan Chioran’s Oberon looked suitably dominant in his blue-feathered costume but neither he nor Seanna McKenna as Titania could spark any fire into their conflicts. This *Dream* worked like a clever machine without a soul. (Brady 269)

But the proposal night played differently from the rest of the run. It brought a new dimension to the production, deepening the way that love was interpreted. Regardless of whether or not the proposal was intended to reflect on the play itself, the nature of this event alongside a play full of marriages insists that the actual proposal and fictional marriages would be read against each other. Often such “happenings” — or unexpected live events — are welcome additions for an audience. A marriage proposal at the conclusion of a play about love seems like a perfect fit. It is entirely probable that the request to stage the proposal was accepted because it helped reaffirm the theatre as a place where love (both fictional and actual) flourishes, and because it would create a sense of community amongst the audience, who are witnesses to this speech act.

Furthermore, because of its placement at the end of the performance, the staging of the proposal is aligned with the ending of the play. For one night only, *Dream* had five couples come together by the play's end, not only four, with the promise of one wedding still to come: Peter and Maggie's.

The stage manager's note also reveals that not all of the actors were required to participate in this event. There is no information on whether any actors declined to participate but it is probable that, because the proposal was a request from an outside source, it had to be put before the cast to see if they would be a part of the event. Their compliance was outside of the realm of the play (and perhaps their contracts). The comment might suggest there was some initial hesitation on the part of the cast or crew when the idea was presented to them. However, this remark could also simply recognize that some of the actors would be tired from the evening on stage, especially those who feature heavily in the final scene. Again, there is no way to determine who stayed or left before the proposal, but it does insist that this extra ending has a formal separation from the production.

There are a number of clear divisions created between the world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and that of Peter and Maggie's engagement. Notably, the proposal occurred after the curtain call, which seems to separate these two events. As noted earlier with the productions of *Hamlet* and *Merchant of Venice*, the curtain call generally signals the end of the narrative, but elements of the play can bleed through well past the curtain call. Furthermore, while the production may have given cues to suggest that the play is over, there were many elements built into the proposal which connected it back to the mystical forest outside Athens.

First, the house lights had not yet been lit. Without the houselights, the audience have not been given their silent cue to exit the theatre. Typically, the house lights will be lit three times throughout any production: they will be on when the audience enters the theatre before the play begins, they will turn on for the duration of the intermission, and, finally, the houselights will be turned on once the production has fully ended. The cueing of the houselights provides a clear signal to the audience that they are no longer bound by the production.⁴ The absence of the houselights insists that even if some of the actors leave the stage, the audience is asked to remain connected to the events in front of them. More than this alone, the proposal was given its own lighting cues. The letter notes that “Lighting will X-Cross fade into a nice cue on stage” (Grasset, “Dream Company”). By giving the proposal event its own stage lighting and scripted cues, the proposal edges closer towards the world of the play, merging it with the performance.

The actual proposal itself contained a number of major connections to the world of the play, especially in the poem created for the event, the second remnant from this performance. Not only is the tone and language of the poem allied to that of the play, but the characters who speak the poem — Oberon, Titania, and Puck — were clearly deliberately chosen (or requested) to provide a magical setting. Using the fairy characters helps unite the two worlds: the world of Athens in the play, and the real world of the

⁴ Martin Revermann notes the unlikely but occasional occurrence where audience members may not wait for their cue from the houselights: “Spectators may, to begin with, withhold from the actors their individual contribution to a curtain call by taking the opportunity to sneak out of the theatre at the beginning of the curtain call or well before its completion ... it sheds light on the power that an audience potentially wields over the actors at this particular stage” (197). However, even Revermann notes this is a rarity and often perceived in a negative light by the rest of the audience.

audience in Stratford, Ontario. The fairies are unconnected to either group and so can serve as an intermediary without fully destroying the fourth wall. Puck has already addressed the audience in his epilogue, showing that he is fully aware of the audience's existence, at least by the play's end.

The poem was given the title "Verses For A Proposal," and follows a simple ABAB rhyme structure in iambic tetrameter. This irregular verse form might link the text to the fairies, who also use non-pentameter verse, further merging the real world and the play. But the lines themselves — especially the bride-to-be's name which appears in the final line — insist that there was little chance the audience would have mistook these lines for Shakespeare's. The poem does, however, encourage the audience to understand that a part of the play (or a part of the world of the play) continues. The speaking characters have stepped outside of their world in order to momentarily enter the audience's, or they have invited the audience into their world. Even if the poem's structure is not Shakespeare's, the style and theme resonate with the play and the lines are not out of character for these three fairies. Indeed, Puck's opening word "gentles" clearly mimics his own address to the audience moments before. The poem was as follows:

Puck: Gentles,

 Before you walk into the night

 Young Cupid has one more delight. **cue for Peter?*

Titania: A couple who first courted here

 Have come to Stratford every year.

Oberon: Tonight they've seen her favourite play

 And he has something he must say

All: To the book of love we add a page

In calling Maggie La Branche? to the stage. (“Verses for A Proposal”)

The poem harkens back to the play in a number of ways, and its language insists that this proposal is a continuation of the world of the play.

Echoing Puck’s epilogue through the word “Gentles” maintains that the figure on stage is still Puck and not actor Jordan Pettle, despite the fact that he has completed his curtain call. Puck’s second line, “Before you walk into the night” (2), further supports the notion that the audience is not yet released from the production, showing a determined connection between this proposal and the play. His final line states that, “Young Cupid has one more delight” (3). In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Cupid is referenced eight times. This specific allusion to Cupid most likely harkens back to Oberon’s account in 2.1 of Cupid’s arrow missing and hitting a flower that pulses with love’s wound (2.1.155–174). These lines, with their mention of “the imperial vot’ress” who, unstruck by Cupid’s arrow, “passèd on, / In maiden meditation, fancy free,” are often glossed as a potential allusion to Queen Elizabeth I. It has even been suggested that they were written to flatter her. In his edition of the play, R. A. Foakes suggests that, “In political accounts of the play Oberon’s allusion to ... an ‘imperial votaress’ ... no doubt may be understood as a complimentary allusion to Queen Elizabeth” (44). Since these lines already reference a world beyond the play, the love potion (or the flower) might be understood to exist both inside and outside of the play. Titania’s next line likewise connects the fantasy world to that of the festival, merging the fictional and the real. The final lines, calling Maggie to the stage, effectively ask her to fully enter the world of the play. The question mark beside her last name suggests that the poem was written by someone in the company rather than her fiancé, and shows the theatre’s involvement in staging this event. There are also a few erased lines on the page showing the poem was a work in progress. This is

all to say that the lines of the poem and the speakers chosen for the poem insist that the proposal is an extension of the play's world. It is a new ending. It takes two individuals from the audience and, through the (theatrical) magic of Oberon and his fairies, transports them into the world of the play.

This transition is made clear by the couple's exit off stage. The stage manager's note states that Peter and his fiancée Maggie will "exit upstage," rather than return to the audience. Having the two lovers exit with the cast suggests they have become a part of the world of the play. Instead of returning to the audience, through their active presence on the stage they have become akin to the players, while the proposal has become play-like. The proposal itself was performative since the poem was written ahead of time and it is probable that the actors rehearsed it. One can presume that the would-be groom would have also rehearsed his proposal speech. So while this was the first (and last) time that this event was staged, the proposal has a number of notable performance qualities.

What does a real marriage (or a proposal) add to the experience of watching *Dream*? The play focuses on a few different kinds of love: matches made from the subjection of one partner to another (both Oberon and Titania, and Theseus and Hippolyta), the match made by means of the drug, love-in-idleness (which Demetrius remains under the effects of), and the match of true love (Hermia and Lysander). Each of these matches is tested to some extent throughout the play. The marriages that are made (and remade) all occur at the very end. Adding an actual marriage proposal makes the magic seem as though it has seeped out of the play and into the real world, as though Peter was inspired by the play and the fairies to propose. In this production, the love potion spreads out from the confines of the stage and into the audience's seats. It is an ending for lovers everywhere, not just those posing as lovers on stage.

It is possible that the magic of the play imparts upon the audience a similar kind of magic. However, the reality of the proposal might also accentuate the artifice of the play. That is, the truest form of love that the audience witnessed was not represented by any of the fictional lovers, but by the pair from outside of the production. There is a startling juxtaposition between the theatrical and fictional worlds and, depending on how the audience interprets the proposal, there is a danger that the line between them might collapse completely. The tension between the real event and the fictional event might disrupt the illusion. The possibilities for disaster were made manifest in the unpredictable nature of the ending, and in this respect, there are clear parallels between this event and Shylock's appeal. Maggie could have rejected her lover, thus upsetting the entire message and theme of comic love. As soon as the proposal began, and became a part of the show, the ending was already anticipated in the minds of the audience — Maggie needed to say yes. But the “reality” of the theatrical moment still held the potential for disruption. Indeed, the show report hints at the possible risk: “Tonight was our onstage wedding proposal. It went off without a hitch. She said ‘yes’” (Polley, “1999 Dream”). If a rejection could have caused an upset in the production's theme or message, an acceptance carries a similar significance. While it augments a pre-existing message of love, the proposal does more than simply demonstrate to the audience how the Stratford Festival is an excellent place for a first date (and any subsequent ones). It allows the audience to become a part of the play, of the experience, and a part of the real-world proposal. It transforms the real marriage proposal into a theatrical event which can be enjoyed by the collective audience. And, most of all, it transforms a solid, if mundane ending, into one with possibility and liveness.

2.4 One Night Only vs. Every Night is Unique

Each of the above productions had only one outlier performance with an ending that was set apart from the rest of the scripted production. These endings had the potential to modify the audience's reading of that production. Tyrone Guthrie's *Hamlet* and Richard Monette's *Midsummer Night's Dream* each modified their ending as a celebration: Hamlet suddenly announced to the audience the birth of a new actress, and the fairies lent their magic and love to a planned marriage proposal. These two moments united the audience and the actors and built a specific sense of community around the themes in the production, particularly through the distinct perception of liveness generated by means of the event. In each created ending, the audience was granted an exclusive experience because of the way each end moment became performative in nature: Olivier achieved this by using Michael Redgrave's character name, while the *Dream* cast achieved it by having actors in character introduce the event with a poem that references ideas and themes from the play.

While the extra ending appended to Cimolino's *Merchant of Venice* occurred on a different night from any of the performances within the production, it was likewise a singular event. It occurred only once in its live form and ensured that those present could experience a similar kind of community in relation to a specific production. By aligning "Shylock Appeals" with the theatrical production, and then staging it as though it were the show's final act, the production invited audience members to interpret this Forum event in terms of continuity and spontaneity — as a one-off ending to the Festival's staging of *Merchant*. Ultimately, each of these three productions provided a sole opportunity to see a single performance through a new lens. The outlier performances discussed here offered audiences an alternate viewpoint that supplemented and, often,

deepened an audience's experience with that production by providing them with different points of reference.

Furthermore, each individual performance also heightened that audience's connection to that particular theatre. While most of these special performances did not seem to be designed exclusively with the theatre's promotion in mind, the theatre companies certainly would have benefited from their audience's positive reception of each event. Olivier's and Redgrave's performances in *Hamlet* helped both actors to solidify their place within the Shakespeare performance canon. By integrating themselves more fully in this one performance, both actors demonstrated their role in further mythologizing and heightening Shakespeare and his works. Olivier's announcement is a gift to a friend and the audience, and it offers a sense of shared ownership in Shakespeare and his legacy, but it also cements Olivier as the inheritor of Shakespeare's legacy.

Both Stratford productions further market a kind of "Stratford" experience to patrons. The *Dream* proposal suggests that Stratford is the kind of festival where love dust floats across the stage and into the audience and indicates that Stratford cherishes its patrons by offering them a place on stage for their biggest personal events. As for the appeal case, it presents the image of a liberal-minded Stratford, concerned with social justice by targeting the issues implicit in *Merchant*, going so far as to get Canadian judges to discuss these issues. Whether or not these examples suggest an affect-driven, rather than content-based, program at Stratford will be further discussed in the chapter on Des McAnuff's works. Regardless, these singular performances help the audiences see themselves as special, and they support the theatre company by catering to that ideology.

The final production I want to discuss, Steven Pimlott's 2000 production of *Richard II*, further extends the notion of community and the potentially unifying elements

of a unique ending, but this section tackles a different challenge. Instead of providing only one night that dramatically stood apart from the rest of the production, Pimlott's *Richard II* ending was potentially unique each night, creating for every audience an experience vastly different from all others. I will examine this staging's multiple endings, and how, especially when understood in relation to their connection to a larger cycle of plays, they attempt to form a community event.

2.5 Our Histories: The British Audience as Community and *Richard II*

The Royal Shakespeare Company's 2000 season was steeped in history, or rather, history plays. The ambitious project of the RSC, titled "This England: The Histories," staged eight of Shakespeare's history plays — both the major and minor tetralogies — beginning with *Richard II* and following straight through to *Richard III*. Barbara Hodgdon commented that "It was perhaps inevitable that the RSC should memorialize the millennium with yet another history cycle: after all, such stagings have consistently served to commemorate particular moments in that institutional history and to stamp particular directors' authority on Shakespeare-at-the-present-time" ("The RSC's 'Long Sonata of the Dead'" 132). This was not the first time that the entire Wars of the Roses was performed consecutively. But the magnitude of the project, as well as the irregular continuity between the production's stagings, made the event unlike similar undertakings:

The plays opened in historical order in the RSC's three different theatres in Stratford-upon-Avon: *Richard II*, directed by Steven Pimlott, opened in The Other Place in March 2000; both parts of *Henry IV*, directed by Michael Attenborough, opened in the Swan in April and June; *Henry V*, directed by Edward Hall, opened

in the main house, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, in August. The three parts of *Henry VI*, subtitled “The War,” “The Fall,” and “The Chaos,” which opened in November and December 2000 in the Swan and *Richard III*, which opened in February 2001, also in the Swan, were cast as a unit, with thirty actors and twenty-three technical staff, all under the direction of Michael Boyd, with design by Tom Piper. (Liston 158)

While different directors were used across productions, providing very different interpretations of the world of each play, actors straddled the productions, playing the same character across connected plays. For instance, David Troughton, who played Bolingbroke in Pimlott’s *Richard II*, also played King Henry IV in Attenborough’s *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2*. Northumberland was also played across both productions by actor Christopher Saul. Co-casting these plays connects their worlds, and actors were given rein to stretch their understanding of the role across each production.

However, the connection between the productions (and the respective plays) was also undercut by other aspects of the cycle, namely, the completely different time periods each director chose for his production: “Stephen Pimlott started the cycle with a modern-dress, white-box *Richard II*. ... Michael Attenborough continued with a medieval-dress, sumptuously-lit *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2*” (Dobson 119). It was not only time periods which separated the history plays, but the ambiance of each production. According to Amanda Penlington, “There was little visual interplay between the productions, with different auditoria and creative teams involved across the two tetralogies” (166).

Hodgdon further clarifies that

This England not only assigned different directors to each play or sequence of plays but staged them separately in Stratford’s three spaces: *Richard II* opened in

The Other Place, followed by the *Henry IV* plays in the mock-Elizabethan Swan Theatre, *Henry V* in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, and the three *Henry VI* plays went into the (considerably redesigned) Swan before travelling to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where *Richard III* opened. (“The RSC’s ‘Long Sonata of the Dead’” 132)

The artistic director’s choice to tour the cycle all across England (and, curiously, to Michigan as well), may have been to show England to the English and not limit a narrative about England to one particular theatre. But the constant shift in time period makes the conceptual understanding of “this England” indistinct. Which England? Modern or Early Modern, or some era in between? Whose England? Current audiences or Shakespeare’s audiences? If the cycle “This England” was supposed to evoke within the audience the notion of “Our England” to create a unifying community experience, the frequent shifts in time period detracted from that goal.

Adrian Noble, the RSC’s Artistic Director during the 2000 season, stated that the purpose behind producing a diverse interpretation of each play was to “restore to each play its individuality and its place in the canon” (qtd. in Hodgdon, “The RSC’s ‘Long Sonata of the Dead’” 132). While the varied interpretations may have restored individuality, it was not made clear how separate visions for each production assured each play’s place in the canon. Michael Dobson paints a more practical reason behind the varied direction across the cycle: “this eclecticism was purely pragmatic — RSC directors have not agreed about anything very much over the last few seasons. ... The chances of Pimlott, Attenborough and Co. teaming up to make shared decisions about the whole of ‘This England’ as a sort of collective directorial cabinet were always pretty remote, even if that had seemed desirable” (119). Regardless of each production’s

aesthetic, unifying the histories under a single title ensured that the audience might come to think of the end of one play as the beginning of another.

Shakespeare's history plays generally provide a different sense of an ending than plays without prequels or sequels, as each history play has a particular afterlife. This is both because the narrative is part of a larger story already known to the audience and because other plays use the same characters at a future (or past) point in their lives. Indeed, at the end of many of Shakespeare's histories, the chorus or an epilogue describes how and when the narrative continues. Peter Robert Orford suggests that theatrical open-endedness has a different definition when it comes to history plays:

The concept of open-endedness is one that can be asked of all Shakespeare's plays, but is specifically asked of the histories not because it is more apparent in them, but because we ourselves approach these plays with a different mentality: we look for aspects of history itself in the plays. If we focus on the here and now, rather than what is to come, we can find moments of great drama in the history plays.

Accusations of inconclusiveness in each of the histories can be best answered with an individual production; equally, the majority of open endings in the histories at the theatre are present only because of the desire to continue the story in a following play. (Orford 7)

Thus, *Henry IV, Part 2* promises more Falstaff in *Henry V*, and *Henry V* ends with a reference to *Henry VI*. The plays are not merely individual moments in time but parts of a series. These eight closely knit plays — the Wars of the Roses plays — concurrently portray the history of the English monarchy from 1398 to 1485. Although the plays cover

nearly a century of turbulent English history, the narrative is fairly linear and there are no excessive time gaps between the plays.

In any production of the cycle, the ending of *Richard II* acts as a beginning to the production of *Henry IV, Part I*, which, in this cycle, was directed by Michael Attenborough. Audience members (and critics) watching the “This England” cycle could go from one production to the next and see the development of Bolingbroke’s journey in the same actor. Indeed, it is Bolingbroke, or rather David Troughton, who is the lynch pin holding these two productions together. This is not only because Troughton has both the last words of *Richard II* and the first words of *Henry IV, Part I*, connecting the two plays in his role as Bolingbroke/Henry IV, but because, in this particular staging, his decisions surrounding *Richard II*’s ending, as I will show, bore directly on the beginning of Attenborough’s *Henry IV*.

Pimlott’s *Richard II* had at least four possible endings and perhaps as many variations from these set four as there were performances in the production. Thus, each night potentially offered a substantially distinct experience. On the nights when the production heavily referenced the next play in the series — *Henry IV, Part I* — it encouraged a community “RSC” experience by soliciting audiences to support the “This England” venture through their continued patronage. Other endings, I argue, demonstrated a vision of *Richard II* as a singular entity rather than as part of a cycle.

The prompt copy for *Richard II* reveals a number of ‘if-then-else’ statements, demonstrating that the ending relied entirely on decisions made by Troughton at each performance. By experimenting with the ending, Troughton purposefully changed each night’s reception, creating any number of outlier performances. The prompt copy lists four possible endings. However, Vanessa Thorpe’s interview with Sam West — who

played Richard II — reveals that the four listed in detail were only a small number of the endings used in this production. West notes that “David Troughton, who plays Bolingbroke, has the last line in Richard II and the first in Henry IV Part I. To date, he has done nine different endings to our play. He still throws in a different one occasionally to keep us on our toes” (West qtd in Thorpe, “To Play the Kings”). Every performance is different in some regard, but with Troughton’s constant alterations, the ending of Pimlott’s *Richard II* had the potential to be purposefully singular each night. Different words, gestures, and interactions made up each ending, and each separate ending provided a new way to interpret the rest of the performance and its relation to *Henry IV*. Thus, as the first in a series of eight productions, Troughton’s ending not only affects a reading of *Richard II*, but each of the subsequent seven plays and how they might be interpreted.

It would be a massive undertaking and outside of the scope of this project to examine the relationship between the multiple endings of *Richard II* and each of the seven subsequent plays. I will, however, analyze the four core endings noted in the prompt copy, suggest how they shape an interpretation of Pimlott’s *Richard II*, and briefly consider their impact on the beginning of *Henry IV, Part I*. In doing so, I hope to show how a single performance within a production holds the power to dramatically alter an interpretation of that production, and, in this case, an entire season. Rather than discuss the four endings sequentially as they were noted in the promptbook, I will instead group them according to themes and the proximity of their relationship to Attenborough’s *Henry IV, Part I*. To this end, I will first discuss the “prison monologue” ending and then turn to the “lamentable tale” ending. Both of these endings are highly metatheatrical and reassert themes found mainly in *Richard II*. I will afterwards discuss the “textual” ending

and then the “*Henry IV*” ending, both of which connect most directly to Attenborough’s *Henry IV, Part 1*. These endings, I argue, encourage audiences to further their relationship with the RSC — to become part of an RSC community — by experiencing the entire cycle of plays.

Curiously, Troughton’s penchant to alter the ending went almost entirely unnoticed by theatregoers. West mentioned it offhandedly in his interview but, otherwise, there was very little said about the matter. Because the variant endings were not publicized as a feature of the performance, most audience members would assume that their individual experience was representative of the entire production. Unless you went to repeat viewings, you would never know that there were multiple possible endings.

The first ending listed in the prompt copy, the “prison monologue” ending, has Bolingbroke repeat Richard II’s lines from his prison scene in 5.5:

I have been studying how I may compare
 This prison where I live unto the world;
 And for because the world is populous,
 And here is not a creature but myself,
 I cannot do it. Yet I’ll hammer it out. (5.5.1–5)

Echoing these lines at the end of the production directly connects Richard’s and Bolingbroke’s mental states. While the text often suggests that the men are in direct opposition to one another, Pimlott’s production heightened a comparison between the two, insisting that being King, a role which imprisons them both, connects the two men. In this production, while Richard and Bolingbroke are very different in terms of action and apprehension, they are, in essence, two sides of the same crown.

Because this ending is the first option listed in the prompt copy, there might have been some privileging of this ending, even if this was not the ending used on press night. The video recording of the 2000 production of *Richard II* at the RSC archives features the “prison monologue” ending, which likewise supports the possibility that it may have been favoured. The lines of this ending were further threaded throughout the play, as Richard’s prison monologue was also spoken by characters other than Bolingbroke. The lines became a kind of motto, and featured, perhaps most notably, in the play’s opening, where Richard foreshadows his eventual imprisonment:

Steven Pimlott’s *Richard II*, which inaugurated the RSC’s “This England” series in 2000 ... experimented with what might be called the subject position of the spectator. Before each half of the play, the soundtrack played a cacophony of barely audible words (they seemed to be from the play; one phrase was “Our scene is altered from a serious thing”). Richard spoke the beginning of his prison monologue at the start, and the same lines were also spoken by other characters during the play. The words, since they had once been written, existed apart from their speakers. (Potter 304)

Using these words to open the play insists that kingship is a kind of prison, one in which each subsequent king in the “Wars of the Roses” cycle will eventually find himself. Furthermore, by making these his first words, Richard II situates himself as always already imprisoned. The difference between the two men, then, is that while Richard was born into his prison, Bolingbroke chooses his. Roberta Barker suggests the last lines form a connection between the two men, stating, “In its final moments Pimlott’s *Richard* emphasized that contingency [of power] by dissolving the opposition it had set up between usurper and king. Perching on his murdered cousin’s coffin, Bolingbroke took

up Richard's opening words and began his own study of the prison into which he had so eagerly locked himself" (17). The coffin was onstage from the beginning of the play, foreshadowing Richard's impending death but also demonstrating how each ruler rests upon the inheritance of a previous, now dead, monarch. This is especially true with each of the eight plays in the two tetralogies. Usurpers who slaughter their king for the right to rule must carry the weight of that death throughout their own reign. It is this burden which causes Bolingbroke to plan a pilgrimage to the Holy Land at the end of *Richard II*.

Far from simply lamenting his imprisonment, the lines uttered by Richard — and in this particular ending by Bolingbroke as well — have a measure of hopefulness. Both Richard and Bolingbroke are determined that they will “hammer it out.” In Richard's case, the hope is futile. The repetition of the lines throughout Pimlott's production shows this to be true. He is never able to people his world with citizens he can connect to and understand. The speech takes on a more topical meaning when it bookends the play, as it did for at least one performance. In the case of Richard, who speaks it in the opening moments, it shows that Richard has failed to understand how to be a good king simply because he cannot relate his prison (i.e., his rule) to that of the world; he does not know how to be a common man or a good ruler. Despite his best intention to figure it out, his desire remains unfulfilled. Bolingbroke's delivery of the speech at the end of the show, however, is another matter. Whereas Richard was never a man of the people, the text of the play makes much of Bolingbroke's connection to the common people of England. Richard himself claims that his rival courted them (1.4.22–35). As Bolingbroke, he is not stuck in the ‘unpeopled’ prison that Richard describes. However, ending the play with these words suggests that Bolingbroke, now Henry IV, is also trapped in the prison of

kingship, forever divided from the populace and unable to “dive into [the] hearts” of the common people.

By using this ending, Troughton ensures that the end of *Richard II* connects to the beginning of the play when these words were first spoken, forming a cyclic effect and perhaps, as Orford suggests, gesturing to the rest of the cycle of history plays. Because of this connection to the whole, Orford suggests this ending leaves the play incomplete:

The 2000 production was offered as part of the RSC’s ‘This England’ season, so the ending was deliberately incomplete. David Troughton’s Bolingbroke, left alone on stage, began to recite Richard’s speech from the tower, linking himself with the tragic king, and ending with an indication that further resolution was necessary. ... The production left the character alone, weeping on stage; the tone was foreboding and suggested that the tragedy was to continue, encouraging the audiences to see Troughton continue the role in *Henry IV Part One*. ... The unresolved ending which Troughton’s solitary, weeping king brought to the RSC production was not an inherent part of the play, but a construct which sought to incorporate the play into a cycle. (Orford 7–8)

I argue differently. I believe that the very presence of multiple endings already confuses the notion of resolution and closure in this production, regardless of whether or not this production was designed as a part of a cycle. I concede Orford’s point that there is a kind of cyclic notion to this particular ending which is created by using the words echoed throughout the play. However, I feel that the use of these lines at the beginning and end suggests that *Richard II* has come full circle and that this circuit is inescapable. Henry IV can no more escape his prison than Richard II could. This point is furthered by Bolingbroke’s mood at the end of the play. He is seemingly resigned to the fate he chose

for himself. Unlike other endings that Troughton would stage, this particular ending is less about encouraging the audience to see the rest of the “This England” cycle than it is about creating and maintaining a self-contained interpretation of two men’s tragedies. It is the other endings which sacrifice this connection in order to encourage the audience to return to the theatre to deepen their relationship with the RSC. The cycle of plays builds a more sustained social experience and community engagement.

The final point I want to make about this first ending is that the echoing of language is supported by the repetition of props. In his review of the production, Michael Billington remarks that the production made “good use of symbolic props, including a long wooden casket which variously becomes throne, vertical mirror and coffin” (Billington, “From Tyrant to Martyr”). The use of the throne/coffin, used alongside the repeated speech, again serves to solidify the play’s trajectory back on itself in a continuous loop. Richard’s throne becomes the mirror in which he fails to recognize himself and, once dead and entombed, the prop becomes a part of the throne where Bolingbroke — now King Henry IV — repeats the same sentiments as Richard.

Despite the poignancy of this ending choice, it seems that Troughton was unwilling to resign himself to one ending alone. The “lamentable tale” ending listed in the prompt copy is similar to the “prison monologue” ending, in that it supports the idea that Bolingbroke takes on qualities of Richard II when he takes on his crown. In this ending, Bolingbroke closes the play by repeating Richard’s earlier words of farewell to his wife, discussing her future life in France:

In winter’s tedious nights, sit by the fire
 With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales
 Of woeful ages long ago betid;

And ere thou bid goodnight, to quit their griefs

Tell thou the lamentable tale of me. (*Richard II, 2000: Prompt Copy*)

The repetition of these lines is perhaps unexpected since the situations of the two men differ so dramatically. However, this ending enhances the metatheatrical qualities made evident throughout the production. The production did not attempt to hide behind heavy velvet and lights. Instead, it used modern dress and a minimalist set created of bare white walls, a mound of dirt, a wooden box, and chairs. Dominic Cavendish remarked that “The overhead lighting is dazzlingly harsh, snapping on and off with an angry buzz. We are reminded not of castles and tournaments, but of recording studios and panel discussions” (Cavendish, “A Richard to Remember”). The white set as a place of potentiality was highly reminiscent of the creative quality of the characters, especially those who manipulate the world around them. Barker suggests that “With its constant use of open address to the audience, its clear references to contemporary culture and its clinical exposure of the political forces that shaped the play’s characters, this was a highly Brechtian production” (13). While the entire play is metatheatrical in nature, these added final lines are particularly self-referential.

There are metatheatrical qualities to the prison monologue too, of course, and the fact that both of these monologues were selected as possible endings is significant. Both endings attempt to remind the audience of their surroundings and their position as an audience. Both speeches discuss the nature of storytelling and imagination. But while the prison monologue is a soliloquy, the “lamentable tale” speech is a direct address which, in the case of Bolingbroke, breaks the divide between actor and audience: “Tell thou the lamentable tale of me.” It is up to us to repeat his sad tale. As with Bolingbroke’s appropriation of Richard’s prison lines, Bolingbroke’s usurpation of the crown may have

gained him the throne, but it has also provided him with the misery of its previous occupant.

The focus on metatheatre was made evident in the way that Troughton's Bolingbroke interacted with the audience: "Troughton is an actor of huge physical, technical and emotional power who sometimes overpowered the tiny arena of *The Other Place*. ... At one remarkable moment in the deposition scene, his steely gaze forced the theatrical audience to rise to their feet in a disconcerting demonstration of the theatrical mechanisms of fascism" (Barker 15). The audience was not merely invited but expected to engage with the material presented in front of them. But the fourth wall was disrupted in other ways as well. The cast sat on chairs surrounding the playing space, waiting for their turn to act. The constant visibility of the actors was one way the production continued to break down any formal boundary between actor, character, and audience. The production showed that the actors were aware that they were acting, or perhaps, more accurately, that the characters somehow knew they were acting out a pre-determined set of events. As Potter remarks, at the beginning of the play,

Richard apparently knew that he was about to set off a chain of events, or a ritual, that he had experienced before. So, while some characters appeared to think that they were speaking their own words, others were equally aware that they were not. ... When Richard read off the formulaic language for the duel, he had to suppress a flicker of amusement at its reference to the adversaries "plated in habiliments of war." (304)

The fact that Richard and other characters indicated an awareness that they were nothing but characters in a play with a scripted destiny, brings a new level of interpretation to this alternative ending. By the end of this staging, Bolingbroke understands not only that his

sad tale can and must be repeated, but that the repetition is already occurring in the form of the production itself. He is requesting something that is already taking place.⁵

The third ending I want to discuss is the “textual” ending which simply follows the received text. Bolingbroke — now King Henry — promises to “make a voyage to the Holy Land,” and closes with a rhyming couplet, commanding his followers to “Grace my mournings here / In weeping after this untimely bier. (5.6.45–52). Troughton, according to the promptbook, might opt to conclude this speech with a heart-wrenching scream. This ending is listed second on the final page of the prompt copy, suggesting that the textual ending was not far from either Pimlott’s or Troughton’s mind. The familiarity of this ending leads unproblematically into the *Henry IV* plays, where Bolingbroke’s culpability in the crime of Richard’s death remains an issue. Keeping the textual ending helps tie together these productions and the “This England” cycle as a whole. The final lines may be anticipated but the scream is a deviation from the received text (and potentially a disruptive feature to what is otherwise an ‘expected ending’). Depending on an audience’s interpretation of the moment, the scream may enhance the feelings of despair and regret of a Bolingbroke in mourning, or it may conflict with an otherwise subdued moment. Regardless, the “textual” ending suggestively leads audiences to the next play in the cycle: *Henry IV, Part 1*.

The final ending, the “*Henry IV*” ending, is only alluded to in the prompt copy by a note to the lighting technicians:

⁵ Barbara Hodgdon remarks that “light prompt copy markings suggest that this ending may have been rehearsed but not played” (Hodgdon, “Inoculating the Old Stock” 27n37). Whether or not it was performed, this ending was available in the prompt copy for technicians or stage hands following along with the script, and, on paper at least, had as much chance of being performed as any of the other endings.

As Bolingbroke starts to scream: LXQ 32 go

OR

If Bolingbroke starts speaking 1st line of *Henry IV, Part 1*: LXQ 42 go. (*Richard II, 2000: Prompt Copy*)

This ending consists of a single line rather than a short speech: “So shaken as we are, so wan with care” (1.1.1). In fact, it is not even the full first sentence of *Henry IV, Part 1* but a fragment of that sentence.⁶ Taken on its own, the line suggests the weight of the crown without the opportunity to lift that weight through a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The abruptness of the line is apt, however, because it is not so much an ending, but a beginning. By including this line from the text of *Henry IV*, the production latches onto Attenborough’s *Henry IV*, in which Troughton plays the same character and delivers the same line. It also maintains that this production is “to be continued.” While the production can stand on its own, the final line from *Henry IV* insists it does not have to — it is a clear call to buy tickets to the next chapter in the cycle.

Most reviewers saw this fourth ending since it was performed on the production’s press night. Paul Taylor applauded the use of this line stating that “Steven Pimlott’s forensic *Richard II* ends, in a pointedly witty touch, with the line that opens *Henry IV*: ‘So shaken as we are, so wan with care,’ and indeed one of the virtues of David Troughton’s portrayal of the usurper Bolingbroke in the earlier tragedy is the sense he imparts that to seize the crown by force is to step almost instantly into a waking

⁶ It is not clear from the prompt copy if this ending was used in conjunction with any of the other three endings. The form of the note suggests it might equally have stood on its own or have been appended to any of the others depending, once again, on Troughton’s disposition.

nightmare” (Taylor, “Falstaff: You’re History”). While the line is certainly pointed, and can be taken to indicate Bolingbroke’s despair at actually getting what he wanted, it is especially difficult to disassociate the line from its original location — from the opening of *Henry IV, Part 1* — since this production of *Richard II* was performed as part of a devised cycle. Indeed, any reviewer who specifically mentioned this line also noted the line’s origin.

This embedded line does more than simply gesture to the next written play; it directs the audience to an actual production in repertory. It prioritizes the “This England” project over either the parallelism between Richard and Bolingbroke, or the metatheatrical qualities of *Richard II*. This is not to suggest that similar themes from the “prison monologue” ending and the “lamentable tale” ending were not available to the “textual” ending and the “*Henry IV*” ending. Certainly the sentiments of repentance, exhaustion, and despair which Bolingbroke expresses in the “textual” ending and “*Henry IV*” endings are shared by Richard throughout the performance. However, because Bolingbroke echoes not only the sentiments but the words of Richard in the “prison monologue” ending and “lamentable tale” ending, they more directly fold the performance back on itself, focusing on repetition and the parallelism. By contrast, the “textual” and “*Henry IV*” endings look more towards the (bleak) future of Henry IV and the Wars of the Roses.

Each ending of this production shaped a particular understanding of *Richard II*. The focus oscillated between the future with Bolingbroke as King Henry IV (the “textual” and “*Henry IV*” endings), or the past with Bolingbroke trapped in the role previously occupied by Richard II (the “prison monologue” and “lamentable tale” endings). Because this production was part of a cycle, the version that an audience saw

had the potential to shape the perception of the whole. An audience member who heard the repetition of Richard's lines and so saw the burden of kingship transferred to Bolingbroke might potentially view the entire cycle with a more pessimistic view.

Furthermore, the focus on metatheatres (as seen primarily in the "prison monologue" and "lamentable tale" endings), changes the audience's interaction with the play, and their understanding of their role as future storytellers. An audience who witnesses Bolingbroke interacting heavily with them, addressing them and even making demands of them in Pimlott's production might feel disorientated or alienated from the same actor who, once he takes up the same role in Attenborough's production, ignores their existence. I argue that the variability between each production of the cycle is made more manifest for those witnessing the "prison monologue" ending or the "lamentable tale" ending, which present a more intensified contrast to the next production. Conversely, there may have been a slightly smoother transition between productions in the cycle for those who saw the performances featuring the play's textual end or the opening lines to *Henry IV, Part 1*.

Again, this analysis only discusses the versions that are recorded in the prompt copy and reviews of the project. More endings than these four certainly existed. A close look at the stage manager's show reports describes some of the small changes Troughton made on a nightly basis: "on May 5, 2000, 'Coat off, hang on throne, sit on coffin facing front. Speech goes to 'I'll hammer it out.' No crown.' And on May 15, 2000: 'Another new ending for Mr. Troughton, incorporating most of the others — jacket off, sitting on coffin, 'I have been studying,' then getting up, putting the crown on, sitting on the throne and doing the scream'" (Hodgdon, "Inoculating the Old Stock" 27n37). The notes suggest that there were variances to each performance and that no two were intended to be

exactly alike. Indeed, the note stating that Troughton created an ending which “incorporat[ed] most of the others” suggests that he continued to experiment with the tone and message of his ending throughout the run, and that small changes were commonplace. Since the prompt copy lists only four endings, it is probable that, rather than continue to document each and every one of Troughton’s variations, these four represent the spectrum of his endings. It is appropriate, perhaps, that the only individual who could decide what kind of ending the actors and the audience would experience was the man who could not escape echoing both the language and misery of the previous king, a point made especially clear in the metatheatrical endings. Perhaps the only question left — in Bolingbroke’s mind at least — is if we, the audience, remain trapped with him.

2.6 Making Sense of the Material

An audience’s objective is to make sense of the material placed before them. In *Space in Performance*, Gay McAuley argues that “In the theatre spectators are presented with a sequence of enacted events, ordered in space and time, and in their attempts to make sense of what they are experiencing, they respond to the events and to the way they have been ordered into a sequence as well as to the actual presentation” (128). The outlier performances I have discussed here include elements which modify the production’s overall messages and themes, and the very fact that the audience experiences these extra events ensures that spectators will package the encounter as a unit, making sense of what is presented before them. In *Understanding Theatre*, Jacqueline Martin and Willmar Sauter state that “in the theatre the spectator is rarely offered a single message, but is

called upon to play with a variety of interpretative possibilities in a complex system of codes” (21). While the director might set out a particular idea (or ideal) that he or she hopes the audience will receive, the process of decoding the work happens within a single performance, and is subject to contingency. Or as John Russell Brown puts it, “When a play becomes part of a theatrical event, anything that happens on stage will have meaning, give pleasure, or cause uncertainty according to how the audience receives it” (7).

Thus, productions which augment the closing moments of any performance allow their audiences to interpret the material innovatively. These individual endings reinforce the notion that productions are living entities that change with each new audience. Theatre archives do not record every performance. Even the combination of the prompt copy and video recording only captures an idealized form (the prompt copy) and a single output of that ideal (one night’s recording). The extreme examples of outlier endings listed in this chapter remind us of the extent to which live theatre is always an event that belongs to a particular moment, place, and audience. These one-off performance endings allow the final moments to reflect back on the performance as a whole, offering closure or new insight into what came before.

3 Textual Resketchings: Restructuring the Text, Reshaping the Ending

When editing a play for production, directors may remove, rewrite, or add text or non-verbal material. Occasionally, lines at the end of a production are overwritten or switched with other lines to focus on a particular idea made relevant earlier in that production. By tinkering textually with a play's closing moments, directors attempt to draw attention to a production's aims and goals, and guide how the performance should be interpreted as a whole. This chapter will examine three productions which modify the text's final lines: Gregory Doran's *Titus Andronicus* (1995), Trevor Nunn's *Troilus and Cressida* (1999), and Sidney Berger's *The Taming of the Shrew* (2004). The new endings found in these three complex and politically charged productions are conceptually motivated. The end to Doran's *Titus* refocuses on the social message of rebuilding a war-ravaged country; the unanswered questions surrounding Cressida's guilt or innocence are given closure at the end of Nunn's *Troilus and Cressida*; and the closing moments to Berger's *Shrew* realign the production with modern feminist sensibilities. Of course, altering the final lines affects the interpretive shape of the whole production, including its politics. The process of adaptation, however, is sometimes difficult to control, and the modifications made by these three directors open up their productions to unexpected readings. While the emendations might have been made to support an underlying theme, these textual endings also present ideas which conflict with the politics of the corresponding production; the textual ideas these revisions seek to address remain, palimpsest-like, layered beneath these productions' endings and the tension is present despite the directors' textual rearrangements. Thus, the politics of the productions fracture and become troubling in renewed ways as these new endings are interpreted against the production's larger

theatrical choices. In essence, by not rejecting the textual ending altogether but attempting to “rework it” in order to fit a new political perspective, Doran, Nunn, and Berger generate competing interpretive meanings which complicate any straightforward political message. It is the tension between anticipated ending, modified ending, and the production’s interpretive potential which I will analyze.

Textual modification is frequent in theatrical productions of Shakespearean plays; editing the text — if only to cut down on the runtime — is an accepted procedure. Indeed, some directors would advise that not shortening Shakespeare for performance is risky, especially with modern audience attention spans.⁷ But textual editing frequently occurs for thematic and interpretive purposes as well. Alan C. Dessen, in *Rescripting Shakespeare*, states that, “For a variety of reasons theatrical professionals continue to be unsatisfied with the closing moments of Shakespeare’s plays as scripted in the Folio and Quartos, so that a playgoer is especially likely to encounter some form of rescripting in Act 5” (109). Dessen defines “rescripting” as “the changes made by a director in the received text in response to a perceived problem or to achieve some agenda ... or ‘concept’” (3). The term is especially useful when considering the goals in restructuring a Shakespeare play for performance. As Dessen explains, “Often final scene changes are designed to change or reinforce a particular *sense of an ending*” (111, italics added). The phrase “sense of an ending” is abundant throughout discussions on endings — whether textual or theatrical. Directors and productions continue to reconceptualize endings in

⁷ Peter Holland in *English Shakespeares* argues that although “the measurement of a performance’s length has significance for the receptivity and pleasure of an audience,” considerations such as economics and even the public transit system weigh on determining the length of a modern production (2).

order to sharpen a particular idea or fix on a single theme. Textual resketching or “rescripting” is an attempt to isolate and manipulate an audience’s understanding of a particular ending.

To edit a long scene or cut lines from a page-long speech situated midway through the playtext is different, however, from cutting or changing lines within the final scene. By definition, the final act is the culmination of all previous action. An informed audience knows (or thinks it knows) how a play ends in terms of dialogue. Editing or altering the final scene changes the nature of the play and the expectations surrounding its closure. When the final lines are cut or modified, audiences expecting a certain ending are left wanting — and potentially left waiting for — an ending that never appears. I argue that the original ending still occurs, at least on a subliminal level, haunting the staged performance.

In this chapter, I will first discuss two productions which rearrange the received text: Doran’s *Titus Andronicus* and Nunn’s *Troilus and Cressida*. These productions transferred earlier lines in the text to the end. The moved lines do not exist in the closing moments in any of the folio or quarto versions, nor was there any particular scholarly case for relocating them. The altered ending was selected over Shakespeare’s version to support the production’s main theatrical concept. This maneuver is different from the stitching that occurs at the end of the third production I will discuss, Sidney Berger’s *The Taming of the Shrew*. This staging added an epilogue, appropriated from John Fletcher’s *Tamer Tamed*, which provided the production with a kind of postscript. Utilizing just one section of Fletcher’s continuation of the Petruchio plot — the epilogue — functions to refocus Shakespeare’s ending by cutting and shaping pieces of what becomes a combined narrative.

These three productions modify their endings to project a perspective that speaks to the intellectual and social conversations surrounding each play, particularly in relation to race and gender. They are challenging productions which endeavour to present politically progressive interpretations of the ideas and themes at the heart of each play. However, as I intend to show, the textual reshaping of these three endings causes the politics of the corresponding production to unravel, demonstrating not only the importance of endings, and the potential ramifications of resketching endings, but also the difficulty of controlling theatrical meaning. Doran, Nunn, and Berger do not fully reject the textual ending of each play; they write over it. Thus, the conflicts within the text bleed through the new edited endings, destabilizing the meanings of the productions in their closing moments.

3.1 The Post-Apartheid Body: Reknitting South Africa in *Titus Andronicus*

In 1995, Gregory Doran and Antony Sher decided to stage *Titus Andronicus* with Sher in the eponymous role. This National Theatre production was co-produced with Johannesburg's Market Theatre and was initially staged in South Africa. It later moved to the Cottesloe Theatre in London, England, and then to the West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds before traveling to the Almagro Festival in Spain. Doran's *Titus* dealt primarily with the social issues surrounding apartheid for a newly post-apartheid South Africa. It stressed the problems with racial segregation as well as the consequences of a society built on violence and colonial cultural dominance.

According to Michael Billington, "Gregory Doran's fascinating new production from the Market Theatre, Johannesburg ... sees [the play] in political terms, as a mirror of

modern South Africa” (Billington A21). In their book *Woza Shakespeare!: Titus Andronicus in South Africa*, Doran and Sher comment on the timeliness of this staging. Doran states that *Titus*, “sort of makes sense in Africa ... because of the violence. It can seem so gratuitous, just a gory melodrama ... but not here somehow. [Sher] nod[s], staring down at the streets of Jo’burg sixteen floors below and think[s] of the things that have gone on in this country over the past half-century” (Sher and Doran 5). The production was a monumental undertaking, and prompted a firestorm of commentary from both England and South Africa about the state of theatre and of Shakespeare in a post-apartheid South Africa. Before unpacking my analysis of this production’s adapted ending — an ending which directly focused on the unity of South Africa — I will first explore some of the show’s notable performance choices, attending, in particular, to the tempering of Titus through changes to Mutius’s role, the staging of the rape of Lavinia, and the decision to reconceptualize Titus’s grandson as Titus’s black servant. These three choices directly impacted on potential interpretations of the ending, informed the production’s staging of the physical body and the body politic, and were crucial to the play’s political agenda of re-forming the body. Furthermore, these choices were instrumental in determining the production’s reception in both South Africa and England.

In order to stage a localized and modernized Shakespeare, Doran cast a number of South African actors and employed multiple South African patois. The Andronici, for example, utilized an Afrikaans accent, and dressed as extreme right-wing Afrikaner nationalists: “Actress Jennifer Woodbourne had bleached her hair blonde and lightened her skin for the role, in order for Lavinia to appear as Aryan as she was virginal ... Consistent with Sher and Doran’s decision to portray *all* of the Andronici — even the women — as right-wing Afrikaners, the Anglophone Woodbourne was directed to speak

with a pronounced Afrikaans dialect” (Ball 117). White South Africans, however, were not cast uniformly to play the Romans. Notably, Ivan D. Lucas, who played Bassianus, is a Cape Coloured actor, a choice which, according to Alan Ball, “effectively ‘raced’ the conflict between the siblings” and marked Bassianus as “an angry young revolutionary, a sharp contrast to Saturninus’ unsympathetic rapaciousness” (105). Yet despite this particular casting choice, on the whole, the Romans represented “conservative right-wing, repressive white Afrikaners” (Seeff 5). Indeed, Bassianus’s casting choice even problematized a few scenes. His marriage alignment with the ultra-white Lavinia and subsequent mocking of and disgust with Aaron and Tamora’s interracial love affair suggests that Bassianus was “passing” for white either in casting or in character.

In direct contrast to the Romans was the presentation of “the ‘barbarian’ Goths as township tsotsis, with their heavily accented ‘black’ English” (Seeff 5–6). Just as the Romans were not cast uniformly along a black-white binary, neither were the Goths:

the Goths were cast in such a way as to suggest the normality of racial hybridity elsewhere on the continent. Tamora (Dorothy Ann Gould) and her eldest son, Alarbus (Bruce Laing) were white; but her other sons, Chiron (Oscar Petersen) and Demetrius (Carlton George) were played by an identifiably mixed race Indian and Coloured actor, respectively. Furthermore, Tamora spoke in an especially guttural and, by association, uneducated “poor white” Afrikaans dialect ... all of the Goths were directed to use “lower, sinewy” body language that contrasted with the “upright, rigid” bodies of the Afrikaner Andronici. (Ball 107–8)

Aaron, the Nurse, and Titus’s Boy — in this production the role of Young Lucius was replaced by a mute black servant of Titus’s — represented a separate group made wholly of black South Africans. The Goths, according to Doran, “could be everything else

including black[,] poor white [or] mixed race” (Doran, “Program Note”). Yet although the Goths as a group displayed ethnic and linguistic diversity, difference itself became another way to represent the entire category of “other.” The Goths were those who identified or situated themselves as something other than white right-wing South Africans. For Catherine Silverstone, “the specificity of ‘other’ South African identities was negated in favour of a generalised ‘otherness,’ which worked to collapse difference” (32). The Goths were unified as a group simply in that they were not white nationalists. Even Tamora, a white woman, becomes “othered” through her Coloured children, low accent, and crouched body language. Thus, in the simplest terms, the production represents “a conflict between extreme right-wing Afrikaner nationalists — the Romans — and tsotsis (black township gangsters) — the Goths — in a post-apartheid South Africa” (Seeff 3).

In England, at both the Cottesloe Theatre and the West Yorkshire Playhouse, Doran’s *Titus* was a commercial success. It was sold out for its entire UK tour with consistently rave reviews. At the Cottesloe, *The Independent*’s Michael Church proclaimed that “Bold experiments like this ... are what keeps theatre alive” (“Take the Bard with a Pinch of Snuff”), and Michael Billington of *The Guardian* stated it was “a highly consistent, beautifully executed reading” (“A Brutal Sort of Interrogation”). In Leeds, Jeffery Wainwright stated it was “a version that deals successfully with the work’s famous excesses by a combination of realism and inventive expressionism” (“Titus Andronicus”). Reviewers were quick to point out — and praise — the Afrikaans accent: “The South African accent slows down the speaking but refurbishes the cruder passages with a new emphatic vigour” (Coveney, “Theatre a Magical Mastery Tour”) and generally found that Doran’s modifications improved the production’s vision of a visceral

and bloodthirsty world torn apart. Overall, the production's tour in the UK was met with widespread approval, even leading one reviewer to call it a "glorious, resonating production" to which he would "volunteer to sell programmes to see it all over again" (Tinker, "Sher's *Titus* is so Formidable").

The production opened with Titus entering in a battered Jeep with his captives pulling the vehicle to centre stage: Titus's "sturdy, upright frame bulging beneath army fatigues, the bristling white whiskers defiantly jutting out, the beret set in an uncompromising line above his cold, commanding eyes, all speak of a man born to be obeyed and untroubled by any thoughts of conscience" (Tinker, "Sher's *Titus* is so Formidable"). Sher's Titus was depicted as a hardened man with absolute clarity of mind. This image was to be juxtaposed against Titus's later insanity; in order to generate pity for Titus afterwards, Doran cut Mutius's death from the opening scene. The death of Mutius is a curious moment in the play. In an attempt to reclaim his stolen daughter, Titus kills his son who is protecting her. The action is often read as a way of understanding the extreme patriotism of Titus's character — he would rather kill one of his own children than be unfaithful to the ruling regime. Brian Boyd comments upon the associated problems with this scene in his article, "Mutius: An Obstacle Removed in *Titus Andronicus*," suggesting how it can be read against the rest of the play's action. His argument is worth reproducing in full. "Titus's killing of his son Mutius," he writes,

seems odd in both its immediate and its wider contexts. Titus kills his son abruptly, with a single line of dialogue in which to formulate and express his intent and without so much as a single word of subsequent regret. Indeed, he soon seems entirely to forget the killing for over forty lines (I.i.299–341). His fatal sword-thrust occasions a mere two lines of reproach apiece from his eldest son,

Lucius, and his brother, Marcus, an astonishingly subdued reaction in a play focused on the deep suffering that all three are caused, and the revenge Titus in particular is driven to, by the injuries inflicted on his remaining children. Over the fates of these children, Titus and Marcus and Lucius lament at often uncomfortable length in the remaining four acts, where the killing of Mutius is never once alluded to, just as if it had never happened. (Boyd 196–7)

The fact that the moment seems so singular and unattached to subsequent action has prompted a number of scholars to suggest that Mutius's death may have been a late addition (or future emendation) to the playtext.⁸ Others suggest that this particular section was the work of George Peele, who many believe collaborated with Shakespeare on the play (see, for example, Vickers 151; 171–4; 207; 453–68). Regardless of its artistic origins, this episode has important implications for the play's concept of the body, which is a recurring and important image within *Titus*. Mutius is a part of Titus's family — a branch of his family tree — and yet Titus is willing to cull one of his own to save his sense of honor and reputation. To Titus, Mutius is a diseased portion of the body since he goes against Titus's own beliefs.

While it is certainly believable that Titus is willing to lop off a branch for his principles — he does, after all, literally cut off a hand later in the play — it seems inconsistent that he would kill one son for an affront against him (or the empire) and yet protest his other two son's deaths when he believes them potentially guilty of murdering

⁸ See John Dover Wilson's *Titus Andronicus* (xxxvi), Stanley Wells's *Re-editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader* (99-100) and Jonathan Bate's introduction to his *Arden II* edition of *Titus Andronicus* (103-5) for more in-depth discussions of Mutius as a Shakespearean afterthought.

the ruler's brother: "after two of his sons have been found in a pit with the murdered Bassianus, and after the discovery of a document designed to incriminate them, Titus does not deplore the dishonour they have brought on the family. Instead he immediately sues, in tears, for his sons to be freed until the trial" (Boyd 205). Titus's reaction to the death sentences of Martius and Quintus directly contrasts with his reaction to the earlier death of Mutius.

Yet this juxtaposition can serve to show the development of Titus over the course of the play. The death of Mutius provides a strong juxtaposition to the death of Tamora's son, Alarbus, which also occurs at the beginning of the play. Tamora begs and pleads for the life of her eldest son — Titus ordered him sacrificed to honour his fallen sons — whereas Titus is willing to murder one of his own children. Morally, this contrast positions Tamora and Titus on opposite ends of the same issue. Titus places honour and rites above even his family. Tamora disregards honour or pride — even marrying Saturninus, son of the man who ordered the slaughter of her people — to save her remaining two sons' lives and plot her revenge. She places the desire to protect her children above any sense of morality. Thus, I suggest, as Titus begins to realize the price of his moral absolutism (the loss of his children and his body), he turns to embrace the same kind of moral relativism that Tamora practises, a decision that ultimately leads to complete anarchy.

Mutius's death thematically resonates throughout the play — even though the characters never mention it again — but, especially in a modern-dress production, it also potentially depicts Titus as unsympathetic and unduly rigorous. The captive Tamora, begging for the life of her child more readily earns the pity of the audience over the man who strikes down his own son for defending Lavinia's right to marry her betrothed. Thus,

as rich as this scene is interpretively, it posed a severe problem for the image of Titus that Sher and Doran wanted to present: “It’s a tricky one ... How do you find a journey for Titus to go, if he’s barking mad to start with?” (Sher and Doran 111). For Sher, Titus killing his son was “hysteria” (Sher and Doran 111), and he was concerned that Mutius’s murder scene would destroy any sympathy the audience might feel for Titus. Doran agreed the scene was messy and, like so many before him, contended that the material was poorly revised: “From a close study of the text, it seems that the death of Mutius might have been an afterthought, a late rewrite. It interrupts a conversation, and Marcus is given the clumsiest segue imaginable in an attempt to get back to the plot” (Sher and Doran 111). With their interpretive concerns at the forefront, and supported by Shakespearean scholarship judging the material as somehow textually corrupt, Doran and Sher decided to cut Mutius entirely. In the space where Mutius challenges his father, Sher’s Titus simply looked shocked at Lavinia’s departure but committed no violent actions against his sons. Reworking this section allowed Doran to cut out material that posed a problem for his interpretation of Titus, but it also fundamentally altered this character. Sher’s Titus is no longer an unyielding man who learns that his moral stance will cost him dearly, and the violence of this scene is sacrificed for a more sympathetic lead character.

A second key performance choice centres on the portrayal of Lavinia’s rape. Lavinia’s mutilation is only one of many instances of the dismemberment of the body in *Titus*, but it is easily the most graphic. Leonard Tennenhouse explains that “Lavinia’s body restates and interprets [the play’s] seemingly gratuitous carnage in a way that must have been clear to an Elizabethan audience in as much as her body was that of a daughter of the popular candidate for emperor of Rome, the first choice of wife for the emperor of

Rome, and the betrothed of the emperor's younger brother" (33). The violence inflicted on Lavinia — the "proper" mate for Rome's head of state — is a continuation of the attack on Rome itself. It is thus that Lavinia's body becomes the centre on which all other acts of bodily violence are localized. Her mutilation is the reenactment of the play's earlier violence — Tamora sanctioning Lavinia's mutilation mirrors Titus's sacrifice of Alarbus — and it is echoed in the play's later violence. Jennifer L. Airey makes this point clear in her essay, "The Politics of Rape." She discusses how the connection between Lavinia and Rome has been used to promote this particular ideology, making particularly reference to Edward Ravenscroft's production in the 1600s, but Airey notes this further dates back to the story within Virgil's *Aeneid*: "When Chiron and Demetrius assault Lavinia, rape simultaneously represents an attack on Lavinia as individual, on Lavinia as Titus's child, and on Lavinia as symbol for the Roman nation" (176). Since Lavinia represents a figurehead for Rome, Lavinia's dismemberment, the loss of her arms and tongue, parallels Rome's own helplessness.

The rape of Lavinia is one of the most violent acts in the Shakespearean canon — challenged only, perhaps, by the blinding of Gloucester — and, if one follows the text, her mutilation occurs entirely offstage. Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, in their introduction to *Titus Andronicus* suggest that "The violence that has been done to this woman does not need to be seen when it is so obvious in its results" (114). However, suggesting the scene is too violent or best left to the imagination allows the audience to maintain a safe distance from extreme violence against women. It ensures the audience feels no complicity in the crime due to their own inaction. Doran, in striking contrast to stage tradition, forced the audience to silently witness Lavinia's torture by means of a

highly-stylized dumbshow.⁹ While waltz music played, the violence was committed, not upon Woodbourne's Lavinia, but on a mannequin acting as a proxy for her. Lavinia was forced to endure Chiron and Demetrius licking her face, until the lifeless replica became her avatar: "Lavinia then waltzed herself out of their clutches and performed a dissociative, slowly spinning dance while the brothers graphically raped the mannequin, cutting off its hands. ... As a coup de grace, Demetrius produced a knife and rammed it repeatedly into the mannequin's vagina while Chiron hopped about, laughing" (Ball 125). After the mannequin fulfilled its role as the substitute Lavinia, Lavinia became doll-like, taking on the mannequin's characteristics: "Doran underscored the brothers' cruelty by having Chiron and Demetrius bring Lavinia back and dance her about the stage like a rag doll" (Seeff 7). The remainder of the play was enacted in a completely realistic manner, ensuring that this moment would dramatically stand apart. The mannequin brings to mind the kind of dolls that psychiatrists use with victims of trauma, often children (Malchiodi 185). However, instead of providing a reenactment of the violence committed upon her, the mannequin represented what was occurring in a present moment.

While staging the violence encourages a passive audience to feel complicit in her rape, the stylization softened the moment for UK audiences: "The horrors are delicately done. When Titus's daughter gets her hands cut off and her tongue cut out, the effect is balletically stylised" (Church, "Take the Bard with a Pinch of Snuff"). This modification also showed the physical dismantling of the body that the end of the production tries metaphorically to stitch back together. Lavinia's hands, her tongue, and father's hand are

⁹ The only other exception to the offstage rape of Lavinia of which I am aware is Heiner Müller's 1984 adaptation of the play, *Anatomy Titus, Fall of Rome*.

all amputated onstage, and this foregrounds the need to reknit the tragedy's literal and political broken bodies. This may have been a way to force the audience to recognize the brutality of violence at the heart of apartheid, an experience which Doran and Sher were trying to capture by staging the play in South Africa.

Broken and damaged bodies are thematically crucial to this play and critical to the message of this production. In "Physical Trauma and (Adapt)ability," Caroline Lamb has outlined the way that the dismembered body is central to understanding the play: "by relying upon a corporeal metaphor of fragmentation to characterise the political state of Rome, Shakespeare makes the traumatised or dismembered body bear a negative ideological burden; political inefficacy is equated with the violated body" (42). Lamb's argument suggests that the play's staging of mutilation makes the reader consider the relationship between a body and its parts — both literal human bodies and bodies of state. She further argues that there is a kind of triumph over trauma and loss which a body without key parts can still accomplish through the development of "a new physical habitus that enables them to communicate and to act" (43). But ultimately, and although Lamb sees Lavinia's and Titus's bodily sacrifices as a success (54), it is equally made clear that broken bodies have no place within the newly reforged Rome. The violence committed on Lavinia is a part of a cycle which Doran's production stresses must be broken in order to re-form Rome's ravaged body.

The final performance choice I want to consider before turning to the ending is the treatment of Young Lucius. The textual ending to *Titus Andronicus* is fraught with unanswered questions. In the final scene, Rome and the audience seem to be back where they started, without a political head to govern the Roman body. While Lucius is one of the surviving Andronici, and perhaps the only one capable of knitting together the parts

of the Romans and the Goths into a new Rome, he is not the only potential future in the playtext. By virtue of his innocence, his age, and his name, that opportunity falls to Young Lucius. Titus's grandson, Young Lucius — seemingly the only grandson he has despite having fathered so many sons — is quite literally the Andronici heir.

Young Lucius is a blank parchment for a director to write on. He is in a number of important scenes, but what he makes of these moments is up to a director to decide. Lavinia chases Young Lucius around the stage, eventually relating through his books the evil that befell her. He observes and helps Titus madly send letters to the gods, demanding justice. Finally, he is present at the feast, watching the slaughter and mourning his grandfather's death. In contrast to the bodies torn apart in the play, Young Lucius's character can be slowly formed throughout a production into a symbol of the Andronici's fate, and directors often use Young Lucius to foreshadow Rome's future. In Julie Taymor's film (1999), for example, Young Lucius takes Aaron's baby and leaves Rome, seemingly rejecting the violence he has witnessed there and instead searching for a kind of peace not attainable in that "wilderness of tigers" (3.1.53). In the Stratford Festival of Canada's 2011 production, Young Lucius helped his father avenge Titus's death by slaughtering Saturninus. Here, director Darko Tresnjak showed that despite Lucius's rule and the semblance of Roman unity, the future for any remaining Andronici will be stained with blood and death.

Doran's production, by contrast, altered the role of Young Lucius almost beyond recognition. Doran removed Young Lucius's blood relationship with Titus, and turned the character into Titus's servant. Titus still called the character "boy" but the word was used in a condescending fashion, a term for someone not warranting a name instead of an endearment for a beloved relative. Indeed, to further distinguish that the child was no

grandson of Titus's, Doran cast a black actor, Paulus Kuoape, as "Boy." Catherine Silverstone suggests the change was employed to show more concretely "the inequalities that attend being black" (32) since both Boy and Nurse — played by black actress Daphney Hlomuka — are servants to the white Romans. Ultimately, the future narrative potentially written upon Young Lucius was traded in this production for a more visible demonstration of current racial inequity.

Doran's adaptation of the final scene should be understood in light of these performance choices. His ending of *Titus* reflected a desire to mend the broken world, presenting to its audience a need to move beyond hatred and physical difference, while still recognizing the extreme violence that caused such a breach. Thus, Lucius did not deliver the final speech. Following Lucius's final speech, Marcus ended the play with a pastiche of parts of some of his earlier speeches:

My heart is not compact of flint nor steel;
 Nor can I utter all our bitter grief,
 But floods of tears will drown my oratory,
 And break my utterance even in the time
 When it should move ye to attend me most,
 And force you to commiseration.
 You sad-faced men, people and sons of Rome,
 By uproar severed, as a flight of fowl
 Scattered by winds and high tempestuous gusts,
 Lest Rome herself be bane unto herself,
 Like a forlorn and desperate castaway,
 Do shameful execution on herself!

O, let me teach you how to knit again
 This scattered corn into one mutual sheaf,
 These broken limbs again into one body. (National Theatre, *Titus Andronicus*,
 1995)

The lines are spliced together from two separate speeches earlier in the play's final scene, immediately following the multiple murders. The first five lines are from the Roman Lord speech at 5.3.87–92.¹⁰ The next three lines are from Marcus's speech directly following the death of Saturninus (5.3.66–68). "Lest Rome" to "execution on herself" are from the opening of the Roman Lord speech (5.3.72–75) and the final three lines of this new ending are the end of Marcus's earlier speech (5.3.69–71).

Although this monologue focuses on healing the body — both the physical body and the body politic — rather than on the ideas of revenge which Lucius's final speech champions, it is this rescripted ending, in conjunction with the other changes analyzed above, which holds the potential to reconfigure and undermine the production's politics. Analyzing Gregory Doran's 1995 production of *Titus Andronicus* through the local perspective of its performances at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg reveals that this textual adjustment in the closing moments has the potential for a much larger impact on

10 The Pelican edition (ed. Gustav Cross) and the Folger edition (ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine) assign this speech to Marcus rather than an unnamed Roman Lord, creating a single speech. The New Arden edition (ed. J. C Maxwell) assigns some of the lines to Marcus while the Riverside edition (ed. G. Blakemore Evans) assigns these lines to Aemilius. Dessen's *Rescripting Shakespeare* provides an in-depth discussion of how the Roman Lord's speech is edited for different editions and the way these changes might affect performance (233-4).

one's interpretation of the play. Indeed, it is the ending of this production, so celebrated by British commentators, that ultimately positions Doran's *Titus* as racially problematic.

While the production was hailed unreservedly as a masterpiece in England, it was an unmitigated disaster in South Africa. The meaning of Doran's production was decidedly different when positioned against the actual backdrop of the post-apartheid struggle. Panned by white South Africans who disliked the patois, and generally ignored by coloured and black South Africans, it spelled financial disaster for the Market Theatre and started off a firestorm of debate between Sher, Doran, and the South African populace about cultural relevance, the appropriation of Shakespeare, and the appropriation of South African culture. Doran's emendations to the final speech attempted to solidify a particular viewpoint about the state of peace after racial conflict, but depending on the location of the production — whether it was staged in South Africa or abroad — those lines and their impact had the potential for radically different interpretations.

In order to understand the alternate potential readings of the production, I will discuss this final speech in detail and analyze how these seemingly small changes affect potential readings of the production. Each of the performance moments (or textual edits) that I have discussed above — the changes surrounding Titus's son Mutius, the portrayal of Lavinia's rape and dismemberment, and alterations to the characterization of Young Lucius — could shape a positive vision of post-apartheid South Africa, a country — like *Titus Andronicus*'s Rome — which has seen immense violence, yet has the capacity for healing. However, once the ending is revealed, it becomes clear that although Doran and Sher sought cultural relevance, the textual adjustments that they introduce leave in question the level of unity that these two separate groups (the Romans and the Goths; the

white nationalists and the black tsotsis) can achieve. Far from envisaging future reconciliation, I argue that they fall back on presumptions of conformity and racial superiority.

The presentation of *Titus* was far more unsettling in a South African locale where Sher's accent, his dress, and his mannerisms bore a clear parallel to Eugene Terre'Blanche. The allusion — though denied by both Sher and Doran — was praised by British reviews as a bold choice, but seen by South African reviewers as an attempt to force cultural relevance. But there are also deep-seated problems that attend on presenting *Titus* in this manner: cutting *Titus*'s murder of his son Mutius to insist on a more sympathetic leading man while simultaneously presenting him as a white supremacist is clearly concerning. As Silverstone notes, “To reproduce, even unwittingly, the image of Terre'Blanche in the context of a play that reifies *Titus*'s grief in terms of heroic suffering implicates the production in racial politics that work against Doran and Sher's project of reconciliation” (31). Indeed, through *Titus*'s supremacism, Marcus and Lucius become implicated by relation: “Guilty by association, the Andronici sons could also be read as Neo-Nazi AWB [Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (Afrikaner Resistance Movement)] militia instead of as SADF [South African Defence Force] soldiers” (Ball 116). If these are the men who are to lead Rome (or South Africa) into the future, the future looks bleak indeed.

Lavinia's rape also takes on unanticipated interpretations in light of the adapted ending. The visual demonstration of cut limbs onstage shows the excessive violence that Doran and Sher felt was representative of the South African landscape in which they set their production; second, and perhaps less intentionally, it insinuates the sheer impossibility of ever completely knitting together what has been torn asunder. Lavinia's

arms, her tongue, and her virginity cannot be reclaimed. They can only be avenged. If this production was about re-forming the broken body, then showing the body physically destroyed, Lavinia torn and violated by the racial other, exaggerated the impossibility of re-forming a whole out of these two groups. Indeed, rather than show Lavinia finding peace — either through revenge or in death — this production in its closing scene staged a disturbing repetition of the aesthetics of her rape. As Lavinia once more struggled to free herself, her father waltzed her around the stage to the same music that played while she was violated; this time, however, her unwelcome ‘dance partner’ killed her. The visual and auditory reminder of her rape and mutilation works against the possibility of reconciliation between the Goths and the Romans and of the larger project of reknitting broken bodies.

Finally, the message behind recasting Titus’s grandson as the black servant is complicated when read against the goal of “reknitting” Rome / South Africa. As Christopher Thurman relates, this is largely because the character was made mute and given such a deprecating title: “No doubt there was a deliberate quibbling on the latent meaning — the derogatory use of ‘boy’ by some whites to refer to black men — but to what end was the allusion made? Why were all of his lines cut, so that a black character was consciously denied a voice?” (31). Thurman’s last point warrants further discussion. Not only was the bloodline cut, but so were the lines assigned to Young Lucius. The production portrayed the character as a silent servant rather than as an inquisitive heir to the Andronici name. Silverstone felt that with this choice, “the production tracked straight back into a reiteration of racial stereotypes and inequalities that post-apartheid South Africa seeks to redress” (32). In transforming the character into a servant, the production crippled the possibilities for the future healing (or destruction) that Young

Lucius textually represents. As a silent figure, Kuoape made no declarations desiring to avenge his aunt Lavinia, nor did he lament his grandfather's passing. The character became a shadow — literally and figuratively — of the role the character might have played.

Without Young Lucius, the projected future for Rome in the closing moments is changed. Perhaps the loss of this character does not resolutely establish the end of the Andronici line — Lucius could still sire children — but neither does it solidify the idea of a future. It weakens, if not destroys, the idea that the next generation can learn from these events, since no next generation is represented. If this production meant to show how to re-form “These broken limbs again into one body” (5.3.71), the focus on Young Lucius might have been an important element of that healing. Instead, Doran's eradication of this figure leaves the audience only left with Aaron's child, the child of a self-proclaimed monster, as the remaining symbol of the future generation.

Textually, Shakespeare's play ends not with healing but with further vengeance:

As for that heinous tiger, Tamora,

No funeral rite, nor man in mourning weeds.

No mournful bell shall ring her burial.

But throw her forth to beasts and birds of prey:

Her life was beast-like, and devoid of pity,

And being so, shall have like want of pity.

See justice done on Aaron, that damned Moor,

From whom our heavy haps had their beginning:

Then afterwards, to order well the state,

That like events may ne'er it ruinate. (5.3.195–204)

The final four lines are found only in the second quarto, and are not always included in either modern editions or theatrical versions of the play. They were not included in Doran's production. Regardless, textually, either Lucius is wholly concerned with revenge without thinking on Rome at all, or the state can only be put in order after Tamora and Aaron have been violently purged from the city and punished for their transgressions. Yet it is this kind of eye-for-an-eye mentality that propagated the cycle of violence throughout the play: Titus seeks a sacrifice for his dead children; Tamora seeks blood for her sacrificed son; Titus kills Tamora's other sons in retaliation for his daughter's rape and his sons' unjust execution; and Lucius seeks justice for his father's death and suffering. While it might seem as though Lucius's final punishments provide an end to the violence, they still hint at the possibility for further strife.

Nancy L. Christiansen, in "Synecdoche, Tropic Violence, and Shakespeare's Imitatio in *Titus Andronicus*," makes clear the revenge cycle will continue ever onwards: "Also followers of this corrupt Roman tradition, Marcus, Titus's brother, and Lucius, Titus's last remaining son, exhibit the same language and reading habits as Titus, for they use at the end of the play the same figures of speech and symbols as those used at the beginning" (373). Aaron's son, if Lucius did let him live, might return to seek revenge, and the Goths themselves wanted revenge on both Tamora and Rome — and only one of those objectives has been met.

Indeed, the relationship between the Romans and the Goths is not at all secure by the end of the play. The Goths may have turned on Tamora and her kin, siding with the rogue son of Titus. However, now that Lucius has been named ruler, it is unclear how his relationship with this group will proceed. Although Lucius needed the Goths to wage war and perform acts of extreme violence, they have no clearly defined place in the Rome he

intends to rebuild. Anthony Brian Taylor makes this problem clear in his essay, “Lucius, the Severely Flawed Redeemer of *Titus Andronicus*”: “there is no evidence for thinking that the Goths have undergone any miraculous conversion on the road to Rome. Those who follow Lucius remain a ‘warlike’ people. ... And what motivates the Goths who have allied themselves to Lucius, is no sudden burst of uncharacteristic altruism but the prospect of revenge on Rome” (151–2). Furthermore, Doran’s production, which portrayed “Roman” national identity in terms of white supremacism, does not suggest that the Roman population would welcome a redefinition of “Rome.”

The uneasiness present in the text’s closing moments, even overwritten with the newly-introduced speech by Marcus, continues to shape interpretation of Doran’s production choices concerning the Romans and the Goths. Although Doran’s production attempted to focus on healing and unity, the Goths as an outcast group remain visibly segregated from the white Romans at the end of the play. Notably, Marcus’s speech to reform the broken body as delivered in Doran’s production is not targeted at the varying groups of peoples present, but only to the Romans: “You sad-faced men, people and sons of Rome” (5.3.66). This segregation is necessary when the speech is placed earlier in the scene since there it forms a part of Marcus’s address to the mob, convincing them to select his nephew as the new ruler. Placed at the end, however, these words distinctly segregate the two on stage groups even more firmly than the production’s visual display of skin colour and ethnicity or the historical motivations of each group. Marcus sees fit only to address the Romans; the Goths are apart from, rather than a part of, his vision for Rome. Doran moved these lines to the end to focus on the idea of peace which would arise between the two nations, insisting that it was the only way to re-form the bloody, broken body of Rome, or, in this case, South Africa. The new speech offers a stream of

nature imagery within a few lines (flight of fowl, winds, gusts, scattered corn) to focus on the productivity that can emerge from healing. These components, currently disparate and therefore useless, could become whole once again to nourish Rome. However, this altered ending actually further segregates the two groups, creating an inherently racist message. It suggests it is only the white upper-class Roman groups — the Andronici and other Romans — who will rebuild society and benefit from a bounteous Rome.

Marcus's role in Lavinia's rape scene, in this production, is also slightly adjusted, and his involvement in this earlier scene has particular bearing on his final lines. Marcus is one of the rational voices in the play, a watcher, often viewed as a foil to his brother, Titus, and the rest of his male kin who are all warriors. Indeed, Bate and Rasmussen call him "the play's chief 'spectator' figure" (x), but his speeches — especially in modern productions — are often problematic. His longest and most troubling speech is his address in face of Lavinia's broken body. Frank Kermode summarizes the problem by stating that, "To a modern director the scene is something of an embarrassment: Marcus, instead of doing something about Lavinia, who, as his account of the matter confirms, is in real danger of bleeding to death, makes a speech lasting a good three minutes" (8). Many directors, such as Peter Brook (RSC, 1955) and Trevor Nunn (RSC, 1972), have trimmed or even completely eradicated this speech, finding it too difficult to incorporate in full. Not all scholarship, however, posits this speech in such negative terms. Some feminist scholars see Marcus as a tool by means of which Lavinia regains her voice and agency, demonstrating that these aspects of her identity were not entirely stolen from her by her rapists. Catharine R. Stimpson emphasizes Marcus's role in comparison to the men who raped her: "Marcus asks for compassion for his niece and shows her how to publicize her plight. The reasonableness of ... Marcus contrasts to the despicable

excesses of will of the rapist [sic] and the dangerous excesses of rhetoric of husbands who brag about their wives' chaste fidelity" (80). Gina Bloom further examines this moment in terms of its feminist potential:

Lavinia has become for many feminist readers in particular the archetype of a link between voice and agency; her narrative enacts intersections between women's sexual and political subjection and their loss of voice. As important as it is to reveal the brutality of Lavinia's mutilation, it is also important to observe the limits of Chiron's and Demetrius's horrific act. For although Lavinia "hath no tongue to call," her rapists, I would maintain, fail to silence her completely. Lavinia goes on to engage in a form of dramatic dialogue with Marcus when he finds her in the woods and prompts her for her story. ... Lavinia may have "no tongue to call," but an act of vocal communication has, in effect, taken place. (101–2)

Through Marcus, Lavinia is arguably able to reclaim some kind of agency, a means of vocalizing her pain.

In Doran's production, however, this speech was presented as a voice-over, so erasing the potential for "dialogue" between uncle and niece identified by Bloom. This production choice stages Marcus, in effect, "silently" expressing and internalizing his horror, in eloquent poetry, at Lavinia's disfiguration. Despite the production's goal of making the (political) body once again whole, the speech ultimately demonstrates how Marcus is unable with words to re-form Lavinia's body and voice and so must instead "speak for [her]" (2.4.33). Marcus attempts to mythologize Lavinia's pain and suffering, perhaps suggesting that if he can locate her source material, he can solve the problem. As Arthur L. Little suggests:

Marcus's speech is strained to arrest her — to fix her as a Lucrece *pictura* — but she flies away, turns away, draws back, always resisting the structuration of his speech. He tries to retreat into mythopoesis by evoking Daphne and Philomela, but in each instance the figure simultaneously or quickly deconstructs before his own eyes. ... By gazing on and lyricizing about Lavinia's mutilated body, Marcus tries to piece her body together even as he blazons it. (53–54)

Memory of this earlier moment generates something of a troubling irony in this production's closing moments, in that Marcus has already demonstrated the impossibility of healing the broken body with language — the impossibility of “knit[ting] again / This scattered corn into one mutual sheaf, / These broken limbs again into one body” (5.3.69–71) — just as the rest of the Andronici have demonstrated the impossibility of achieving peace by tearing the body apart. Indeed, as Gillian Murray Kendall argues, “too many limbs have gone literally astray for characters to return so glibly to the kind of ‘put a head on headless Rome’ imagery that began the play. The literal limbs have gone missing — are not on stage — so it is a bit difficult to picture the complete joining Marcus has in mind” (315). If the literal body has throughout the play stood for the political body, then it seems impossible for Rome's body to be re-formed. The body has not been made whole but sheared further with the deaths of Titus and Lavinia. Neither war nor words have been effective thus far. Giving Marcus a final speech exhorting healing and unity does not show the audience the effectiveness of peace, but rather the uselessness of words.

The production was not well attended in Johannesburg, causing a mass debate in South African media on the value of producing Shakespeare in a post-colonial South Africa. During the course of the run, while Doran and Sher endorsed their theatrical choices and attempted to encourage greater attendance, white South African reviewers

defended their poor reviews. In both their book and in the surrounding print and on-air justification of their choices, Doran and Sher implied they were targeting a black audience: “with only one exception, all of the participants in this debate were white. ... This is also at the root of the problem. The future for South African theatre, and the arts in general, must surely rely on a significant input from black culture” (Sher, “Violent Reaction” 1). It is also clear that the majority of the audience was white: “Sher and Doran hoped that more blacks would attend their *Titus* — and, in *Woza Shakespeare!*, bitterly complained that few came” (Ball 98). Both Doran and Sher seem to suggest that the failure of the production was because the “right” audience was not attending. Doran particularly relates in *Woza Shakespeare!* how, after a one-time matinee set up for township blacks, a black man approached Doran, stating, “‘I didn’t understand it all here,’ he says, pointing to his head. Then he bangs his chest. ‘But I understood it here’” (213). Doran’s use of this story clearly supports his belief that *Titus* was the correct play to stage in South Africa for a particular audience. However, black South Africans, like Israel Motlhabane, countered by suggesting Sher and Doran were putting on the wrong play:

It’s all very well to moan about Shakespeare’s celebrated *Titus Andronicus* and other shows of its ilk playing to nearly empty houses, but to the theatre lover in the townships, Shakespeare is sawdust. Gibson Kente is a hero! I can understand Mr. Sher’s lamentation about his show — but what about all the scripts and theatrical productions that have never had proper theatres in which they could be produced or performed? (18)

As if to confirm the lack of interest the black community had for a “South African Shakespeare,” there was almost nothing noted about the production in any major black

paper at the time. Motlhabane published his commentary in *The Star*, a paper with a predominantly white audience base. Doran's production, despite its ostensible politics, illustrated the difficulty of any easy unification of the two groups within the play, ultimately pointing out the divisions that still exist.

In the end, the only thing rebuilt and re-formed within this production was a cycle of violence and racial exclusion. Far from presenting a positive image of a post-apartheid future, Doran's powerful closing image, driven by Marcus's closing speech, revisits the violence, the lack of future, and the difficulty of rebuilding Rome's broken bodies. Doran's ending — painfully, given his and Sher's ostensible political goals — is counterproductive to the healing process between factions. His production choices show the consequences of broken corn, bloodied fields, and destroyed culture. But instead of promising peace, the closing moments demonstrate that one cannot simply knit together what has been torn asunder.

3.2 Cressida's Silences: Unheard Conversations in *Troilus and Cressida*

Editing lines to fix a perceived problem within a play is often achieved through minor cutting or a slight emendation of words. However, even small cuts can have a dramatic effect. Doran's *Titus* made a large impact by repositioning text within the same scene. The National Theatre's 1999 production of *Troilus and Cressida*, directed by Trevor Nunn and staged at the Royal National Theatre (London), spliced together lines assigned to Troilus, Pandarus, Thersites, and Cressida from various scenes, rearranging them to create a "new" final moment. In doing so, Nunn's ending allowed these characters to once more vocalize their respective betrayals, fears, and anger. In this created moment,

Troilus confronted Cressida while she attempted to defend her actions; their encounter was positioned directly before Pandarus delivered his closing epilogue with Cressida on stage beside him.¹¹ The revised context in which the characters' lines are spoken generate meanings quite different from the unaltered text.

In crafting this new moment between the characters, Nunn created the opportunity to solve two potential "problems": a narrative problem and a social problem. First, the invented ending turned the attention back to the lovers and provided a conclusion to their love story. Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* is a play that leaves a lot of the story untold, especially in relation to the lovers; in particular, there is no resolution to their story. Cressida seems to believe Troilus is lost to her at the end of 5.2, but she still sends him a letter, showing that she has not quite given up all hope. Troilus tears up the letter, but feels emotionally distraught enough to seek out her new potential lover on the battlefield. To a viewer unfamiliar with the myth, this kind of intense emotion suggests at least the possibility for reconciliation. Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* and his *Romeo and Juliet* show just how easily love and hate collide and how they can be overcome. Tybalt's death almost comes between the two Verona lovers and Antony even threatens to kill Cleopatra after she has betrayed him by running from battle. Both of

¹¹ A few productions have had Cressida present at the end of the play, a way of reminding the audience of the main storyline and ensuring that the lovers' story is not eclipsed by the secondary plotline, the Trojan War. Michael Boyd's 1998 production of *Troilus and Cressida* at the Royal Shakespeare Company was one such production. Along with moving Pandarus's epilogue to earlier in the final act so Troilus's final speech ends the play, the production also had Cressida enter and watch Troilus speak. But even though she was present, this Cressida remained silent – still mediated by the men in the text who read her as a whore. Furthermore, while it brought the focus of the play strongly back to the two lovers, it did not provide any additional sense of closure. The textual problems surrounding the ending are explored in Roger Apfelbaum's *Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: Textual Problems and Performance Solutions*.

these sets of lovers have lines following their respective fall outs demonstrating their continuing love for one another. *Troilus and Cressida* ends before this potential for reconciliation can be explored.

The lovers' story is unfinished, of course, because it is only a small part of a larger narrative. There is no resolution to the story of *Troilus and Cressida*, but neither has the Trojan War ended. As David Daiches states,

the flavor of the play as a whole remains strange. Shakespeare presents an unfinished story — a story much more familiar to his contemporaries than that of Hamlet or Lear — whose end was already known to the Elizabethan audience. They knew what the fate of Troy finally was, and what happened at last to Achilles, Troilus and Cressida. It is as though Shakespeare has deliberately arrested time, to show the plans and expectations of men in a double perspective, first in the context of the moment and then in the larger context of past, present, and future. . . . *Troilus and Cressida* ends without a climax or a resolution: the true end, as Shakespeare's audience well knew, lay in the death of Troilus, the degeneration of Cressida, and the sack of Troy. (290–291)

Presumably, by ending the play midway through the story, Shakespeare not only assumes that his audience knows the ending, but, to a degree, he also implicitly supports the ending that the audience knows. That is to say, because Shakespeare makes no striking changes from the source material in terms of the larger Trojan War — Hector still dies, for instance — one might infer that the extended storyline of *Troilus and Cressida* will likewise play out according to literary tradition: Troilus will die in battle, and the “false Cressid” will die shamed and damned in the minds and hearts of all future lovers. However, since it avoids explicitly stating or showing this “ending,” the play resists

closure. Nunn's production dealt with this uncertainty by interpolating a conclusion to their story, forging a new ending from bits and pieces of the text. This new ending allows Cressida to face Troilus, and it gives her the chance to explain why her attentions have changed. As Roger Apfelbaum argues, "Without providing any neat resolutions, Nunn's final scene did offer some sense of closure that the play denies. Bringing the characters together allowed Cressida to offer some explanation for her actions to Troilus, and allowed Troilus to reject not just her letter, and not just Pandarus, but Cressida herself" (238).

The second, and perhaps more important problem that Nunn's new ending tackled was the unequal gender politics at work within the text, and this staging provided an opportunity to subvert them. Problematically, Cressida is a character often read in extremes: guilty or innocent, victim or perpetrator. Interpretation of Cressida — as either sympathetic victim or sexualized whore — has plagued literary analysis and performance interpretations. Both molds are generated by male figures within the play who interpret Cressida for the audience. As Grace Tiffany explains, "Cressida as wanton and Cressida as victim present two sides of the same interpretive coin: both notions result from and re-create the idea of Cressida as a creature formed by male perceptions and values; thus both notions, by privileging male determination of female identity, reinforce female subjectivity" (44). Cressida is constantly "read," mostly negatively, by the male figures in her life.

Not only is Cressida's story left unfinished by Shakespeare, but she becomes an increasingly mediated character; her voice is either stifled or she is voiced by the male characters in her life. This erasure occurs more and more as the play progresses, and Cressida is fully absent from the final scenes. There are gaps in the dialogue filled by

other characters' opinions just when Cressida seems potentially most compromised. Notably, these characters have already pre-determined her guilt. In her article on female silences, Christina Luckyj states that "Male, humanist discourse represents speech as human agency and subjectivity, and silence as erasure, negation, repression. In casual language the association between women and silence is almost always a pejorative one" (51). Cressida's silence — or lack of presence — at the end of the play is emblematic of the silencing of female characters in general. Luckyj, however, further argues that female silence can be reinterpreted not as a reproduction of male opinions, but as an exercise of power in itself (51–2), a rejection of the choices offered.

But Cressida's silencing is seemingly repressive since she can no longer defend herself to her world or the audience. Cressida does not simply refuse to answer (like Isabella from *Measure of Measure*, or Hermione in *A Winter's Tale*); she is not given the option to speak. Harvey Rovine argues that silent women in tragedies are often problematic:

the silent female characters are under the same imperatives of family, state, and love as their comic counterparts, but the nature of the tragic genre generally implies an unhappy resolution. . . . In tragedy the silence of a woman may not suggest consent . . . but often connotes fear, despair, or confusion. Whatever the particular meaning of a woman's silence, it is usually the result of her not having any other alternative . . . Very often silence is a condition forced upon women because the opposite alternative, speech, is not sufficient to express their deep feelings towards their family, state or husband. (41)

By creating a new moment in which Cressida is present in the play's closing scene, Nunn's ending offers to subvert the male narrative and empower Cressida by giving back

her voice and allowing her to speak for herself, unmediated by the males around her. Nunn's production thus attempts to create a feminist Cressida who, by the end of the play, can defend herself against Troilus's accusations. Before turning in more detail to this ending, however, I want first to consider Nunn's casting of Cressida and discuss Cressida's portrayal with particular reference to two key scenes — Acts 4.6 and 5.2. These scenes stage a number of the narrative "gaps" concerning Cressida, gaps that onstage characters fill with subjective interpretation, so shaping audience reception of Cressida's character.

To begin then with casting choices, one of the main ways the production sought to manage the play's problematic treatment of female sexuality was by shaping Cressida's character as witty and likeable, something other than simply a virgin or harlot. Sophie Okonedo played Cressida as playful and intelligent, confident and strong. Okonedo portrayed a modern and progressive Cressida who was sexual without being whorish. She was dressed in a virginal white costume at the play's opening, but the production by no means presented her as simply a chaste and modest girl. Rather, her manner held a hint of sexual flirtatiousness and a great deal of female empowerment, made more evident in the scenes and production choices to which I will turn in a moment.

One of the most notable casting choices about this production was that all the Greeks were white, while the Trojans were black. Despite this visual divide, the production made little to no comment on questions of race. Matt Wolf said of this production that "having made a presumably pointed casting decision, Nunn refuses to push racial buttons" ("Review: Troilus and Cressida"). That said, Okonedo's skin tone against the white dress ensured that she was visually striking from her first scene and, with her vibrant personality, she never let the attention waver from her. Perry

Tannenbaum noted that “The luminous Sophie Okonedo is fetching, spirited, and yet demure as Cressida, a walking enchantment” (“Troilus And Cressida”). Yet eventually, her abandonment by Troilus and her mistreatment by the Greeks causes this spirited woman to break. In his review of the production, Maxwell Cooter suggests that

the Cressida who emerges in this production is a truly tragic heroine — neither an arch schemer nor a wilful flirt. Rather, Okonedo’s performance conveys a confused young woman who, having lost her first lover, finds herself surrounded by lascivious men. She participates in Troilus and Pandarus’s final meeting, only to be shunned by her erstwhile lover and abandoned by her mortally sick uncle.

(Cooter, “Troilus & Cressida (NT)”)

There is no indication that Okonedo’s Cressida is promiscuous or that she sees Troilus as some kind of temporary prize. She is merely a woman who knows who and what she wants — Troilus — and pursues it until she finds herself in a situation she cannot comprehend. Ultimately, Nunn’s production shows how the rigid boundaries of the patriarchal system are set against her.

For Cressida, her strength against this system is tested in Act 4.6 (the “kissing in general” scene). Her reception at the Greek camp and her reaction to that reception are often the means by which an audience is invited to condemn or pity her. If the men are welcoming, and if Cressida seems to invite their flirtation and kisses, she is easily portrayed as the whore that Troilus condemns her as. If Cressida is unwilling to receive their attentions and they mistreat her, force her, or otherwise disrespect her, Cressida instead comes to seem a victim, the unwilling plaything of the Greek army. In Nunn’s production, although Okonedo’s Cressida managed to fight back to some extent, showing

her strength and endurance, she was still presented as a victim of the circumstances. As David Bevington and David Scott Kastan state,

What positive human value the play did find was focused on Sophie Okonedo's clever, sexy, spirited Cressida, who was betrayed by all the men around her. She was shocked at the decision to send her to the Greeks, but had the spirit and self-control mockingly to offer Ulysses her foot to kiss as the Greek generals disgustingly groped her, and, though she did give in to Diomedes, she did so in recognition that this was the only way to survive. (392–93)

Okonedo's Cressida was neither a willing participant nor a meek subservient female but a strong woman, and Ulysses' negative assessment of her in this scene as one of the "daughters of the game" was presented as largely due to his wounded pride.

Nunn's production did not shy away from the assault Cressida suffers at the hands of the Greeks in Act 4.6. This staging presented her with few options to escape future sexual harassment and there seemed a very real possibility that the abuse might escalate to gang rape. Robert Smallwood found that the racial divide between the Greeks and Trojans heightened this risk: "[Cressida's] arrival at the Greek camp, a solitary black girl surrounded by threatening white men, had something of gang rape about it, with Agamemnon's enforced kiss beginning a disturbing sequence in which she was mauled by one of them after another before finding the presence to mock Menelaus" (258). Furthermore, since she is a part of a prisoner exchange, Cressida cannot count on her lover to rescue her; he did not even give her the news himself that she was to be traded. As Barbara Heliodora C. de M. F. de Almeida states, "Troilus may be rather romantic and touching, but if we come to ultimate values he is not much better than his fellow-heroes: at length and romantically he defends the idea of not sending Helen back to

Menelaus again, because keeping her had become a ‘point of honour’; and yet he makes no effort whatever to keep by his side Cressida, who has no husband to go back to” (331). Troilus may have threatened Diomedes when the Greek showed interest in Cressida, yet he was not on hand to stop her from being sexually molested at the Greek camp. The fact that Troilus shows up later is immaterial as he does so alongside the very Greeks who physically assaulted her, and only with the intention of visiting her (or checking up on her), not of removing her from her attackers. Although Nunn’s Cressida is heartbroken over Troilus’s abandonment, she retains her mental acuity, fighting off the men with the only means left to her — her wits. Eventually, however, she realizes that it will not be enough to keep them away indefinitely.

Cressida’s treatment in Act 4.6 directly shapes interpretation of her decisions in Act 5.2 (the “watching scene”). This later scene in Nunn’s production showed an immense change in characterization. Okonedo’s Cressida of Act 5.2 was not the same Cressida presented in the play’s opening scene. As Matt Wolf suggests, “Realizing that the brutishness of the Greeks demands its own guileful, pragmatic response, Okonedo’s Cressida emerges all too fully as all things to men, at mournful cost to her own identity” (“Review: ‘Troilus and Cressida’”). Rather than wilt, Okonedo’s Cressida seemed to evolve, struggling to maintain autonomy without any clear path ahead. It is this change in Cressida which showcased Nunn’s critique of the patriarchal system. Cressida was forced to harden herself, to become an opportunist rather than a casualty of war. Whether Cressida sexually betrayed Troilus, or she was simply considering it, or was stringing Diomedes along to ensure protection from the rest of the camp, Nunn’s production clearly demonstrated that her personal safety required her to go to such lengths. Indeed, Cressida’s choice to pursue a relationship with Diomedes demonstrated not only the

destructive qualities of a male-dominated and limited system, but the restricted means through which Cressida could take action. As Michael Billington states, “Okonedo’s superb Cressida is clearly the product of a patriarchal society ... In such a society, the witty Cressida is forced to adopt the mask of a hesitant tease” (“Review: Troilus and Cressida” 15). In changing herself to survive this society, Cressida chooses to fight back rather than simply capitulate to the damsel-in-distress stereotype. Thus, Nunn’s production and its interpretation of Acts 4.6 and 5.2 seek “reclamation of Cressida as a genuine tragic character” (Billington, “Review: Troilus and Cressida” 15) through a feminist lens.

Cressida has a short monologue in the playtext that follows Diomedes’s exit from 5.2, a speech that she speaks aloud, half reproachfully and half rationalizing:

Troilus, farewell. One eye yet looks on thee,

But with my heart the other eye doth see.

Ah, poor our sex! This fault in us I find:

The error of our eye directs our mind.

What error leads must err. O then conclude:

Minds swayed by eyes are full of turpitude. (5.2.107–112)

To create a voice for Cressida in the production’s closing moments, Nunn cut all but the first two lines and relocated them to his new end. Cutting up this monologue dilutes the sight imagery which runs through the speech. Cressida mentions eyes four times within these six lines. Half of these occurrences are in the first two lines which were not moved with the final four. Cressida’s double gaze — referencing how she turns from Troilus to Diomedes — relates to her transformation from innocence to experience, both in terms of sexuality and love. Cutting apart this monologue removes the implication that Cressida

has learned a cruel lesson which, arguably, legitimates and rationalizes her actions. The decision to move the last four lines of Cressida's soliloquy out of Act 5.2 also leaves unstated for eight further scenes her explanation of her relationship with Diomedes. She simply says farewell to Troilus and asserts to the audience that her gaze has wandered. Without the conclusion to this monologue, Cressida's despair, and even her confusion are not readily made apparent and she seems to have far fewer regrets about switching her affection from Troilus to Diomedes. Furthermore, these are lines that Troilus is supposed to overhear as he judges her actions. While overhearing her does not seem to soften his opinion towards her, without them, his condemnation of her seems all the more plausible and acceptable. Cressida seems less overtly repentant, and thus Troilus is able to dismiss her more easily, suggesting "this is Diomed's Cressida" (5.2.137).

I want to turn now to Nunn's composite dialogue and the opportunity this production gives Cressida to voice her side of the story to Troilus. While Nunn's production restructures the play, it does not attempt to rewrite Shakespeare. Because each character's lines are imported from different places in the play, it seems easiest to lay out the new dialogue in its entirety. This exchange immediately follows Troilus's monologue in which he sends out the soldiers ("To Troy with comfort go / Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe" (5.11.3–31)). At this point, Pandarus and Cressida enter:

PAN: But hear you, hear you!

TRO: Hector is dead. there is no more to say.

CRE: Poor our sex! This fault in us I find:

The error of our eye directs our mind.

TRO: My love with words and errors still she feeds,

But edifies another with her deeds.

CRE: What error leads must err. O then conclude:

Minds swayed by eyes are full of turpitude.

TRO: Come, wind, to wind: there turn and change together.

PAN: A goodly medicine for my aching bones.

TRO: Hence, broker-lackey! [Strikes him] Ignominy and shame

Pursue thy life, and live aye with thy name.

Exit

THER: After this, the vengeance on the whole camp — or rather, the Neapolitan bone-ache, for that methinks is the curse dependent on those that war for a placket. [Kicks Pandarus] Now the dry serpigo on the subject, and war and lechery confound all.

Exit (National Theatre, *Troilus and Cressida*, 1999)

Pandarus's epilogue followed these lines. By creating an entirely new ending, Nunn's resketching altered the love story between Troilus and Cressida, giving the play a strong sense of closure where previously none existed.

However, while Nunn's new ending allows Cressida to speak for herself, the closure that the text provides also solidifies Cressida's guilt and reasserts the other characters' sexist opinions of her. The feminist image of Cressida developed throughout the production was undone. These lines now functioned to assert her betrayal of Troilus and force her to take full culpability for an act which the production otherwise suggested was her only choice. This added section does not provide her with more agency, but less. The production takes Cressida's suggestive and inconclusive words that are voiced before any transgression has taken place and repositions them in dialogue with Troilus's judgement of her guilt. Cressida is no longer apologizing for considering adultery — she

is guilty of it. In moving these lines, Nunn's production provides closure to an unended story, but closes the narrative in a way that damns Cressida and twists into fact what had previously been only uncertainties and assumptions. Instead of empowering Cressida by restoring to her a voice, Nunn's production removes the ambiguity surrounding her betrayal and provides a final encounter in which Troilus can demean her to her face.

While the rest of the production sought to portray the strength and determination of Cressida, these feminist politics are undone precisely because the open qualities of the text are sacrificed for narrative certainty. There is no proof within the text that Cressida betrays Troilus. This is an assumption based on the male characters' reading of otherwise ambiguous scenes and moments. There are gaps in the narrative, whispered lines and unheard conversations to which the audience has no direct access. The audience must rely on the words of others to interpret the material in front of them. It is these unknown elements of her character which initially allowed Nunn to present a strong, feminist image of Cressida, since, for most of the play, Cressida's motivations and her thoughts are not directly stated. In her discussion of Cressida's erasure from the play, Tiffany argues that any idea of Cressida is built upon an interpretation of her: "Cressida's participation [in the kissing scene] is not physical — Shakespeare's text, which keeps her silent throughout the men's kisses, gives us no reason to believe she is physically receptive, especially when her subsequent lines reiterate her *refusal* to kiss" (50). Believing Cressida acts promiscuously during the "kissing in general" scene relies heavily on Ulysses' interpretation of her as one of the "daughters of the game" (4.6.64). But by situating her betrayal of Troilus as a certainty by repositioning some of Cressida's final speech to the production's closing moments, Nunn's production, seemingly

inadvertently, supports Ulysses' and Troilus's reading of her as promiscuous and unfaithful.

The fact that "Cressida-as-whore" is shaped by onstage interpretation of her behaviour is made clearer in Act 5.2's "watching scene." In her article on whispers and asides in *Troilus and Cressida*, Nova Myhill has argued that, like the kind of "proof" that causes Othello to believe Desdemona is false, Troilus relies on a particular reading of the evidence rather than actually receiving evidence itself: "[Troilus's] conviction that Cressida is false to him [is] based on his own version of ocular proof — the sight of his sleeve in Diomedes' hand. But the fact of the transfer of the sleeve from Cressida to Diomedes is curiously unhelpful as an indicator of her motives" (166). Myhill's argument that Cressida's motives cannot be assumed from her interaction with Diomedes not only goes against the interpretations of the other spectators of the scene — Troilus, Ulysses, and Thersites — but also against the critical tradition surrounding Shakespeare's Cressida. In various ways, the audience is invited to partake in the assumption that Cressida must be false. But, as Myhill makes quite clear, although Cressida's position as a spectacle "marks her vulnerability to interpretation, the inaudibility of the words she three times gives to Diomedes alone emphasizes that interpretation is not the same thing as knowledge" (166). Indeed, competing perspectives on the character are possible through this process of interpretation. The text shows "Cressida the unfaithful" as construed by the male characters in the play. However it also portrays "Cressida the unknown" since the gaps that exist — the whispers and moments when the onstage spectators speak over top of what Diomedes and Cressida might be saying — are built into this section of the play by Shakespeare.

Very little is known about Cressida's motivations in Act 5.2. Her whispers to Diomedes early on — interpreted as lewd but the contents unheard — inform the viewer that the heart of the conversation is ultimately unknown. It is never explicitly said what Cressida intends to do (although it is heavily implied) or, perhaps even more importantly, whether she expects to follow through with her promise. Shakespeare never shows us proof of her guilt and Troilus ignores that she might be lying, deceiving, or stalling. He completely disregards her multiple instances of hesitation throughout the scene. David F. McCandless, like Myhill, remarks on just how little of this scene is actually known:

[Cressida] eventually promises to honor her original promise to sleep with [Diomedes]. But the play does not dramatize or even substantiate the fulfillment of that promise, and therefore does not dramatize or substantiate her betrayal ... The betrayal is deferred to an altogether uncertain future. Perhaps ... she will once again stall and equivocate; perhaps she will put Diomedes off indefinitely ... Perhaps she will persevere in constancy while awaiting one of the visitations that Troilus promised her (4.4.66–7, 72–74) or, failing that, simply await the end of the war.

Of course, none of these scenarios squares with Cressida's notorious identity. But ... how much authority should that identity be granted, particularly when Shakespeare declines to ratify it unequivocally? (153)

McCandless's point that Shakespeare is the driving force behind Cressida's obscurity is important when considering the implications of her silence and of these gaps. While she is condemned by Troilus (and perhaps by the author and audience), the evidence against her is circumstantial at best. J. Gavin Paul states that "Cressida's letter ... — its contents forever unknown, its pieces strewn about the stage and likely further scattered and

stomped in the final battle scenes — is beyond ‘recollection’ in the fullest sense of the word. Attempting to ‘re-collect’ or ‘re-member’ the letter — put its pieces back together and know its meaning — is a tantalizing, though ultimately impossible task” (150). The act of reading Cressida is equally impossible. The audience is given only pieces of her, some damning, some suggestive, but none conclusive. This slipperiness allows her actual guilt to remain indeterminate, while simultaneously keeping the plot of *Troilus and Cressida* in line with the familiar legend through other characters’ interpretations of Cressida. By suppressing the presence of Cressida at the end of the play, I argue that Shakespeare’s text ultimately leaves her guilt as an unknown entity — something that is determined only through individual interpretation.

Shakespeare’s “feminist” defense of Cressida depends, however, precisely on what is not said, what is not brought to a firm resolution. I argue that Cressida must be silenced, and remain silent in order to have even the possibility of innocence. Once she speaks, this character must follow the pre-established historical and legendary template for Cressida and admit her guilt. Herein lies the problem with Nunn’s reclamation of Cressida’s voice. Nunn’s clever stitching at the end shuts down the possibilities for, and alternative perspectives on, Cressida that Shakespeare left open through unheard lines and even an unread letter. The guilt of Shakespeare’s Cressida may be unknown to us, but the guilt of Nunn’s Cressida is not. Nunn, a male director using a male playwright’s lines, reverts to a conventional perception of this character rather than follow through with a feminist Cressida. Cressida is no longer rationalizing to herself a choice she has not fully made, but apologizing after the fact for her sexual promiscuity. Troilus’s response, since he refers to her in the third person, seems to reject her even more fully than in the unadapted version: “My love with words and errors still she feeds, / But

edifies another with her deeds” (5.3.113–14). The lack of harmony in the lines echoes the disjointed quality of the relationships between these four individuals. The dialogue feels broken, and there is a shattered quality to the characters’ interaction. For Troilus, Cressida is not even worthy of direct address. The actors spoke their lines while looking in opposite directions. They stared off into the distance as though conversing from different planes of existence. Cressida clearly knows that Troilus is there since she placed her hand on his shoulder. Troilus, equally aware of her gesture, broke contact and stormed away, leaving her and the stage. The broken contact shatters the interaction, but instead of creating an effect of ambiguity as in Shakespeare’s text, it brings Cressida’s actions, and the condemnation of her actions, more sharply into view.

If the new invented dialogue confirmed Cressida’s guilt, her presence throughout Pandarus’s epilogue only served to amplify the effect and further damn Cressida. After Troilus and Thersites exit offstage, Pandarus delivered his epilogue, addressing not only the audience but Cressida as well. She became the target of his speech, the body that would house all sexual diseases, his lines seemingly referring to her past and future sexual promiscuity. This idea was strengthened by Pandarus’s final attempts to pander her. As she stood, shell-shocked from Troilus’s rejection, Pandarus tried to fix her clothing, her hair, and her makeup. His final act was to turn her into a painted woman for a future conquest, little heeding the devastation or heartbreak on her face. Jami Rogers felt that Nunn’s ending implied that Cressida was guilty in a way that was not in the playtext:

Pandarus addressed his final speech — a passage dealing with prostitutes and sexual diseases — to Cressida, which can be read as making the implication that she is a bawd for and not a victim of men blatantly apparent. The inference from

the stage picture was that bawdry brings ruin, as Nunn invented a new visual language for the Madonna/whore paradigm with his usage of Cressida. (67)

Pandarus left the stage, seemingly believing Cressida would follow, but she remained, slowly turning in place where Troilus rejected her, and staring into the darkness, perhaps searching for her lover, for answers, or even her lost self. Bevington and Kastan state that “the play ended, through some substantial textual adjustment, with Cressida, in the dark, disoriented and alone” (393). But the image was more than simply an abandoned Cressida. Nunn presented a broken Cressida, one who seemed more dead than alive. Indeed, Nicholas de Jongh suggests she is like “some ghostly icon of lost desire” (“Troilus And Cressida — Review”). Cressida’s final presence not only solidifies the shift in focus from the usual Trojan War images to the lost lovers, to a “tragic Cressida,” but it reminds the audience that Cressida has gone from being a bright, sexy, vivacious girl to a discarded and damaged woman. The production attempted to align itself with feminist politics by situating Cressida as a strong, decisive woman who embraces her sexuality in a positive way, but the manipulation of the final moments to provide a powerful, lingering visual image — placing Cressida centre stage as the tragic heart of the play — backfired and fed into conservative values which equate sexual promiscuity with condemnation and uncleanness.

As with Doran’s production of *Titus Andronicus*, resketching the lines dramatically changed the perception of the ending. The focus of the Trojan War was superseded for that of the individuals — in this case the lovers — whose faith and trust in one another was destroyed. In the end, both of these performances demonstrate how a reordering of the text can provide a radically different understanding of a production, especially when the effect is situated at the end of the play. Although all performances

are edited in some form, edits at the end of performance — where the final moments of the text and the production meet — have a heightened potential to radically shift the overall meaning of the play.

3.3 Misogyny at High Noon: Stitching Equality onto *The Taming of the Shrew*

The final production I want to discuss regarding edited endings is The Houston Shakespeare Festival's 2004 production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Unlike the other two productions I have analyzed which were produced by major international theatre companies — the National Theatre and the Market Theatre — The Houston Shakespeare Festival caters to a local audience base. The smaller Houston company's *Shrew* could anticipate its audience more concretely. Thus, my examination of this particular performance will also look more directly at how this production was conceptualized with a local audience in mind.

This production was held at the Miller Outdoor Theatre in Houston, Texas from July 31–August 14, 2004 and was directed by Sidney Berger.¹² Berger's *Shrew* added an epilogue to present a particular interpretation of the male-female relationships at the centre of this play, softening the text's misogyny.¹³ Berger's production, taken as a whole, suggested a way to redeem *Shrew* for modern audiences. While the adapted

12 The Houston Shakespeare Festival is associated with the University of Houston's theatre department and has consistently produced two Shakespeare plays each summer in repertory since 1975.

13 This new epilogue is documented by Elizabeth Klett in her review of the play published in *Shakespeare Bulletin* 23.1 (2005): 149-151.

ending is the most striking of the emendations made for this production, its significance was contextualized by other directorial choices. Before turning to the final lines, I want to first examine the relocation of the play to a more “modern” time, the emphasis on the love match between the two leads, and the focus on physical comedy in order to consider more broadly the production’s gender politics.

Berger’s production followed a particular trend in modern *Shrew* productions, shifting the time and setting of the world of the play, and turning *The Taming of the Shrew* into a Wild West comedy of the late 1800s. Productions which move *Shrew* to this exact time period and location include one at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in 2003 directed by Miles Potter, and another at the Folger Shakespeare Library in 2013, directed by Aaron Posner. Posner argues that “the Old West” seems “a helpful or logical setting for this complex little comedy,” because in this world, “Rules were continually being rewritten”: “[L]aw was still ... flexible. There was a sense of possibility and limitless potential, hence, it attracted an interested kind of individual. We can imagine it as an exciting, dynamic, invigorating environment ... It is a place that seems to catch our collective imaginations” (“Director’s Notes: *The Taming of the Shrew*”). According to the Houston Shakespeare Festival associate producer Linus Craig, relocating the play offered a means of mitigating the problematic aspects of *Shrew* since the Wild West setting frames the play’s challenging gender politics. Thus, Kate “trades her obedience for protection in an untamed world” (Craig qtd in Ramey, “East meets West at the Houston Shakespeare Festival”). Berger’s production attempted to find a place where the characters’ misogynistic attitudes could be excused, while also bringing the material a little closer to the present audience’s time and place.

The Wild West setting seemed especially appropriate in Texas. Berger used a setting that had a particular relevance for the local audience, albeit offering a romanticised version of the past. In order to accommodate his Western setting, Berger altered all of the place names:

Petruchio was a gentleman of Kansas City, Lucentio resolved to disguise himself as “some Oklahoman ... or meaner man of Texas” (a reference that prompted cheers from the audience), and Vincentio reminded Tranio that his father is “a mule-skinner in Oklahoma.” Lito and Cambio were said to be from the Northeast — the former from Boston, and the latter had been “studying up there at Yale.”

The Pedant, who was dressed in academic robes, was also from Boston, which set up a distinct contrast between the learned East and the ‘Wild’ West. (Klett 150)

Performing the play in its original time and setting — either in the England of Shakespeare’s time, or Renaissance Italy where the action of the play takes place — would not provide the same kind of nostalgia that the Wild West production could for Houston audiences. Capitalizing on tropes of the Western genre — the anti-hero, the side-kick, and the hardened woman — downplayed the play’s controversial taming techniques, and justified Kate’s submissive speech at the end. Even the title holds a different perspective when viewed through this time period and culture. When considered against the untamed environment of the West in the late 1800s, the word “taming” suggests a particular project of acculturation, a move towards civilization from disorder and the rough, feral land. To tame the West was a progressive move, one which might require extreme measures. The Wild West must be tamed, and so must Kate. Of course, the personification of nature as a wild entity — and the conflation of the female Katherine with that of Nature — imposes a different kind of misogynistic flavour on an

already problematic play. Oppressive gender relations and humans' oppressive attitudes towards Nature become mutually supportive, seemingly "commonsense" regimes.

The Taming of the Shrew has often been considered a play which is problematic for modern audiences. Margaret Jane Kidnie argues that

The problem (and beauty) of this early comedy is the way it remains open to endless, even conflicting, interpretation, yet prompts in many spectators and readers an intense ideological investment in gender roles, both as played out in Shakespeare's time and our own. For those who wish to control audience reception of the action — whether as a positive affirmation of patriarchal systems of power or as feminist resistance to them — *The Taming of the Shrew* is bound to frustrate. ("The Taming of the Shrew" 158).

As in many of Shakespeare's plays, there are lines, scenes, and characters that are at odds with modern values of society. However, unlike other situations where strategic cutting might be employed to mitigate these problems, the issues with *The Taming of the Shrew* are built fairly solidly into the plot of the play. As Ann Thompson remarks, "The relationship between Petruchio and Katherina is obviously the heart of the problem; in no other Shakespearean comedy does a single relationship dominate the play so thoroughly" (25). Miriam Gilbert outlines how these problems have affected contemporary stagings:

[*Shrew* is] a highly popular play and also one which raises problems for a contemporary audience. Even in 1978, the *Guardian's* Michael Billington asked "whether there is any reason to revive a play that seems totally offensive to our age and society" — a view that echoes George Bernard Shaw's description in 1897 of the final scene as "altogether disgusting to modern sensibility." Indeed, the program for the RSC's 2003 *Shrew* featured two pages quoting these and

similar remarks, arranged around a central panel with PROBLEM PLAY?
 stretched out across them. (320)

Yet despite the fact that modern readings of the play can easily interpret the relationship as presenting the archaic cruelty of Petruchio torturing a strong-willed woman, it is a popular choice to stage this play as a comedy rather than a problem play. Modern productions thus tend to play Petruchio as less of a gold-digger and more of a man who falls in love. Berger's production was no exception. But while the production focused on "the possibility of marriage as a rich, shared sanity" ("The Taming of the Shrew Program"), it also made sure that the unequal power relations were justified through the production's time period. That is to say, as Kate comes to love her husband, it seems "natural" given the location and time period for Kate to assume a more compliant role.

Much of the play's controversy results from Petruchio's self-proclaimed taming of Katherine, the techniques he uses, and, ultimately, how this process changes or destroys her. In 1925, E.K. Chambers lamented Katherine's abuse and suggested that "you do not need her final sermon, with the symbolic placing of her head [sic] beneath the foot of the genial ruffian who has subdued her, to point the obsolete and degrading moral" (40). The very title of the play demeans Katherine to the position of an animal, a shrew, and places the tamer, Petruchio, as her dominant master. Kate's transformation is especially visible in those scenes in which she capitulates to Petruchio's demands: the sun/moon debate (4.5) and her final monologue on the importance of female submission (5.2).

Some productions choose to perform these moments satirically to mitigate the effect of her capitulation.¹⁴ In Berger's production, however, Celeste Roberts (Kate) submitted to Petruchio's demands in these key scenes deliberately and pointedly. She was not a broken individual who responded out of fear, but nor did she comply in jest. In showing that Kate could play with rather than against Petruchio, the production demonstrated the subtle difference between being controlled and being tamed. But it was this first submission during the sun/moon debate, and Petruchio's satisfaction with her responses, which alerted Kate to her own growing attraction towards Petruchio: "while talking to Vincentio, Petruchio put his arm around her for the first time, and her face reflected both surprise and pleasure" (Klett 150). The production thus complicated the demonstration of power relations by showing Kate choosing to play with (rather than simply giving in to) Petruchio, but also showing the gratification she experiences by following her husband's commands.

Performances which depict Katherine and Petruchio as attracted to one another often portray Petruchio as highly charismatic. In his essay on the topic, Richard A. Burt argues that it is through charisma that the "problem" of Kate is dealt with: "Petruchio's charismatic authority ultimately disguises the fact that his taming process is a coercive, social practice designed to discipline, control, and subordinate Kate" (299). Petruchio's

¹⁴ Elizabeth Taylor's Kate in the 1967 film production directed by Franco Zeffirelli was clearly aware that the sun was not the moon. Yet she played along since her husband demanded that she make outlandish public claims. Taylor's Kate had learned to abide by Petruchio's word, but she was not broken. Other productions go even further, having Kate teach as well as learn. In the final scene of a 1990 production in New York directed by A. J. Antoon, Tracy Ullman put her hand beneath Petruchio's foot (played by Morgan Freeman). After a brief moment of apparent submission, she grabbed his foot and pulled him off his feet, undercutting the entirety of the speech and the supposition that she could (or should) be tamed.

charisma is what wins over Kate — and presumably the audience. Berger’s Petruchio clearly followed this established template. Elizabeth Klett notes that “Justin Doran’s energetic, likeable performance ensured that Petruchio’s taming seemed neither violent nor sadistic” (150). Lee Williams confirms that “Lanky and loud, the man brings a tornado of brash wit to the stage every time he saunters out. Landing somewhere between bronco rider and Western sheriff, Doran’s Petruchio delivers his jokes with a sexy strut as he tries to conquer a wild horse of a woman” (“The Houston Shakespeare Festival Shakes Things Up”). Doran’s Petruchio winning over Roberts’ Kate through charisma solidified the romance between the two. It allowed Kate to submit because of love, rather than his (potentially) abusive taming techniques. The romantic angle does not disregard the male-centric power relations — Kate still gives in to Petruchio — but attempts to soften them. Kate chooses obedience rather than being forced into it. But Berger’s period setting encouraged one to believe that a successful marriage, in this location and time period, relied on a patriarchal structure. Kate’s relinquishing of her autonomy for a satisfying relationship, therefore, seemed in line with the time period’s understanding of love.

Portraying a love match in this comedy relies heavily on a version of Kate who is not only genuinely attracted to Petruchio, but who is hiding her true self beneath a sharp tongue and a quick hand. In this production, Kate’s shrewishness was largely due to jealousy of her younger, prettier sister, who is more beloved by their father.¹⁵ Roberts’ Kate made a show of attacking her sister, lassoing Bianca into submission. The act shows

¹⁵ Again, this is a common choice for modern productions since textual evidence supports this reading (this sibling dynamic was apparent, for example, in the Stratford Festival’s 2003 staging of *Shrew*). Kate accuses her father of such favouritism in 2.1.31-36.

her talent as a cowgirl — a quality that Petruchio and a Texan audience might admire — but, more importantly, it shows how she treats others. She treats Bianca like an animal (a cow or horse), which is how Petruchio treats her: as a lesser being and as property. Berger's production thus suggests that Kate's taming is a form of education, rather than punishment. Indeed, by portraying Kate as just as violent as Petruchio, the production rationalizes Petruchio's more aggressive taming techniques by suggesting that he is forced to fight fire with fire. The "mock" depiction of violence demonstrates, however, that the director was conscious of (and attempting to address) the play's controversies. A simple relocation, it seems, was not enough in itself to fully justify, from a modern perspective, the violence that is committed upon Kate.

This production also sacrificed character depth in an attempt to sidestep further the potential problems that could occur in a play which textually presents spousal violence: "Just as the set looked deliberately flat, like a cardboard cutout of a Western town, many of the characterizations were intentionally one-dimensional" (Klett 150). By situating the characters and the set as one-dimensional, Berger created an atmosphere that shied away from deep analysis, insinuating there was no serious meaning to the violent behaviour between characters: "The wooing scene between Petruchio and Kate in 2.1 was also broadly comic and full of sexual innuendo. The slapstick between the two characters was often cartoonish: when Kate tried to pummel him, he held her away at arm's length as she swung her fists ineffectually at him" (Klett 150). This kind of slapstick humour attempts to undercut the abusive situations represented in the play. Thus, the production moved away from the deeper implications of violence in the production to ensure that Kate's final speech concerning female obedience is not interpreted as indoctrination bred from abuse.

Despite the intensity of the violence and the sexist values espoused throughout the play, a production's treatment of power relations is often tied to Kate's final monologue. These are the lines which prove Kate has been tamed — regardless of whether the production presents this as positive or negative — or prove she has resisted taming, either in cahoots with her husband (perhaps for the wager money) or in defiance of him. As Elizabeth Schafer notes in her *Shakespeare in Production* edition,

The challenge of Katherina's long last speech, where she speaks in favour of the submission of wives to their husbands, is essentially that of tone. Performers have a wide range of choices here: is Katherina ironic, sincere, angry, exhibitionist, lobotomised, in love, masochistic, feminist, indulgent, threatening, or does she just have her eyes on the cash, which 5.2.128 draws to her attention? Historically Katherinas have moved from unambiguous submission (particularly when the final Sly scenes weren't played), to a whole range of subversive and complex readings (34).

While modern productions have attempted to nuance the speech into a variety of complex readings, the speech still comes down to the question of a perception of sincerity. Does Kate believe what she is saying or not? If Kate seems to support what she espouses unreservedly, and the production has been played as a comedy, then often the production also seems to support the patriarchal and misogynistic ideals that Kate has learned to parrot.

In Berger's interpretation, Kate's headstrong character was not completely eradicated by the end of the production — she even challenged the Widow to a gunfight in the final scene. However, Kate's monologue was still portrayed as perfectly sincere: "Celeste Roberts played Kate's speech of submission to Petruchio in the final scene

completely seriously. When she described a wayward wife as ‘froward, peevish, sullen, sour,’ she was acknowledging her past bad behavior and apologizing for it publicly. She performed the speech with dignity and with pride at her own transformation” (Klett 150–151). Portraying Kate’s speech as earnest and making her grateful for her new attitude attempt to legitimize the means by which that transformation was achieved. That is to say, not only is Kate’s transformation speech is a kind of apology to her husband, father, and the general populace whom she wronged, but it also serves as a way for the audience to forgive Petruchio for his actions towards her. He has changed her, she agrees it was for the best, and so he can now lessen his own domineering role. When Roberts’ Kate kneeled to place her hand beneath her husband’s foot, Doran’s Petruchio quickly grabbed her hand before it touched the floor and knelt to her as well, kissing her hand. This production allowed Petruchio (and the audience) to see that Kate had fully changed, but also ensured that Petruchio stopped her before she debased herself completely. His actions emphasized his desire for some measure of equality in their relationship in addition to “peace ... and love, and quiet life” (5.2.112). But, more than this, it allowed Kate’s speech to be performed in its entirety while still attempting to establish husband and wife as companions, although Petruchio clearly remained the dominant partner. The sincerity of this scene might have been more problematic if the rest of the production had not taken such pains to legitimize the misogyny as a “product of the time period.” However, with the shift in location, as well as the slapstick humour, the sincerity of Kate’s speech was in line with the production’s staging of systemic gender inequality.

In the playtext, Kate’s speech does not end the play; ten lines of dialogue from other characters follow her monologue. These ten lines wrap up with a male voice, provide a repetition of Petruchio’s earlier demand to “kiss me, Kate” (5.2.184), and alert

the audience and the wedding guests that the couple will finally go to bed — implying both sleep and sex. Notably, however, this production did not hurry the lovers off to bed. Instead, the group began to dance. This in itself is not an unusual ending to a Shakespearean production. Many productions add dancing or music to the final scene, especially ones, like *Shrew*, that end in marriage. However, the added music both forestalled the characters' exit to their marriage beds and provided the opportunity to further stress the importance of equality over patriarchy. It allowed the audience to focus on ideas like partnership — a necessity in dance — and social harmony. It showed the two lovers working together as a unit. But midway through the dance, Kate and Petruchio stopped to add some additional and unexpected lines, addressing the audience with an epilogue.

The Taming of the Shrew has an Induction featuring Christopher Sly, but this character has no further lines after 1.1. The anonymous *Taming of A Shrew*, however, sustains the frame narrative through to the end. It is not uncommon for productions using Shakespeare's opening Induction to add all or part of *A Shrew*'s ending. Without the addition of this material, the frame is left open and unresolved. Berger's production, like many others, simply cut the induction altogether. Instead, spectators were introduced to the world of the play by means of an opening dumbshow featuring saloon girls and drunken cowboys who exited a tavern brawling, firing their guns, laughing and drinking. With the Sly frame removed, there was no expectation of a closing frame.

Epilogues are privileged over the rest of the text; by definition they are metatheatrical. They announce to the audience the play's intentions and a performance's desire to please. Above all, epilogues encourage the audience to respond to the work that was just viewed. The epilogue in Berger's production was introduced, not from *The*

Taming of A Shrew, but from John Fletcher's sequel, *The Woman's Prize, or the Tamer Tamed*. Berger adding a part of Fletcher's text allowed the qualities, morals, and lessons of that play to also be overlaid onto this production. "Kate and Petruchio interrupted the audience" (Klett 151) in order to deliver Fletcher's epilogue:

The tamer's tamed, but so as nor the men
 Can find one just cause to complain of, when
 They fitly do consider in their lives
 They should not reign as tyrants o'er their wives;
 Nor can the women from this precedent
 Insult or triumph, it being aptly meant
 To teach both sexes due equality
 And, as they stand bound, to love mutually.
 If this effect, arising from a cause
 Well laid and grounded, may deserve applause,
 We something more than hope our honest ends
 Will keep the men, and women too, our friends. (Epilogue.1–12)

This added text explicitly comments on the rest of the play. It condemns Petruchio's previous actions, while also excusing them since, as this epilogue suggests, he has learned from his old ways. The epilogue seems to imply that Shakespeare's action is problematic, precisely to the extent that it fails to correspond to the process of taming that spectators have watched unfold. These lines are necessary to point to the moral of equality in marriage because otherwise it would not be available to spectators as a likely interpretation of the taming of Katherine. The epilogue attempts to conform to modern

values, even though, interestingly enough, the words used to adjust the comedy to modern expectations are from Shakespeare's own period.

Fletcher's *The Tamer Tamed* is notable not only for reviving another playwright's characters, but for its commentary on the original. In her introduction to the text, Lucy Munro writes that the play is "both a sequel to and an imitation of Shakespeare's, in which the younger dramatist rewrites his predecessor's narrative and interrogates its assumptions" (ix). While Fletcher wrote his play in a different century than Shakespeare, there are only twenty-odd years between the two: *The Taming of the Shrew* was written in the early 1590s and *The Tamer Tamed* was written between 1610 and 1612. As Barry Gaines and Margaret Maurer point out, "There is evidence that Shakespeare's [*Shrew*] was a popular commodity or that it was performed at court. . . . That *The Tamer Tamed* is so explicitly a response to Shakespeare's *Shrew* also supports the early popularity of Shakespeare's *Shrew*" (xviii). Gaines and Maurer furthermore argue that the relatively short time between the two plays, as well as the reprinting of *A Shrew* in 1596 and 1609 — which in itself may be a testament to the interest generated by Shakespeare's *Shrew* — demonstrates "not only that the general idea of taming one's spouse was of continual interest but also that there were audiences and readers who appreciated a variety of perspectives on the matter" (xviii–xix). Gaines and Maurer trace the interest in these three plays through to the Restoration where they note that Shakespeare's *Shrew* was one of the first performed after the theatres were re-opened. Notably, the inclusion of this epilogue in Berger's production not only hints at the controversy that is still present in staging *The Taming of the Shrew* but harkens back to the potential controversy the play provided in its own day. Molly Smith argues that "Fletcher goes beyond simply reversing earlier themes and instead, takes Shakespeare to task for his inadequate representation of

gender conflicts” (72). By including Fletcher, Berger’s production admits to the problems in the play but insists that Petruchio has learned his lesson.

The themes of the epilogue complement and support Berger’s presentation of a love match between Kate and Petruchio. This would be especially true for spectators who are unaware that the epilogue does not normally follow the play, and as Klett explains, “This epilogue was not identified as Fletcher’s in either the performance or the program notes” (151). The epilogue tells the audience that Petruchio has been tamed and learned to no longer act as a tyrant toward his wife. The wife referred to in this epilogue, as written by Fletcher, is actually Petruchio’s second wife, Maria, but the audience, making sense of this speech in its new theatrical context, would inevitably gloss the woman in the speech as Kate. The production has pressed the idea of a harmonious relationship between the two leads, and so the announcement that Petruchio and presumably the other husbands (in following his lead), will no longer “reign as tyrants o’er their wives” may seem to offer narrative progression and closure, corresponding with Petruchio’s decision to raise Kate’s hand up rather than tread upon it. The ending speech then suggests that Petruchio has learned the value of an equal partner and will treat Kate accordingly. Kate, in turn, has discovered the importance of positive interactions, and will teach the women not to “insult or triumph” as was her style earlier in the production. The epilogue can thus be seen as a way to smooth out the gender problems of which the production was obviously aware. But, as I will explain in a moment, it also held the potential to aggravate the staging’s politics.

Epilogues are flexible and performative. Tiffany Stern speculates, with specific reference to *Henry IV, Part 2*, that different epilogues may have been written for different events:

It could be that we have ... two alternate public theatre endings: one epilogue leading to a jig, and one leading to a prayer, perhaps representing two options — secular or religious — for performance; or one of the endings is for touring production and one for fixed performance; or one represents a first performance and one a revival; or one provides a censored text and another gives the replacement. (127)

By documenting how plays may have ended “differently at court and in the public theatre” (122), Stern demonstrates not only the point and purpose of epilogues within performance but how they can be modified or augmented to present a particular message to a certain audience. At their core, epilogues are added endings that are situated within a particular circumstance in order to extend a specific notion of the play. For Stern, epilogues are a part of the story of the *performance*; they are a part of the story being lived by Shakespeare’s audience, rather than strictly a part of the story of the play.¹⁶

Thus, epilogues might be best understood as projecting a message for a particular production rather than for the play itself. This is an apt model through which to interpret the additional text heard by spectators at the end of the 2004 Houston *Shrew*. This particular epilogue was chosen in order to relieve the gender conflicts within this play,

16 Indeed, Juliet Dusinberre in “Pancakes and a Date for ‘As You like It’” has suggested that a small document – the “Stanford Epilogue” – with nine verse lines, might have been a separate epilogue for *As You Like It*, even if “it doesn’t begin to approach the panache and audacity of Rosalind’s final address to the audience” (397). Dusinberre infers that “there could have been more than one epilogue to *As You Like It* – that the Stanford epilogue was written for a court performance of the play and specifically for the Shrovetide performance at Richmond on 20 February 1599” (397). While Dusinberre’s argument holds significant weight, especially in light of Stern’s evidence, both of these scholars are actually pointing to a larger idea that epilogues are a separate entity from the playtext itself and that they should be considered mainly in terms of their performance aspects.

perhaps anticipating potential backlash against a production which plays Kate's final monologue "straight." However, for a production that spent so much time dismissing and diminishing the gender problems within the play, this final epilogue was a marked departure from the previous neutralizing of gender concerns. In fact, not only does this ending reassert the problems with the chauvinistic attitude that Petruchio boasted for most of the performance, it demonstrates exactly what is wrong with this comedy to begin with, from a modern standpoint.

First, despite claiming that the "tamer's tamed," this production focused only on Kate's transformation. While Petruchio's wild heart might have been tamed in learning to love Kate, Berger's "Wild West" staging is founded on gender inequality. There is no real reason for the audience to believe Petruchio has learned his lesson. Nothing negative has happened to Petruchio (unlike in Fletcher's play). This missing section — the rest of Fletcher's sequel — which focuses on Petruchio learning how to respond to women in a more temperate manner — is required to demonstrate the painful repercussions which result from wife-taming. Without this lesson it seems possible Petruchio will eventually revert to his old ways of taming and domineering if Kate ever chooses to express her own opinions again. The epilogue tells us he is reformed, rather than the action actually showing the taming process; thus, the transformation seems unearned. Ultimately, the epilogue does not mesh with the lighthearted tongue-in-cheek perspective on patriarchy that the rest of the play adopts and, in failing to do so, it draws attention back to the way in which the play presents a chauvinistic attitude towards gender equality.

Furthermore, the epilogue requests the audience to applaud the play for being "well laid and grounded" and for "teach[ing] both sexes due equality." But if the audience is to interpret the model in front of them as representing an equal partnership,

then a number of problems present themselves, mainly because equality was not quite what the production presented. It clearly showed lovers who were well-matched, well-suited, but certainly not quite equal. This is first demonstrated through Petruchio's earlier misogynistic boasts (2.1.198; 3.3.101–104; 4.1.190–1). Although these lines were presented as comedic and a product of the time period, they chafe against an ending which suddenly insists the production has demonstrated equal gender rights. But the problems with the earlier production choices are made most clear due to the seeming sincerity of Kate's final monologue. The very fact that Kate's final speech of submission is delivered in earnest shows that genuine gender equality is absent. Certainly Petruchio picks her off the ground, but an equally-minded Kate could not possibly feel that women "are bound to serve, love and obey" (5.2.168) or feel the need to prostrate herself at all. The claim that equality has been achieved simply because Petruchio allows his wife to stand rather than be tread upon is problematic and thoroughly weakens the positive perspective on gender equality one might try to take away from the addition of Fletcher's epilogue.

The production's added epilogue thus seriously complicates the other production choices. It points to a deep preoccupation with the gender roles presented within the play and to the enduring controversy surrounding the plot's violence. Supplementing the ending attempts to make amends for what cannot be edited out. However, stitching Fletcher's epilogue to Shakespeare's comedy results in contrary and opposing images within Berger's staging. The rest of the production suggested that misogyny should be laughed at, or is a product of the time period. But the introduction of Fletcher's epilogue insists that Petruchio's misogynistic actions should instead have been judged and denounced rather than enjoyed. That is, once the epilogue presents the production as

promoting gender equality rather than staging a Wild West comedy premised on female inequality, one becomes pointedly aware of what Kate has had to sacrifice for her “true love” — respect, dignity, autonomy. In trying to be progressive but still utilizing the text (or texts) from the early modern period, Berger’s *Shrew* ends up reinforcing the status quo — Kate sacrifices herself because she loves Petruchio. The epilogue may change the ending, but it has longer-reaching implications when read back across the rest of the production that challenge any seemingly progressive stance.

3.4 Shakespearean Collages

This dissertation argues that final lines by no means constitute the end of a production. The narrative carries on through images, sounds, or even elaborate jigs. However, the final lines still hold a particular resonance. When modified, they mark the end of the narrative in a way that separates the words of the playwright from the goals and objectives of the director. The words are the link to the storyteller, while the production holds the key to the story. The relationship between the lines in the text and the end of a production’s narrative is nuanced. It speaks to a production’s power to control its own ending to attain a particular social or political reading. However, it also speaks to the fact that textual endings may retain a measure of influence over the interpretation of the production. This is especially true for these productions — Doran’s *Titus Andronicus*, Nunn’s *Troilus and Cressida*, and Berger’s *The Taming of the Shrew* — which did not remove, so much as relocate, the textual ending. For a privileged audience member aware of the more usual Shakespearean ending, this creates a moment of tension where the play continues on past its traditional end.

In Doran's *Titus Andronicus*, the message of unity on which the production focused by moving Marcus's lines to the end is in direct conflict with the revenge motif found in Lucius's lines that usually end the play. In Doran's production, Shakespeare's original ending was delivered just before the new ending. The old ending therefore still holds the potential to act as an end marker for spectators who recognize these lines as Shakespeare's closing lines. Its themes of revenge thus remain present in the modified ending even as Marcus attempts to focus on healing and the idea of re-forging Rome. Original endings, in these circumstances, have the potential to complicate modified endings.

A similar occurrence of haunting might potentially transpire in the other two productions. Underneath the encounter that ends Nunn's *Troilus and Cressida* is an echo of another Cressida — one might call her Shakespeare's Cressida — whose sexual acts are unknown to the audience. Cressida's lines, particularly in Nunn's new theatrical moment, are subject to a kind of doubling for certain audience members: one eye looks on this exchange while the other eye views a ghosting of this exchange in which Cressida's guilt remains a potentiality, not a certainty.

Finally, in Berger's *The Taming of the Shrew*, the lines that end Shakespeare's play are also present and unaltered. The "interruption" of that ending, with Fletcher's epilogue, attempts to amend the controversy of Kate's final speech, but ultimately this character's insistence on inequality just moments before has the potential to cast a shadow upon the new finale. For some audience members, Shakespeare's ending may linger in this newly created space. The program for Berger's *Shrew* hints at this initiative by pointing out that "Using the title of a play as an anagram, the result is *The woman's the fighter*" ("Taming of the Shrew Program"). Pointing out hidden meanings discovered

through textual rearrangement can open the play to new ideas. However, an anagram — like the textual arrangements found in these three productions — is limited to the text out of which it is formed, and the rearranged words and lines still have the potential to snap back into their original formation. Thus, because these particular productions do not cut, but overwrite, the ending, they open the possibility for multiple endings to occur at once, both the production's and the text's.

The directors of each of these plays reordered, adapted, and supplemented Shakespeare's text. In resketching these endings, each director attempted to support meaningful and relevant themes for their particular audiences. Regardless of the outcome of each production, which, I argue, potentially reinforced the racial tensions and patriarchal viewpoints espoused in the plays themselves, these modifications may instigate a kind of rumination on the whole production. In essence, changing the ending changed something about the play as a whole. As Susan Bennett succinctly states,

Unlike the printed text, a theatrical performance is available for its audience only in a fixed time period. Furthermore, the event is not a finished product in the same way as a novel or poem. It is an interactive process, which relies on the presence of spectators to achieve its effects. A performance is, of course, unlike a printed work, always open to immediate and public acceptance, modification, or rejection by those people it addresses. (67–8)

Thus, as the audience engages with the performance, it changes, and in turn any modifications made to the performance change an audience's reception of the performance. It is a relationship that exists in a state of constant flux.

The final lines in a Shakespearean play are structured to anticipate and announce the ending through phrasing and intonation. Thus, productions which replace the ending

with additional text, such as those I have discussed above, create a moment which signals that the play is both over and not over. These productions provide an opportunity for an audience to look deeper into the play's new ending and interpret this moment back across the rest of the production to understand how these new or misplaced lines affect the entire narrative. In essence, this moment provides a space where new interpretations are possible. Resketched endings allow productions to comment on particular themes or messages, political or social, simply by allowing the audience to hear the text in a different order or with another author's (or director's) added dialogue and interpretation. The effects of this, as I have shown above, exponentially influence how audiences may interpret the rest of the production. This is especially true for audience members who are aware that modifications have been made. Experiments in film and psychology have shown that film clips shown to a viewer in different sequences will produce different sensations, emotions, and even a different understanding of the narrative. Cutting and pasting Shakespeare — and Fletcher's sequel — provides a similar result. But it is, of course, only when we reach the end that we can fully understand, criticize, and internalize the order of events. It is only when we reach the end, no matter where it is placed or how it is rewritten, that we can truly grasp the sense of that end.

4 Affective Audiences: Ending Images in Three of Des McAnuff's Shakespearean Productions at the Stratford Festival

From cheering to jeering, the curtain call is a designated forum for audience members to expressly state their judgement of a performance. Indeed, it is deemed the audience's responsibility to applaud at the end of the performance, as long as they felt the production was worth recognizing. Scholars tracing the history of applause, such as Baz Kershaw, have remarked on a distinct trend which has emerged in regards to the curtain call. Kershaw specifically yearns for the return of unruly audiences, having noticed that the modern, better-behaved audiences are losing some element of their own authority by silencing their voices and clapping politely (Kershaw 143; 150). Kershaw observes that on some level the audience is merely applauding themselves: the "standing ovation becomes an orgasm of self-congratulation for money so brilliantly spent; the desultory clap becomes an increasingly rare event, as it is an admission of income wasted" (Kershaw 144). Applauding the purchaser (i.e. the spectator) rather than the product, according to Kershaw, disconnects the audience from the experience.

Despite Kershaw's cynicism regarding an audience's response to a performance's closing minutes, the emotional resonance of the final moment is intrinsically important to the audience's sense of closure. Furthermore, applauding, cheering, or giving a standing ovation marks the event. The continuation of applause, either because the audience refuses to give up their own role in the performance or are simply extending the curtain call, indicates a refusal to let the performance die. It is within the power of the audience to determine when the production actually ends; the longer the applause, the longer the curtain call. As long as the curtain call continues, some element of the performance is

still progressing or at least lingering. Generally, the actors and audience take cues from one another. The audience will often provide applause for the length of the set choreography until every actor has bowed at least once individually and (often) all together as a company.

Modern curtain calls have set blocking. The choreography is designed to focus on both individual performance and to recognize the company as a whole while, one would imagine, prolonging accolades from the audience. Since there is a connection between the actor and character, the audience's applause continues the narrative of the play. As Kershaw states, "Applause thus celebrates the loss — the lack — that it tries, impossibly, to mark; for it can never, of course, recover the events it appreciates, except perhaps as an encore that itself intensifies the immediate irrecoverability of the rest of the show" (Kershaw 135). However, even marking the moment continues the narrative that the action of applause cannot quite recover. It paradoxically maintains that which has already ended. And while something is continuing, it can provide new information, disrupt old material, or simply enhance what has just been seen. Thus, the ending moments, including what occurs during or after the curtain call, provide an affective experience for the audience and enable (or disrupt) a sense of closure.

There are three particular productions from The Stratford Festival in Stratford, Ontario that I want to discuss. These three productions, *The Tempest* (2010), *Twelfth Night* (2011), and *Henry V* (2012), each create affective experiences in and around the curtain call. These shows were the final three Shakespearean works directed by Des McAnuff during his tenure as the Stratford Festival's Artistic Director from 2008–2012. In each closing moment, these Shakespearean productions attempt to induce an emotional response from the audience through the inclusion of a visual or auditory stimulus. These

images/sounds endeavour to stimulate the audience's senses and evoke an auditory reaction (gasp, sigh, laughter) to the final image/sound, threading that emotion into the curtain call dynamic; they provide an affective experience which is specifically designed to "move" the audience, to shock or surprise them. Erin Hurley, in *Theatre & Feeling*, suggests that, "doing things with feeling is the primary reason for theatre's existence. Furthermore, feeling carries theatre's communicated meanings and informs its significance to theatre-goers" (4). Certainly, this seems to have been a priority for McAnuff.

The sort of emotional stimulation McAnuff's productions provided might be linked to the larger purpose of growing the Festival's audience attendance. Adrian Kear suggests that "The language of theatre operates ... as a metonymic extension of the rhetoric of seduction — a formalised system for the generation of affect and the circulation of emotion" (106). McAnuff's productions are not merely a way to ensure that the audience enjoys that particular play, but function as a means of creating a relationship between an audience member and that particular theatre, director, or style. Indeed, Kear further argues that

To be 'moved' by a piece, to be shocked, stimulated, exhilarated, amused or horrified is, in effect, to have a 'gut reaction' to it: a visceral as well as intellectual experience ... Although such experiences are infrequent — and intermittent — they serve to reacquaint the spectator with the phenomenal possibilities of theatre, to renew our belief in its enduring matter and import, to reignite our love affair with it. (106–7)

Of course, these are not irregular reactions. Directors want to connect emotionally with their audience, draw them further in, and create a symbiotic relationship where audiences

are fed experiences which in turn prompt their continued patronage of the theatre. However, the Shakespeare plays which McAnuff chooses to direct contain weighty material. These particular Shakespearean plays have controversial elements which might detract from any straightforward staging of “feel-good” theatre.¹⁷ Thus, these works cannot simply be labelled as “popular” theatre. McAnuff’s productions betray a tension between a desire to trigger powerful audience reactions and a desire for political and cultural engagements with Shakespeare’s drama that are perhaps less readily accessible, emotionally. It is possible that McAnuff chose these plays in order to demonstrate his ability to experiment with politically edgy material. A 2010 interview with *Macleans* suggests that being “typecast” might have been a concern and consideration for him as Artistic Director:

His Stratford post may save him from being typecast by the popularity of *Jersey Boys*: “When you do a successful musical ... suddenly it’s like that’s the only thing you’ve done.” And since big Broadway shows — including McAnuff’s own short-lived revival of *Guys and Dolls* — haven’t done well lately, the real future in theatre might be in what he calls “setting the bar high on classical work.” (Weinman, “Can He Get Stratford to New York?”)

Indeed, the struggle for “cultural achievement rather than commercial success” is something that McAnuff was quite aware of:

McAnuff himself says the struggle for all Stratford artistic directors has been to maintain creativity inside an institution that relies so heavily on ticket sales. ... “It

¹⁷ While all Shakespeare plays present unique challenges, some are more prone to the elements which McAnuff is relying on – especially *Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

is very hard to be earning 70 to 80 per cent at the box office as an arts institution,” McAnuff says. “... That is the real struggle at Stratford: to find imaginative ways to take chances while earning the money at the box office.”

The tension between serious art and serious business has always existed at Stratford. (Posner and Taylor “Applause (mostly) for Stratford artistic director Des McAnuff”)

It was notably important for McAnuff’s shows to be commercially successful, while also achieving political or cultural significance. This tension perhaps sheds light on his shaping of the production endings discussed in this chapter.

As already argued in this dissertation, endings and their affective qualities are not isolated events, but must be laid back across the rest of the production in order to fully interrogate their effect. Each production’s ending also comments — whether deliberately or not — on the social and political questions that are relevant to both the audience’s present perception of each play and to the larger questions important to each play’s history. These lingering moments, and the stimulus they provide, tend to culminate in what feels like an “answer” to the challenges presented by each play. As I will show, McAnuff’s stagings could either deflect, or tackle head-on, these challenges.

4.1 Of Feathers and Freedom: Des McAnuff’s 2010 Production of *The Tempest*

The Tempest holds a mythical place in the Shakespeare canon. King Lear may provide the oldest lead male role for any Shakespearean actor, but, in the last century, it is often Prospero that marks an actor’s final role and farewell to the stage. *The Tempest* speaks romantically about the end of an era, even as it discusses new forms of global

exploration. However, for some, it primarily references the end of Shakespeare's life as a playwright. When actors take their leave from the stage by playing Prospero, they are often mimicking the erroneous idea that *The Tempest* was Shakespeare's final play. This myth suggests that the epilogue was Shakespeare's own curtain call from playwrighting; thus, the role is a popular means of signalling an actor's last production. Of course, this legend has since been proven inaccurate. While *The Tempest* was one of his last plays, Shakespeare wrote *Henry VIII*, as well as possibly the lost *Cardenio* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, after he penned *The Tempest*. But the idea that this play represents a finale, a kind of lifetime achievement, has remained a part of the play's mythos. McAnuff makes vague reference to this idea in his director's notes for his 2010 production: "This was a brave new world indeed — and had Shakespeare lived another two decades, heaven only knows where he might have taken us" (McAnuff, "A Mirror for the Human Soul" 6). McAnuff builds into his notes the feeling of conclusion and the loss of genius. If it is not a play that represents the end, it is certainly a play that evokes the sense of an ending.

There were a lot of expectations placed on McAnuff's *Tempest*, starring Christopher Plummer, specifically regarding its ending. This is perhaps why McAnuff created such an affective image to conclude this production. The preceding two productions of this play were directed by the previous Artistic Director, Richard Monette. Both the 1999 production and its 2005 remount starred William Hutt. The latter staging was specifically remounted as an opportunity to honour Hutt's acting career and to provide Hutt with an appropriate send-off from the stage. As John Colburn of the *Toronto Sun* stated in his 2005 review, "In the end, when all is put to right in his world and Hutt as Prospero begs his audience for release with the words, 'Let your indulgences set me free,' the Stratford audience gave it willingly — passionately — in a spontaneous ovation

that filled the theatre with the magical memories wrought by a single actor, blessed with both a gift and a passion for his craft” (Colburn “Stratford Festival review: The *Tempest*”). This 2005 production achieved great acclaim and it seemed a fitting farewell to one of Stratford’s most illustrious and prolific actors. Scarcely a half decade later, many who attended McAnuff’s *Tempest* could still vividly recall Hutt requesting release from his audience.

Hutt’s final performance in the role was frequently commented upon in media discussions leading up to Plummer’s performance as Prospero. It was also touched on in many of the reviews for the 2010 production. McAnuff himself did not shy away from remarking on the short time period that existed between the two productions. However, he rationalized his choice based on the availability of great actors, rather than a limited repertoire: “There are very few actors who can play this part, and we’ll have had two of them here within a decade: first William Hutt and now Christopher Plummer” (qtd in “Stratford celebrates Plummer in ‘The *Tempest*’”).

With the numerous media comparisons, and with Monette and Hutt both recently deceased (Hutt in 2007 and Monette in 2008), McAnuff’s *Tempest* seemed haunted by this previous staging. However, unlike Hutt, Plummer had no intention of retiring from the stage; McAnuff’s ending needed a different kind of culmination to set it apart from Monette’s work, and yet one that could induce a similarly strong reaction. McAnuff endeavoured to achieve this goal with the recurrent image of a single feather.

Since the 1960s, there has been a renewed interest in *The Tempest*. This is not only because it is a play about exploration and magic, but also due to the imperialist and colonialist themes which run throughout the work. Shankar Raman notes that scholarship on *The Tempest* is “an impressive array of interpretations shaped by decolonisation and

the rise of postcolonial studies that has established something akin to a new orthodoxy: colonialism is understood as not just *a* but *the* discursive context through which the play acquires its meaning” (52). It is this angle of the play which would provide fertile ground for McAnuff’s *Tempest* to explore.

It is from this perspective, I argue, that the production’s final image of a single feather forms its meaning. Technically, the added moment which occurs at the end of this production is quite simple. As Prospero finishes his closing monologue to the audience, a single feather floats down from the catwalk to rest on the stage, and the stage lights fade to black. The image is intrinsically beautiful, a feather gently weaving its way to the ground, but earlier staging choices gave this stage property, often held and used by both Ariel and Prospero, additional layers of meaning. The feather signified an undefined connection between Prospero and his servant Ariel, and, ultimately, it attempted to embody a sense of closure. The final visual image provides a retrospective view that makes visible the relationship between the ending and the rest of the performance. This particular ending confirmed the themes of freedom within the text. However, in doing so, it also revisited the harsher aspects of slavery with which the feather was also connected, despite seemingly trying to resist this association. This production demonstrates the competing narratives at the Stratford Festival. The Festival wants to present a positive experience for its audience while also tackling the elements within these works which could be construed as adding value to the Canadian cultural sphere and the conversations surrounding Shakespearean scholarship. However, attempting to pursue both narratives within one production can form tension since these narratives often pursue different emotional goals — especially with a play like *The Tempest*. Thus, the feather represented both freedom and slavery, power and submissiveness. The relationship between what the

production attempted to accomplish and attempted to resist was made more evident through the evolution of the feather's meanings over the course of rehearsal.

The feather, from the production's inception, was evidently considered one of the most important props. The stage manager's promptbook contains an entire page called the "Feather Tracking Document." It is aptly named since the purpose of this page is to outline concretely where the feather is supposed to be throughout the performance: when it would appear to the audience, and when it would disappear. Originally, the feather was supposed to appear and disappear a total of seven times in the production: six times before the intermission, and once after intermission. This changed by the time the production was staged. The video-recorded production used the feather five times, including the ending, but the positioning of some appearances had slightly shifted by a few lines.¹⁸ While I will discuss how the feather was used in the final performances — including the recorded version — I also want to analyze a few of the moments that were originally envisioned to include the feather. A theatrical run is an organic creature; modifications during the run affect the production as a whole. Furthermore, these moments demonstrate how the director and set designer imagined the feather would be used and understood. These ideas linger even though the actual choices changed. I argue that the alterations in the feather's use may indicate reconsideration on behalf of the creative team concerning the slavery subtext. The modifications suggest an attempt to

¹⁸ I am not including the feathers on the harpy wings as one of the feather's appearances. Ariel does not have the feather in her hands at this moment and no single feather stands out from the rest of the wings. However, the feather is certainly evoked with these magnificent wings and I would argue that the presence of Ariel's harpy form is granted to her because she was given the feather to use while controlling the events on the island.

make the master-slave dynamic less overt, minimizing the political implications in order to focus on a more positive affective experience.

While slavery is a prominent aspect of the text and, as a consequence, present within the production, most of the post-colonial dynamic in this Stratford production was focused on Caliban. The production attempted to portray Ariel as a child-like helper, shying away from Ariel's actual position as an indentured servant. The conditions of Ariel's servitude might have been left further behind had McAnuff not refocused on the feather at the end. The feather is an object of power between Prospero and Ariel, but although it was modified to symbolize friendship and love, it also demonstrates Prospero's ownership of Ariel.

Of the two master-slave relationships in *The Tempest*, Prospero and Caliban, and Prospero and Ariel, the latter is often performed as the more benign relationship.¹⁹ Reviews of McAnuff's production comment that the master-servant dynamic between Plummer and Julyana Soelistyo (Ariel) was familial, making their communications more akin to father-daughter interactions rather than simply a benevolent master and his obedient slave (Sragow, "A Terrific 'Tempest'"). Notably, McAnuff's Ariel was decidedly female, not just cross-dressed. This was made clear when a line was modified to say, "Ariel and all her quality" rather than "his." The gender switch strengthens the

19 Some scholars speculate that the textual relationship between Ariel and Prospero is generally more benign than that of Prospero and Caliban. Tommy Lee Lott goes so far as to suggest Ariel is more like a servant than slave, albeit one in bondage, although he hesitates to suggest that this difference in categorization suggests that Prospero's treatment is any better towards Ariel (101-2). Derek Cohen, on the other hand, agrees that the treatment of Ariel is different than that of Caliban, but just as calculated: "Prospero's apparently affectionate or benign treatment of Ariel is among the means he uses to motivate his sprite-slave to virtuoso levels of performance" (47).

“father-daughter” motif important to the rest of the production. It softened Ariel by making her pixie-like. Notwithstanding his age, Plummer has a commanding figure and Soelistyo’s Ariel was exceptionally petite by comparison. Soelistyo’s tiny size made her seem child-like in action and appearance.

The details of their relationship directly relate to the feather’s interpretation. The production portrays Ariel as a kind of daughter with whom Prospero can revel in the magic side of his persona. There is a playfulness between them concerning magic that Prospero does not share, for example, with his actual daughter, Miranda; McAnuff’s production makes it clear that this Prospero shares something unique with Ariel, something that is theirs alone. Prospero uses Ariel to create a number of illusions and tricks akin to those he performs himself:

Thou and thy meaner fellows your last service
 Did worthily perform, and I must use you
 In such another trick. Go bring the rabble,
 O’er whom I give thee power, here to this place.
 Incite them to quick motion (4.1.35–39).

Prospero earlier refers to Ariel as his “tricksy spirit.” However, the fondness between the two characters in this production does not detract from the fact that their language is still that of a master and his slave. The power dynamic between the two does not desist even after Ariel capitulates to Prospero’s control after being threatened. In Act 1.2, Prospero reminds Ariel of her earlier imprisonment by Sycorax and threatens to re-imprison Ariel if she disobeys him. Prospero points out that Ariel refused to serve Sycorax because Ariel was “too delicate / To act [Sycorax’s] earthy and abhorred commands” (1.2.274–275), and yet threatens to do the same to her if she should refuse his orders, regardless of her

own feelings. This is not to suggest that Ariel finds Prospero's orders abhorrent; she objects on principle since she desires her freedom. Yet Prospero's own response suggests he is not concerned with why she is objecting, only that she is.

In McAnuff's production, the threatening scene was powerfully staged. As Prospero reminded Ariel of her imprisonment at the hands of Sycorax, Ariel was literally petrified on stage. Her body was frozen in fear at the possibility that Prospero might incarcerate her in a tree again, and she seemed to be reliving her prior imprisonment. Her face clearly showed pain, and strange lights, reminiscent of tree patterns, twisted over her face. It was unclear if the light display was simply to show her memory of her imprisonment, or if Prospero was actually working magic on her and beginning the incantations which would bind her back into a tree, helpless and alone once again. Regardless, the effect on Ariel was severe, and the pain of her previous captivity was evident. The harsh reminder seemed unjustified considering Ariel merely wished to be free after serving Prospero for so long. Prospero's display of power belied his benevolent manner; he was a controlling master who would accept nothing less than full obedience from, and dominance over, his slaves.

The feather prop first appears in this scene. Originally, in the feather-tracking document, the feather was intended to be revealed at the line, "Come away, servant, come!" (1.2.188). This instance was removed before the production's final run and video recording, but it demonstrates how the feather's power was envisioned. Using the feather to call Ariel suggests the feather is a controlling agent, a means of Prospero contacting Ariel and perhaps even forcing her to appear before him. The feather was supposed to go away on the following line, when Ariel and Prospero both laugh, slightly diffusing the master-slave dynamic and Prospero's order for Ariel to appear. The changes to this

moment might indicate that the feather's appearance was too brief to be effective and the production team wanted a more involved and prolonged first appearance.

In the recorded version, the feather does not appear until Ariel responds to Prospero's question, "Hast thou, spirit, / Performed to point the tempest that I bade thee?" (1.2.194–195). Ariel then relates the tale of the storm:

And for the rest o'th' fleet,
 Which I dispersed, they all have met again,
 And are upon the Mediterranean float
 Bound sadly home for Naples,
 Supposing that they saw the King's ship wrecked,
 And his great person perish. (1.2.233–237)

At this moment, Ariel hands Prospero a single white feather, black tipped, thrust from a hidden location in her costume. Her feather discharged, and her tale related, she turns to walk away. The new use of the feather, moved from the very opening lines of their exchange is curious. Ariel hands Prospero the feather as a form of closure (rather than greeting), a confirmation that she has completed her task and intends to terminate their interactions. Then she turns to walk away, leaving the feather behind. Forfeiting the feather suggests that Ariel believes there is no more toil for her to accomplish and that she can give up this source of power in return for her freedom. Even though the rest of the production continues to connect Ariel with the feather, suggesting that it is innately tied to her, it seems here that she would rather give the feather up and leave Prospero's service, than serve with that power available to her.

Although Ariel tries to leave, she is told she must stay a slave, so she attempts to remind Prospero of his promise to free her:

Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains,
 Let me remember thee what thou hast promised
 Which is not yet performed me. (1.2.243-245)

After setting the stage for Prospero's revenge, Ariel clearly states that she has not been granted what was promised: her freedom. Prospero's side of the contract is unfulfilled. In McAnuff's production, her act of insubordination is portrayed as though it were a temper tantrum. Ariel crosses her arms in front of her, stomps her foot and seems very much a child. Indeed, this is the vein in which Prospero seems to treat her, and his, "How now? Moody? / What is't thou canst demand?" (1.2.245-5) is stated as though he is a tolerant parent chastising his child for acting untoward. If not for the torturous moment when Ariel relives her imprisonment, and the feather which is now in Prospero's control, the scene might have continued along these lines of spoiled child and indulgent father. However, for the next 100 or so lines, Prospero brandishes the feather, twisting it in his fingers, pointing with it, and ultimately using it as a kind of wand. The feather is still visible at Prospero's phrase, "In a cloven pine," which the feather-tracking document marks as the prop's second occurrence. Its threatening aspect would have been more prevalent had the feather first appeared at this particular moment. Instead, the feather appeared throughout the entire speech in which Ariel challenges Prospero and is threatened as a result. This change makes the feather an object of undefined power, albeit one connected to Ariel's servitude.

At one point in the rehearsal process, the feather was to disappear (or go "away") at an added line. Ariel's states "I thank thee, master" (1.2.295) and, in McAnuff's production, Prospero's echoes Ariel's words. This added repetition was originally marked as the feather's cue to disappear. Ariel's line is both a mollification to the perceived

threat — that Prospero will actually re-imprison her in the abhorred pine — as well as genuine appreciation for freeing her from the prison in which she was trapped by Sycorax. “I thank thee master” represents her recognition of the act he performed as well as recognition of the power he has over her. The tone of Ariel’s line in the text seems to lack irony, and, in McAnuff’s production, her gratitude was certainly performed as genuine. As such, the repetition is an interesting choice. Prospero repeats Ariel’s line in a playful or mocking tone, drawing attention to it. His repetition may have been envisioned as teasing rather than scornful, but moments like this demonstrate that there is still a master-slave dynamic at the core of their rapport. He can tease her or mock her while she cannot even disagree with him. Thus, intending to remove the feather at “I thank thee master” was perhaps Prospero’s response to Ariel’s apology/concession. It was a moment of submission for Ariel for she ceases to fight for her freedom and instead becomes once more Prospero’s slave. Ariel mollifies Prospero and he, in turn, removes the threatening instrument. The original intention involved the feather acting more purely like a weapon, something controlling Ariel, rather than an item that Ariel can also use to enhance her own power.

In the recorded production, the feather remains visible throughout their interaction in this scene. It is still visible a few lines later at Ariel’s full apology when Prospero hands over the feather to Ariel, ordering her to do more work:

Ariel: Pardon, master.

I will be correspondent to command,

And do my spiriting gently.

Prospero: Do so, and after two days

I will discharge thee. (1.2.298–302)

Ariel takes the feather from Prospero while stating quite sincerely, “That’s my noble master!” (1.2.302). She then prances around with the feather. There are two ways to interpret her happiness; neither is mutually exclusive. She could be leaping in excitement over the prospect of performing further magic and of continuing to help Prospero, following the earlier child-like attitude she presented, or she may be acting like a beaten creature suddenly patted on its head by its master. Because her excitement follows so suddenly after she was willing to leave Prospero, and because of the threat that Prospero just held over her, I would argue that, despite the playful relationship between the two throughout the production, both interpretations are equally visible to the audience in this moment.

But Prospero returning the feather to Ariel complicates what the feather might represent. She takes it offstage in order to “do [her] spiring gently” (1.2.300), so it would seem that Prospero is giving Ariel the power to perform her next task. The previous scene showed that the feather is related to Ariel’s servitude and is an aspect of the master-slave dynamic, but the specifics are quite vague. Regardless, in the feather-tracking document and the performance itself, the appearance or disappearance of the feather coincides with aspects of control, either when Prospero is giving a command to Ariel to perform some specific task, or as a means of seeking Ariel’s attention.

In a pre-circulated conference paper on the Stratford Festival archives at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America (SAA), Jessica Riley discusses the particular lines chosen for the appearance and disappearance of the feather and how these might be analyzed by the audience:

What if the feather prop registered as a more sinister symbol of Prospero’s mastery over Ariel? According to the Tracking document, the feather’s

disappearance coincides in at least the first [three] instances with some sign of Ariel's submission ... Thus it is possible to imagine the feather as a source of Prospero's power, brandished as a threat and retracted when his mastery has been affirmed ... What, then, if we imagine that the feather's power to enforce Ariel's obedience is not a consequence of the feather's intrinsic magic but rather of the relationship of Ariel to the feather itself? Might not the feather belong to Ariel, a key to the sprite's freedom? (Riley 2–3)

Riley's hypotheses demonstrate that there is a darker element to the feather made manifest through the master-slave dynamic. The second appearance of the feather occurs a few lines later and heightens the object's magical properties. Ariel turns into the feather, or at least is completely invisible except for the feather. Instead of following the stage direction to enter, "like a water-nymph," Ariel takes on the guise of a dancing feather in the air, which Prospero laughs to look on:

Prospero: Fine apparition! My quaint Ariel,

Hark in thine ear.

Ariel: My lord, it shall be done. (1.2.320–321)

Modifying Ariel's form from water nymph to feather not only supports the image of Ariel as a creature of the air, but strengthens the argument that the feather is an actual part of Ariel's powers, one which Prospero controls. If Ariel can turn into a feather only by possessing the feather, and if the feather is an intrinsic part of her being — as an air element — then when Prospero controls the feather, it acts as an equivalent to shackles.

The feather appears once more before the intermission in the recorded version of the production a little later in Act 1.2. Ariel lures Ferdinand to Miranda with singing, Prospero then praises his sprite: "At the first sight / They have changed eyes. — Delicate

Ariel, / I'll set thee free for this" (1.2.444–446). Ariel is then visible standing far above the stage. She had been perched above the stage while singing but it is only at these lines of praise from Prospero that the feather becomes visible in her hand. Again, the feather represents a kind of bondage as Prospero's promise of freedom is connected to its appearance. The final two appearances of the feather occur at the very end of the play. When releasing Ariel from his service, Prospero hands her the feather, granting her freedom. The last appearance of the feather occurs after the final lines of the play are spoken, as it falls delicately from the theatre's rafters. Both of these moments will be discussed in more detail momentarily.

There are a few clues in the production that indicate the feather might specifically belong to Ariel rather than simply act as an object Prospero uses. As mentioned before, Ariel is often described as airy, light, and even as a bird by Caliban. Furthermore, in this production, she has the ability to become invisible and to fly once she has the feather. Ariel also turns into a harpy later on in the play. In McAnuff's production, her wingspan was an impressive display; the length was twice her body size. Because her two transformations occur when Ariel possesses the feather, it stands to reason that Prospero's control of the feather might limit Ariel's power while also binding her to Prospero.

Technically, there is only one mention of a feather in the play, and it occurs during Caliban's entrance speech:

As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed
 With raven's feather from unwholesome fen
 Drop on you both! A southwest blow on ye,
 And blister you all o'er! (1.2.324–327)

In McAnuff's production, it is not made explicit that Sycorax's feather has any connection to Ariel's. Certainly Ariel's feather (largely white) is not a raven's feather, but Caliban's lines suggest that feathers may be connected to the kind of magic that both Sycorax and Prospero practise. Both Sycorax and Prospero use feathers in their incantations. Noticeably, Prospero's threat to imprison Ariel was accompanied by a feather, and Caliban's recollection of his mother paints a similar picture. Although they differ in colour, the feathers point out the similarity of the two magi. The cruelty of Sycorax is connected to her feather. Prospero's use of a feather shows his own power and the darker elements to which it alludes.

After the power struggle between master and servant in 1.2, McAnuff's production cut many of the lines which showed Prospero ordering Ariel about, but not his many promises of freedom. For instance, Prospero has an early aside to Ariel in which he says, "Thou shalt be as free / As mountain winds" (1.2.502–503), but the production cuts his following caveat, "but then exactly do / All points of my command" (1.2.503–504). While the effect is not enough to fully divorce their relationship of its master-slave connotations, it reinforces the idea of freedom. Robert Blacker, dramaturge for the Festival, writes in the programme that freedom is a core element of the play: "the conflict between master and servant and the elusive vision of freedom resound throughout *The Tempest* right down to the last word of the play: 'free.' We hear it right from the opening scenes" (Blacker 4). In order to connect Ariel's freedom to the play's final words, the production has to insistently remind the audience that Ariel is in Prospero's thrall, even while it tries to shift their relationship to parent-child rather than master-slave.

While the feather-tracking document lists other opportunities for the feather to appear (not marked as high priority), all of these other appearances were eventually cut.

Instead, two different moments involving the feather took their place, both at the end of the staging. Prospero gives Ariel one last command to create gentle winds for the ships to sail home, and then frees her: “My Ariel, chick, / That is thy charge. Then to the elements / Be free, and fare thou well” (5.1.320–322). On the word “free,” Prospero pulls the feather from inside his cloak, and gives it to Ariel, returning her freedom and power, and fully releasing her. Ariel scampers into a boat and disappears. Thus, the feather given to Ariel at this moment is an indication of her liberation and a way for her full power to be returned to her. Simultaneously, by freeing her with the feather Prospero acknowledges both his previous ownership of her and his control over her powers.

Once Prospero is alone on stage, he begins his epilogue. The final speech alludes to a different master-slave dynamic, one between the audience and the actors. In this way, Prospero is as much a slave as Ariel. He needs to be unshackled by the audience in a manner similar to his freeing of Ariel and he relies on audience affect in order to achieve this goal. This moment works because the theatre encourages the transmission of emotions. Helen Nicholson states that “the theatre is a very good place to spread emotions, as actors are intent on them passing on and audiences expect to be infected. Often theatre happens in confined spaces, making emotions easier to catch” (20). In this case, it is applause which frees Prospero. To stimulate this applause, the final appearance of the feather was crucial. The feather dropping from the ceiling at Prospero’s final line, “Let your indulgence set me free” (Epilogue.20), reflects back on the idea that the audience can “free” him with applause, just as Prospero “freed” Ariel by giving her the feather.

Connecting the production’s slavery motif with Prospero’s closing-speech request for freedom destabilizes a potential post-colonial reading. Prospero has been a master all

along and here he seems to be usurped in that position by the audience. In this context, it is unclear what kind of freedom Prospero is asking for. There is certainly a hold that the audience has over Prospero. They must applaud in order for the production to end. But there is a form of death motif also suggested. As the characters become the actors, the characters themselves cease to exist. Along with the fanciful notion that this was Shakespeare's last play, the notion of freedom evokes an idea of being released from this life. The connection to death is also present in the feather itself. While the feather floating down is a beautiful image, it is accompanied by a sense of loss. After all, the production has suggested that the feather is associated with Ariel's freedom and powers, and yet Ariel has now lost her feather. The feather becomes a microcosm for the larger ideas of loss that permeate this ending: Shakespeare's farewell (imagined or not); an actor's farewell, both from this play and the stage more generally; and the loss of the performance. It draws upon that unutterable sense of wanting something to continue past the certainty of the ending, a duality I would argue all great theatre stimulates at the close of a play. As Erin Hurley suggests, "witnessing another's actions and emotional experiences can create the same neurological imprint as doing or feeling them oneself. In this way, vicarious experience is very intimate indeed" (76). Thus, the ending seeks to imprint upon the audience these feelings of loss alongside the beauty of a moment shared. In the same way, the audience must mourn the end of the performance but still value the experience that occurred.

The falling feather could simply signify that Ariel wants to help free Prospero. Their relationship was friendly and it makes sense in this production that a now-freed Ariel would return to recognize Prospero's need to be released. However, this could suggest that Ariel is releasing Prospero by giving up her own freedom and her own

powers. Throughout the performance, the feather indicated her bondage and freedom as well as her powers. Thus, the loss of that feather would seemingly have devastating consequences for Ariel. The feather is so emblematic of subjection and slavery (along with power and freedom) that the image conjures more than beauty alone.

But while McAnuff may have simply wanted to evoke images of loss and freedom in his audience, reintroducing the feather prop specifically in the context of freedom brings back issues of enslavement. The feather, a token of power, is as much a freeing agent as it is a binding agent. It also places the audience in a unique position to deny Prospero his freedom, as he so lately denied Ariel, by withholding their applause. It may remind the audience of the power which Prospero wielded without pity over the sprite who begged for freedom, and of the torture he caused Ariel by reminding her of her imprisonment while waving that particular feather. His cloak, his books, and his staff were all symbols purely of magic; the feather, on the other hand, was invested with both the qualities of magic and of domination. The feather cannot be simply about freedom without also reminding the audience of slavery. While McAnuff may have focused on producing an affective response to beauty and freedom, by choosing a play which in a modern context is politically charged, the effect becomes uncertain. Kear suggests that an individual meaning which is generated from an affective response cannot necessarily be contained:

the meanings generated within a production might mean more, or other, than they were supposed to — creating an affective supplement or subjective remainder that destabilises any simple conception of theatre as purposive communication. ...

This is not to say that such an effect of intersubjectivity cannot be manipulated or

created intentionally, but rather that signification is never a unidirectional transaction or unique responsibility. (112)

The feather's meaning becomes unstable when read in context of the entirety of the play and production.

The feather's connection to slavery was established from its first appearance as an icon of power. Despite the beauty of the image within the final scene, the ideologies of power which were affixed to the item emphasise the relationship between the sprite and her master. Thus, while the falling feather evokes both the feeling of loss and the desire for freedom as an emotional prompt for the audience to applaud the performance, it is an image complicated both by conditions of slavery, and the two characters' father-daughter relationship. By evoking an image of Ariel at the end, McAnuff's production closes with a focus on the strongest relationship in the production, and its most complicated.

Notably, the feather falls onto the stage and, during the curtain call, it rested at Soelistyo's feet. The actress was positioned there so that Soelistyo — ostensibly as Ariel — could retrieve the feather before exiting backstage. Thus, it seems that there is some need for Ariel to be reunited with the object even though it was a part of freeing Prospero. The position of the feather's drop point and Soelistyo's curtain call location demonstrates a desire to ensure that Ariel is able to reclaim her feather once more, even though the performance has ended.

Overall, *The Tempest's* ending presents a desire for an emotional outpouring that is not about the actor's farewell, as was the case with William Hutt and Richard Monette's production barely five years earlier. Instead, McAnuff provided a concluding image that was differently charged. In the final moments, the falling feather represented the delicate balance the production had striven to achieve between love and obligation,

slavery and friendship. The production sought to suppress the slavery tones by focusing on the idea of freedom. However, the falling feather effectively brought both themes to the forefront. Thus, McAnuff's feather provokes an emotional response, even if the effect is uneven. As Richard Ouzounian suggests, "The love between [Soelistyo's Ariel] and Plummer's Prospero is one of the most touching things about this show, but McAnuff constantly keeps flipping our emotions around until we feel we, too, have been visiting a strange but magical island" ("Christopher Plummer's *Tempest* Finds Him on Top"). The emotional angle of the ending provided a release in which the audience could partake, yet it also acted as a reminder of Prospero's position as master, and of Ariel's role as slave. For McAnuff's *Tempest*, the aesthetic of the ending, the affective response to the image of the feather, weighed heavier than the production might have anticipated.

4.2 Singing in a Wedding Dress: Des McAnuff's 2011 Production of *Twelfth Night*

The following year, in 2011, McAnuff directed *Twelfth Night*. Like his *Tempest*, McAnuff's *Twelfth Night* was an elaborate production, and it serves as a testament to McAnuff's structuring of strong, affective endings. It was full of musical numbers and extravagant costume changes. But one particular costume change helped inform the production's final moments. Viola reappearing in a wedding dress reshaped the play's treatment of same-sex desire. Textually, Viola remains in her breeches outfit at the end of the play. Leaving Viola in her male garments is potentially problematic for some directors because it insists upon a certain lack of closure; Viola is left both untransformed and unmarried. It also constitutes an unresolved issue regarding sexuality. While it is explicitly mentioned in the dialogue that Viola will be Duke Orsino's "fancy's queen"

(5.1.375) once she dons a dress, there is absolutely no certainty about when her clothes will be recovered. The Captain who has her female clothing is imprisoned under Malvolio's suit, and Malvolio exits the stage calling for revenge. Thus, when McAnuff's production of *Twelfth Night* redressed Viola for her final appearance in a wedding dress, it ensured that, despite the lack of textual dialogue, Cesario became Viola and Viola became the Duke's wife. The costume change as a means of handling sexuality in the play was one of three narrative shifts which were brought into focus at the end of this production. I will also discuss the portrayal of Feste's final song and how it rejected the image of Feste as a sad fool, as well as the production's very final image before fading to black: a bitter Malvolio threatening to destroy everyone's happiness. These three end pieces occurred in tandem, but they each developed the interpretation of the performance in different ways. Ultimately, each end-piece provided a different emotional experience. By creating a multi-leveled ending, McAnuff's production captures what Erin Hurley refers to as "feeling-labour." She describes this as

the work theatre does in making, managing, and moving feeling in all its types (affect, emotions, moods, sensations) in a publicly observable display that is sold to an audience for a wage. ... [I]t is theatre's feeling-labours — the display of larger-than-life emotions, the management of our sensate body, and the distribution of affect between stage and auditorium — that draw us in, compel us to return, and most capture our imagination. (9)

By tripling his ending, McAnuff ensures that his audience leaves the theatre more fully connected to the production as a result of the extreme emotional shifts present in the final few moments.

Choosing to dress Viola in a wedding gown modifies how sexuality is presented in the production. The early modern period would have viewed the inherent sexual complications caused by Viola's cross-dressing in a different manner from modern audiences, not the least because, in those earliest stagings, Viola was played by a male actor. The force with which *Twelfth Night* plays around with — stages — varieties of sexuality is not limited, however, by the body (male or female) beneath the dress. I will argue that *Twelfth Night* challenges heteronormative politics regardless of whether Viola is played by a woman or a man. It was precisely this queer comedy that McAnuff's ending sought to straighten out.

Notions of sexuality, sexual actions, and sexual identity were fluid in Shakespeare's time. Susan Dwyer Amussen, in "The Part of a Christian Man': The Cultural Politics of Manhood in Early Modern England," suggests that

Both manhood itself and the power of men were unstable categories of early modern thought. In part this derived from fluid concepts of gender. ... [T]he conception of the body common in early modern England (and Europe generally) did not make a sharp distinction between the bodies of men and women; rather, the common scientific assumption was of the 'one-sex' body. This medical theory held that the sexes were essentially identical, and that the genitals of women were a mirror of those of men: women were deformed men, not a radically different sex. In this model, as with dress, it was possible (though certainly not common) to move from one sex to the other: sex was not fixed, but fluid. Such fluidity made it difficult to sustain a rigid sex/gender system. (215)

Early modern sexual desire cannot be understood in terms of modern sexual desire. Those who engaged in same-sex relationships would typically not have self-identified as

sodomitical, and same-sex activities were not inconsistent with male-female marriage or other heterosexual commitments. Tom Betteridge makes this point clearly in *Sodomy in Early Modern Europe*, as he examines Alan Bray's seminal argument on the topic in *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*: "the status of sodomy as a cosmic crime meant that people were often reluctant to recognize specific sexual actions as sodomitical. Acts which we would now describe as relatively unambiguously homosexual, for example mutual male masturbation, could be ... regarded as simply too commonplace or insignificant to warrant being classed under the dreadful label of sodomy" (5). Betteridge notes this does not indicate that sodomy was tolerated, but that the "emergence of the [sodomite] was not simply the product of male sexual behaviour" (5).

There is a history of sexual politics at work in the play. Orsino seems attracted to Cesario, and this attraction seems based on Cesario's feminine qualities, which Orsino praises (1.5.20–35). In modern performance, the markers that attract Orsino are also visible to the audience, since the part is actually played by a woman; however, in the early modern period, sex and gender identities map less easily onto each other — they are queered — because those markers are part of the play's fiction. David F. McCandless remarks that

the boy actress confounded distinctions not only between masculine and feminine but, to the extent that he attracted a male erotic gaze, between heterosexual and homosexual as well. Even if Shakespeare's society seems less anxious than our own about preserving this distinction, the testimony of Puritan critics [indicates that] ... the boy actress is monstrously effeminate not simply for donning dresses but for stirring same-sex desire. (11)

Numerous critics have debated the extent to which the female form could be equated with the beardless youth on stage, and whether or not the relationships depicted on stage were problematic because they sexualized boys, because they sexualized women, or both.²⁰

Early modern sexual desire cannot be measured in terms of modern conceptions of homosexuality. That said, the blurred sexualities of *Twelfth Night* remain blurred (albeit in different way), even when they are transferred to the modern stage.

To some extent, *Twelfth Night*'s ending is different from other Shakespearean plays featuring a cross-dressing girl. It is not the only play where the heroine remains in boy's clothes and does not transform back into a girl by the end; it shares that honour with *Cymbeline*. However, *Twelfth Night* is the only play with an impediment standing in the way of every character returning to his or her original social position and gender. Viola as Cesario is transgressing both her gender — from female to male — and her social status — from a lady to a servant. While Michelle Dowd in *Women's Work in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* points out that “Viola's exact social position is never clearly delineated in the play,” she reminds readers that Viola's “initial discussion with the sea captain suggests that she is nobly born. ... [H]er decision to enter into service is couched in the rhetoric of choice rather than need” (25). While Viola serves as a man, she “makes the choice to enter service while still a female character” (Dowd 25). Thus, it is not only her dress which remains crossed at the end of the play,

20 This debate is still ongoing. See Jonathan Goldberg (*Sodometries*), Stephen Orgel (“Nobody's Perfect: Or Why Did the English Take Boys for Women?”), Jean E. Howard (“Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England”), and Laura Levine (“Men in Women's Clothing: Anti-theatricality and Effeminization from 1579 to 1642”) for analyses of cross-dressing and sexuality.

but also her social situation. Both costume and station need to revert to their original state for the status quo to be re-established within the play.

In the final moments of *Cymbeline*, Innogen stands on stage still dressed as Fidele, a young man in the service of the opposing army. However, there are two factors which mitigate concerns caused by Innogen's continued cross-dressing and lower status. The first is the assurance that Innogen will return to her royal garb. There are no impediments for her to reclaim her clothes, and indeed she is not the only one onstage in need of a costume change. Her two brothers have just recently discovered they have been wearing disguises all along, and her husband, Posthumus, is dressed as a poor soldier. The fact that so many characters are in the wrong clothes takes the attention off Innogen's cross-dressing and instead places it on the need for everyone to return to their proper social station, regardless of gender. There are also fewer homoerotic undertones in *Cymbeline* between Innogen and her lover. This is evident in the way Posthumus treats Innogen while she is disguised as Fidele. Assuming that Innogen is an insolent male youth, he hits her, knocking her to the ground: "Thou scornful page, / There lie thy part" (5.6.228–229). Thus, while Innogen ends the play in her disguise, her situation is quite different from Viola's.

By changing the costume of the actress playing Viola from boy's garments to a wedding dress, McAnuff suggests that the play needs a more conclusive ending, one which both provides an emotional impact and "solves" the unresolved gender issues. Thus, it was only when Viola (played by Andrea Runge and alternately Suzy Jane Hunt) re-entered for the final song and curtain call — no longer in male clothes but a wedding dress — that spectators realized the story of the play was still being told, the huge white dress rewriting and resolving the deferrals of the earlier supposed ending. McAnuff's

choice to have Viola reappear in her “woman’s weeds” upheld a certain ideological happy ending that re-inscribed particular notions of gender, genre, and sexuality onto the play, all after the scripted dialogue had ended.

McAnuff’s choice to have Viola in a wedding dress mimicked an earlier production by Richard Monette in 1994, also at the Stratford Festival, when Monette had Viola appear in a wedding dress for her curtain call. Given Monette’s death just two years prior to McAnuff’s production (and the relationship that McAnuff’s previous Shakespeare play — *The Tempest* — shared with Monette’s 2005 *Tempest*), it seems possible that this musically-inclined curtain call not only repositioned the actress as Viola instead of Cesario, but offered a nod and a tribute to the late Monette. The wedding dress does more, however, than simply add new material or confirm speculation about what would come next within the world of the play. It changes the message and meaning of *Twelfth Night*.

In *A Lifetime with Shakespeare*, director Paul Barry comments on this particular emendation to *Twelfth Night*, saying, “Cesario has time to change into Viola for the curtain call. ... Although this means the costumer has to build a wedding dress for her, or at least a beautiful dress that proves she’s a woman, just for the curtain call, I think it’s worth the expense” (66). Barry’s need to prove that Viola — or the actress playing her — is indeed a woman, and his assertion that the expense of a dress is worth this proof, speaks to the sexual politics which are at play during this production’s final moments. McAnuff’s production adds the wedding dress for both the final song and the curtain call, but there is no additional or remaining dialogue for Viola and Duke Orsino to perform. By adding this final change, McAnuff’s production attempts to side-step the sexual

tension present throughout the rest of the play and to “straighten” the future of these two characters.

Reading the play through a queer lens is possible because, while in her male disguise, Viola is a source of attraction for Olivia and for Duke Orsino. It is imperative for the future relationships of Olivia and Sebastian, as well as Orsino and Viola, that Viola is considered attractive to both characters. If there is no sexual attraction between Orsino and Cesario within a production, then there is little motivation for Orsino to seek to marry Viola, no matter how much he valued her company. The same is true of Olivia; it is mistaking Sebastian for Cesario that leads to the overhasty wedding between the two. In order to “normalize” or sexually straighten the relationships in *Twelfth Night*, Olivia must fall in love with Cesario, the external disguise of Viola, eventually transferring her love, apparently unproblematically, to Sebastian. Concurrently, Duke Orsino is likewise attracted to Cesario, the “male” page who looks and sounds like a woman, though, from a “straightened” perspective, it must be the feminine aspects that he ultimately values enough to choose to marry Viola. Orsino is often therefore portrayed in modern performance as uncomfortable or confused by his emotions for Cesario.²¹ Certainly this was how McAnuff’s production portrayed the sexual tension.

21 Ian Judge’s 1994 RSC production had Orsino begin to kiss Cesario at 1.4.40 but then quickly turn and give her shoulder a shove instead (Schafer 103 n40a). Clearly, Judge’s Orsino felt the need to perform an overt masculine gesture to counteract the impulses he was experiencing. Similarly, in Tim Carroll’s 2003 production at the Shakespeare’s Globe, “Orsino wrestled with a passion for Cesario that he was ashamed to acknowledge. . . . [B]y his looks, Orsino tried to assure himself that he was not feeling sexual attraction to this boy” (Bulman 577).

There were a number of moments in this staging where the lovesick Viola seems to forget she was wearing a disguise. One such lapse occurred during Act 2.4. After admitting to the Duke (Mike Shara) that she desired a lover “Of your complexion” and “About your years, my lord” (2.4.25; 2.4.27), she sings for him and he touches her shoulders. The touch is not necessarily sexual, but it is certainly familiar and shows a growing level of emotion between the two. Then, while Feste sings, Viola leans into Orsino, her head resting on his side. Orsino first looks shocked and uncomfortable at the “boy” lying so intimately against him, but eventually puts his arm awkwardly on Viola’s shoulder. Orsino’s gaze drifts to Viola multiple times during the song and by the end of the song, his hand was on her neck, holding it in a way that seems both possessive and sexual.

Jonathan Crewe remarks that “At the narrative level, it is indeterminable whether Orsino is falling for a girl in the semblance of a boy or for a boy who resembles a girl. At the performative level, he is falling for a boy passing for a girl passing for a boy. In neither case is the object or species of desire gender-determinable” (Crewe 108). Most productions, like McAnuff’s, choose to cast a boyish or even androgynous female to play the role. Sebastian is likewise cast as slightly feminine so the mistaken identity between the two can be considered more realistic. Thus, as Catherine Thomas suggests, Viola/Cesario becomes something outside of a binary system of sexual identity: “Constructed as neither absolutely woman nor absolutely man, and as a desiring subject and desired object of both sexes, Cesario complicates any neat definition of his gender or sexual choices. Rather s/he operates in the eroticized space produced by relationships with Orsino and Olivia” (Thomas 308). McAnuff’s production had a short-haired blonde and lithe girl play Viola (Andrea Runge) and a pretty blond male play Sebastian (Trent

Pardy). The two were obviously not identical, and the sex of neither of them was ever really in doubt, but the attempt to homogenize the two figures through casting choices tries to explain the homosexual desires of both Olivia and Orsino, and to suggest how the play can be “straightened.”

Clearly, there are different levels of gender, sex, and sexual orientation which shape interpretations of Viola’s male dress and actions. Casey Charles, in “Gender Trouble in *Twelfth Night*,” strongly argues for the complication of gender that is produced by the simultaneous male/female Viola/Cesario. The argument is worth reproducing at some length:

Viola’s androgynous performance as a woman playing a man ... upsets the restriction of erotic attraction to heterosexual binarism in part because that dualism is collapsed in a single subject. As Viola is a man, her “state is desperate for her master’s love,” but as Viola is a woman, Olivia’s sighs for her must prove “thriftless,” under the social condemnation of same-sex love (2.3.35–8). She not only upsets essentialist constructs of gender hierarchy by successfully performing the part of a man as a woman, but in her hermaphroditic capacity as man and woman ... she also collapses the polarities upon which heterosexuality is based by becoming an object of desire whose ambiguity renders the distinction between homo- and hetero-erotic attraction difficult to decipher. (127–8)

Viola’s gender confusion can be pushed further depending on how the actions or emotions of the characters are presented in a production. Olivia could seem content with the substitution of Sebastian, but her attraction to Cesario might also be based on the woman who was beneath the disguise. Likewise, when Orsino admits that Cesario is “the lamb that I do love” (5.1.126), he could be seeing the woman beneath the costume, or his

desire might be focused on the masculine exterior. The Duke demands Viola return to her feminine dress, but he also agrees to marry her even though he has previously only known her as a man.

The queering of the text remains open so long as Cesario does not become Viola once more — as long as the play ends with the script's final *exeunt*. However, this is exactly the type of (open) closure that the wedding dress in McAnuff's production resists. McAnuff's staging attempts to undo questions of queering and transexuality by insisting that "Cesario" was simply a disguise — Viola's costume — and that the final Viola, this blushing bride, is the real Viola. The wedding dress insists upon a heteronormative ending and resists alternative possibilities. Crucially, for my argument, this production choice demonstrates that theatrical story-telling does not end when the dialogue finishes.

The dialogue, of course, goes to great lengths to show how difficult it is for Cesario to become Viola once again. Not only are her female clothes locked away in a trunk, but the sea captain that has control of that trunk has been thrown in prison. The only individual who can release the captain is Malvolio, and he has just sworn that he will "be revenged on the whole pack of you" (5.1.365). An individual's clothes are a particular marker of identity. Duke Orsino's final lines, for example, make clear that the divide between Viola's masculine and feminine selves is defined by her wardrobe:

Cesario, come —

For so you shall be while you are a man;

But when in other habits you are seen,

Orsino's mistress, and his fancy's queen. (5.1.372–375)

On stage, costumes are more than simply fabric. Alison Findley suggests that "The material memories invoked by costume are emphasized in a theatrical context, since the

character has no identity except for its costume and the voice and body of the actor who dons it for the performance. Thus, when a character borrows costume from another character she/he also borrows the identity of the owner” (398). Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass further argue that “in the Renaissance, clothes can be imagined as retaining the identity and the form of the wearer. . . . The garment bears quite literally the trace and the memory of its owner” (201). Viola’s male clothes have theatrically altered her being, and in order to transform back, she needs her “woman’s weeds.” Part of the reason Duke Orsino’s love is so controversial from a hetero-normative position is not only because he has fallen in love with an individual he believes to be a boy, but because, to some extent, Viola, by early modern conventions, has actually been transformed into a boy.

Malvolio controls the means by which Viola can revert back to her female form and so gain the freedom to marry the duke. If Malvolio is sincere in his desire for revenge and if Viola’s clothes are a necessary component of her identity, then denying Viola that identity might fulfil that revenge. By withholding her clothes, Malvolio, in essence, withholds the bride. Notably, his call for revenge and Viola’s missing clothes are the only two potentially disruptive notes at the end of the play, and, textually, they are intimately connected. This production tried to minimize Malvolio’s power by cutting Duke Orsino’s final lines concerning him:

He hath not told us of the captain yet.

When that is known, and golden time convents,

A solemn combination shall be made

Of our dear souls. (5.1.368–371)

Without these lines in McAnuff's production, the Duke's order for his servants to "Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace" (5.1.367) seems more sincere, less self-serving. The loss of these lines also stops the play from reminding the audience of the power Malvolio has over those on stage. Cutting these lines marginalizes the impediment to Viola's costume change, while maintaining the anger of Malvolio for the final stage image, cutting the connection the play otherwise insists on between sexual and social politics.

Thus, although an extra wedding dress may seem like a simple addition, it glosses over the comedy's open end and asserts cohesion, and, alongside the extravagance of the scene, tries to provide a Hollywood happy ending. In this production, putting Viola in a wedding dress for the final song and curtain call not only feminizes her once more, but visually returns her to her status as a lady and appropriate social match for Duke Orsino. The wedding provides a conclusion to the narrative, firmly pairing Viola and Duke Orsino alongside Sebastian and Olivia; both female characters were in wedding dresses in this production for the final song. The final song thus became an ersatz marriage celebration, and the applause of the curtain call doubled as validation of the new couples, congratulating them on their nuptials. But while the wedding dress sought to trigger a certain kind of emotion, it did not guarantee that the audience would experience that affect. After all, as Hurley admits, "If emotion is made in the relationship between stage and audience (the stimulus and receiver, if you will), it cannot simply be projected by actors and caught as the same emotion by the audience. The theatre's emotional labour, then, is, in part, a negotiation" (20). It is this negotiation process, and the idea that different audience members will respond to different emotions, that might have inspired McAnuff's multi-leveled emotive ending.

Feste's final song reinforces the upbeat elements already inspired by the wedding dress's appearance. Feste's song is usually considered melancholy, a reminder of the more austere elements of life, perhaps of an early modern clown's life. Jim McGahern remarks that "The play ends with Feste singing another song as only he can do it. It helps the audience to recognize that though the lovers may remain in enchanted Illyria, they must return to the wind and the rain of everyday life" (424). The song speaks of regret — with words like "foolish" and "alas" — and of finality, with Feste relating the tale of a man progressing from small child to old man. Yet while the play is full of music, this final song, at least as it was performed in McAnuff's staging, projected a somewhat inconsistent message. Often the scoring of Feste's song provokes a kind of sad mood to match its lyrics, providing a kind of emotional unease that an audience could then apply to the entire play.

But McAnuff took this song in a different direction. A wistful, quiet song did not match the rest of the production's spectacle. In musical composer Michael Roth and Des McAnuff's version, Feste's final song is upbeat, and the lyrics were slightly modified to allow the entire cast to join in. Ben Carlson's Feste delivered the stanzas, with key phrases repeated by the onstage cast. These repetitions heightened the "sing-song" quality of the ballad. In her analysis of the McAnuff staging, Erin Minear comments that

Feste's final song, with its ominous iterance of wind and rain, returns the audience to quotidian reality; but it also extends the peculiarly musical enchantment of the play ... The audience leaves the theater [in McAnuff's staging] not attuned to the harmonies of human life or the music of spheres, but with a tune stuck in their heads. The meaning of the song dissolves; the negative images of the lyrics are forgotten and the melody remains. (139)

McAnuff and Roth changed the song, focusing on the song's hook, "for the rain it raineth everyday" and ensuring that it was repeated numerous times by the entire cast. (The word "everyday" alone was repeated over a dozen times.) This was no longer simply a song for Feste to sing to himself. He may have led the song, but it was a company show tune. As Minear notes, the catchy melody drowned out the melancholic lyrics, providing instant gratification rather than intellectual stimulation. Anton Franks, discussing the role of affect and drama classes, states that "dramatic performance is designed to elicit affective responses in audiences. There are, of course, always ideas, themes, intellectual or 'rational' aspects of dramatic representation, but these are inextricably intertwined with and coloured by affect" (196). The production choices around this musical number, tellingly, coincided with the appearance of the wedding dress.

McAnuff's production of *Twelfth Night* changed the play into a form of musical, turning many of the songs within the play into full-length musical pieces. While the characters did not break into song spontaneously as they might in a traditional musical, there were enough songs produced for the staging to warrant the release of a separate CD. The CD featured eleven tracks along with a bonus version of *The Wind and the Rain* performed by McAnuff and the Red Dirt Band. Roth and McAnuff were co-composers of the music, and they ensured that each song was a show-stopping number. The play opened with a full musical experience: Feste entered the stage, guitar in hand, and began to strum to the music. A band followed onstage — including bass, drums, violin, and a saxophone — as riffs of music filled the air. The opening number, an overture, did not have lyrics to accompany it but each of the distinct riffs matched sections of the later songs that would feature throughout the show, and the rock-and-roll sound soon became

entwined with the thunder of the storm that capsized Viola and Sebastian's ship. It was, literally, a musical prologue, telling the melodic narrative to follow.

The production turned many of the play's original songs into more elaborate affairs. For instance, the songs played by Valentine and Curio, the Duke's courtiers, were modified into a full-band production, and Feste's song to the imprisoned Malvolio ("I am gone sir") was drawn out, turned into a haunting blues ballad. The original ending to the song reads:

Cries 'Aha,' to the devil,
 Like a mad lad,
 'Pare thy nails, dad,
 Adieu, goodman devil.' (4.2.119–222)

This staging modified the lines to repeat the phrase "to the devil" after each of the final four lines, emphasizing the word 'devil.' Additions are in italics:

Cries 'Aha,' to the devil,
 Like a mad lad, *to the devil*
 'Pare thy nails, dad, *to the devil*
 Adieu, goodman devil.' (*Twelfth Night*, 2011)

Feste sang this song standing on top of a glass cage that was Malvolio's prison. The stage was awash with green and blue gel lighting as Feste belted out his lines. He ended it by pulling out his harmonica and playing a final few notes, confirming the melody's hereditary links to the rock-and-roll and blues genres. In this instance, the lyrics of the songs were not heavily modified, but their tone and delivery was notable. The music was haunting and the rendition was a far cry from the mocking jester version which the sing-song rhymes might otherwise suggest. Furthermore, the repetition of the line "to the

devil” etches this refrain in the mind of the audience to paint Feste as a slightly dangerous figure.

In his songs, Feste alternated between manic energy and soulful depression. Many of the music numbers referenced musicians and bands of the 1960s and 1970s by visually “quoting” iconic stars, and Feste’s “tributes” positioned him as a kind of musical impersonator. Carlson portrayed a more stable idea of Feste when not singing — he was much more biting and cynical in speech — but the music numbers are not simply out of character for the brooding clown, but different roles for him to play. Rather than furthering the plot, the songs came to seem more like gimmicks or interludes. As Christopher Hoile points out:

After Orsino’s first speech the three musicians in Beatles costumes of the Sergeant Pepper era play on whereupon a white piano floats in played by a bearded, long-haired, white-suited young man who turns around to let us know he’s supposed to be John Lennon. This is just one of many gimmicks that make no sense. Why mix three Sergeant Pepper Beatles with the Lennon of “Imagine”? Quite often Feste will begin a song accompanying himself on the electric guitar only to have the “Beatles” float in on a bandstand as backup. (“Twelfth Night”)

The “tribute” quality of these songs disassociates them from the rest of play. Thus, the final production number, rather than being a quiet reflection on life and the play, becomes, “a rock anthem with the entire cast joining in, forcing a lyric about the return to cold reality to become, contrary to its lyrics, a big upbeat finale” (Hoile, “Twelfth Night”).

Setting aside his songs, Carlson’s portrayal of Feste as a melancholy, cynical clown is in keeping with many modern productions. Neil Novelli’s article “Feste”

outlines the stage history of the figure and his many depressed iterations: “Stacy Keach took Feste to far reaches of pain and alienation. . . . Ron Pember as Feste for the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1974 (directed by Peter Gill) was a caustic malcontent. In 1979, Terry Hands directed a production in which a ‘gnomish,’ genial Feste (Geoffrey Hutchings) was onstage almost all the time — watching, creating, participating, even helping change the set” (190–1). These less-than-festive Festes portray the character as perceptive, but somber. By presenting the final song in such an upbeat manner, the spirit of the melancholy clown is lost somewhere in the loud production values. Recall, as well, that the final song is the vehicle by which Viola returns to her female self by showing off a wedding gown. Thus, despite the song’s lyrics, this production sees Feste replace a potentially melancholy moment with toe-tapping sing-along music, implicitly endorsing the wedding dress image and the normative heterosexual values that this costuming choice represents.

McAnuff changed the emotional resonance of the final song in order to present a more unified “happy ending” context for Viola’s dress, but then he unexpectedly darkened the production’s emotional range in the very last moments. Thus, as the song came to a close, Malvolio walked to centre stage. The final strains of Feste’s song drew attention to Malvolio as the stage lights faded, leaving only a spotlight on the steward’s angry, cold face, this spot finally fading to black. Although he lightened the mood of Feste’s song, McAnuff’s final moment introduces aspects of unease or tension as Malvolio’s appearance seeks to unravel the happiness of the little group. His angry presence suggests that the pleasant world of Illyria will once more experience the wind and the rain of another storm.

Thus, McAnuff does not completely abandon that sense of melancholy which often accompanies productions of this play; he simply moves it from Feste's final song onto the final spot-lit image of the angry Malvolio. Malvolio's desire for vengeance is still visible in his unblinking stare. He faces the audience rather than his apparent targets, however, and it is unclear whether this is to let the audience know that he is still a threat to the happy world behind him, or if the audience is also a part of "the whole pack" on whom he intends to be revenged, especially those who were clapping in time to the final song.

This final image undermines the happily-ever-after idea pushed by both the final song and the wedding dress in order to produce a variety of emotions and a multiplicity of endings, without, however, complicating the heterosexual ideology that the wedding dress sought to foreground. Viola is female once more and Feste is singing, joyfully accompanied by the people of Illyria. Malvolio does not fit in this new world, and this final image serves as a lingering reminder of that last loose thread he represents. Thus, the audience is allowed to choose their own sense of the ending, fulfilling the play's "what you will" subtitle. As Michal Kirby states in his text *Formalist Theatre*, "Theatre seeks not merely an effect — a response — but an affective response, an emotional and ultimately nonintellectual one" (xiv). The audience is invited to experience the ending rather than analyze it. Ultimately, then, the moments that McAnuff creates in his ending pull the audience away from their engagement with the political themes of the texts. When the wedding dress is revealed, the audience is encouraged to feel a sense of closure to that particular narrative. It encourages the audience to revel in that moment — the wedding and bride and groom — rather than linger on the homosexual themes on which the narrative previously touched. The music and Malvolio's appearance fulfil similar

functions. The response to each is visceral rather than reflective. Mixing pleasure with political engagement can provide a muddled impact on the audience at the end of the curtain call. McAnuff ultimately seems to side with stimulating affect rather than discussion. The opposing images suggest a joyful and melodious future, but hint at the darkness to come. The play had a happy ending — evidenced by the new wedding dress; a tragic ending — as seen in Malvolio’s unresolved vengeance motif; and a closing musical number which is upbeat in tone but still has bleaker aspects in the lyrics — sung by Feste and the band. The effect of this triple ending was to reinvent the production as an extravaganza event, ensuring that romance, betrayal, and music all make appearances in the final few moments.

Overall, these three facets of McAnuff’s 2011 ending of *Twelfth Night* — the wedding dress, the final song, and a last glimpse of Malvolio — provide a variety of emotional possibilities. None of the endings completely answers the questions presented by the play about sexuality and desire; instead they attempt to write over these questions, to “straighten out” the production’s sexual politics. However, despite the wedding dress, the queer elements still linger. It is not possible to fully eradicate the play’s queerness by arguing that Orsino is unwittingly attracted to the woman beneath the costume. If that were true, then presumably the same would be true of Olivia, and her attraction to Sebastian could dissipate as they spend more time together. Secondly, while the final song is elaborate, toe-tapping, and energetic, it is at odds with the actual lyrics that Feste sings. It turns a haunting solo into a company sing-along. While it might dissipate the gloom with which other productions of *Twelfth Night* end in favour of a more harmonious vision, even this image of community is called into question by Malvolio’s final appearance. Although Malvolio is no longer challenging the play’s sexual dynamics — in

McAnuff's version the audience is not reminded that Malvolio has control of Viola's clothing — Malvolio's presence complicates the social world of Illyria by reminding us of the play's unfinished business. Malvolio's appearance provides a threatening air immediately before the blackout and reminds the audience that things in Illyria are far from perfect.

Thus, McAnuff's *Twelfth Night* does not end with a definite solution to the sexual questions of the play, or with the usual note of melancholy alongside the return to reality. Rather, this production's ending provides a variety of potentially available emotions, while still attempting to homogenize the sexual politics at work. Like that of *The Tempest*, the ending to McAnuff's *Twelfth Night* suggests that emotional experience is a higher priority than developing the queer or "troubling" elements present within the text. The wedding dress offers an element of surprise, a supplementary conclusion to the Viola and Duke Orsino love story, although it comes at the cost of exploring potentially more interesting questions of sexuality. The musical number, while out of harmony with the lyrics, encouraged spectators to follow the beat right to the theatre store. Finally, Malvolio's appearance rounded out the emotional range by eliciting goose bumps as the figure glared at the audience as the stage turned to black. It is not a unified ending, but it is an emotional rollercoaster presented for the audience to enjoy. It may feel out of keeping with Shakespeare's play, but it is as extravagant as the production that it draws to a close.

4.3 Performing the End: The Unexpected Endings in Des McAnuff's *Henry V*

In 2012, McAnuff directed *Henry V*, his final Shakespearean production as Artistic Director of the Festival. *Henry V* followed McAnuff's previous Shakespearean productions by appending a visually stimulating and emotionally driven ending to a potentially politically challenging work. McAnuff's numerous stagings of Shakespeare for the Stratford Festival indicate that, for McAnuff, it is the emotional impact of a production that drives audiences to attend the theatre. Hurley's analysis of theatrical affect offers some support for this view:

We attend the theatre to feel *more*, even if it doesn't make us feel *better*; we go to have our emotional life acknowledged and patterned, managed into coherent storylines, and exposed in all its tumult (or its banality). We go to experience an expanded, more expressive, and nuanced range of feeling imaginatively and viscerally with the aid of another person or agency. We go, in the end, because feeling matters. (77)

As with McAnuff's *The Tempest* and his *Twelfth Night*, his *Henry V* created affective scenes, which the audience was invited to partake in. Furthermore, as with any long-standing company, and in keeping with the previous two McAnuff productions discussed, Stratford is haunted by previous incarnations of the same play. There are two earlier productions of *Henry V* which particularly resonate with McAnuff's production and which together present diametrically opposed perspectives on the play's politics. The production choices in McAnuff's *Henry V* suggest instead an effort to find an ideological middle ground. McAnuff's production is speaking to — if not these particular productions directly — the two different versions of Henry which are most often staged. I

will analyze these three Stratford Festival productions of *Henry V* and discuss how the 2012 production challenges the boundaries of performance endings, questioning both the notion of closure and the expectations of the audience.

While it is not usually considered a problem play, *Henry V* often requires the director to make a number of strong performance choices about the depiction of war. Determining the character of Henry, in particular, sets the tone and emotional range for the rest of the production. In his article “Rabbits, Ducks, and *Henry V*,” Norman Rabkin likens this play in production to the rabbit-duck illusion. When looking at the figure in the illusion, both a rabbit and a duck are visible, depending on how one looks at it. Most individuals, however, can focus only on one animal at a time. Rabkin argues that the same is often true of productions of *Henry V*: Henry is either a warmonger or a hero, but not both. Coen Heijes reinforces this perspective, stating that “*Henry V* is a play which elicits mixed interpretations from critics. On the one hand it is considered jingoistic: in fact it is rarely performed outside of the U.K. and it was not staged in France, for example, until 1999. ... On the other hand, more recent interpretations have shown *Henry V* to be a play about a ruthless, Machiavellian king fighting a vicious and unjust war” (139–140). The two different versions of the King are not simply added-on production choices — both aspects of Henry can be supported textually. However, while in the text the character Henry V has both warmongering and heroic elements, directors usually prioritize either a pro-war or anti-war version, ignoring the contrasting aspects of the character in order to present a more unified version of the play. Rabkin asks,

Should one see a rabbit or a duck? ... [S]ome critics ... see an exemplary Christian monarch. ... [O]thers ... see ... a coarse and brutal highway robber. Despite their obvious differences, these rival views are essentially similar, for

each sees only a rabbit or a duck. I hope that simply by juxtaposing the two readings I have shown that each of them, persuasive as it is, is reductive, requiring that we exclude too much to hold it. (Rabkin 294)

The rabbit-duck dichotomy is innately connected to the way nationalism is portrayed in the play, and this is especially an issue in Canadian theatre. As Heijes notes, “Although *Henry V* is rarely performed outside the U.K., Canada is an exception to the rule, with no less than 6 productions — including the latest by McAnuff — at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival” (140). Stratford’s early productions that I will discuss in this chapter thus provide relevant context for an analysis of McAnuff’s production.

The first two productions of *Henry V* were staged at the Stratford Festival exactly ten years apart: one in 1956 starred Christopher Plummer, and the second in 1966 starred Douglas Rain. Both were directed by Michael Langham and both displayed very different political images of war. In each staging, Langham specifically associates his work with the French-English relations in Canada, notably by casting leading Québécois actors from Le Théâtre du Nouveau Monde as many of the play’s French characters. The extreme differences between these two productions highlight the opposing viewpoints on war present in *Henry V* and, as such, clearly show the play’s widely varying interpretative potential. It was this range, encompassing both the pro-war and anti-war messages, that marked the differences between Langham’s two productions.

In the 1956 production, Langham presented his Henry as a heroic king and sought to strongly emphasize Anglo-French unity. Thus, many of the performance choices made by Langham reflected a desire to show Henry (and his conquest) in the best light possible. Act 1.2’s Salic Law exchange outlines whether or not Henry has a legal right to

France. This production added a number of lines throughout Canterbury's speech, delivered by Henry's courtiers, urging him to war:

Exeter:	There need no more be said
Westmoreland:	Your Highness' claim is just
Gloucester:	This course is true my brother
Exeter:	France is your right
Westmoreland:	Your highness' course is clear
Bedford:	'Twas clear enough before his grace confirmed it
Gloucester:	'Tis true indeed, my brother

(Gibson, *Henry V*, 1956: *Prompt Copy*)

Each of these added lines advocates that Henry should take action against France. By adding these interruptions throughout Canterbury's rather dubious argument, the performance reinforces the validity of this war in the eyes of his court. To some extent, it lightens Henry's personal responsibility for the decision and encourages the idea that brotherhood, unity, and the support of his people will be gained by waging war. Furthermore, it not only creates a situation where Henry is prompted to action, since the entire court is in agreement, but it also reinforces to the audience through sheer repetition that this is the correct course.

The 1956 production also modified the lines surrounding Bardolph's hanging to focus on Henry as the hero. In the text, Henry is told that a man named Bardolph — one of the friends of his youth — has been caught stealing. Henry then condemns his old friend to death. The connection between the two characters is staged in *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Henry IV, Part 2*, but is not made explicit in *Henry V*. The characters do not even necessarily share any scenes in this play. Thus, each individual production of *Henry V*

must determine the details of the relationship between these two characters and how, or even if, their relationship is made clear to the audience. Langham's 1956 production cut the lines which actually named Bardolph as the offender, ensuring that the man that Henry condemns is unknown to him when he casts sentence. He is simply punishing an unidentified criminal. This adjusts one's moral perception of Henry so that he acts justly to punish crimes but is not a man who would willingly execute his friends.

Another textual modification this production made was to remove the lines which discussed the future King Henry VI and the start of the Hundred Years' War from the Chorus's final monologue:

Fortune made his [Henry V's] sword,
 By which the world's best garden he achieved,
 And of it left his son imperial lord.
 Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crowned king
 Of France and England, did this king succeed,
 Whose state so many had the managing
 That they lost France and made his England bleed,
 Which oft our stage hath shown. (Epilogue.6–13)

By cutting these lines, the production emphasized the unification of France and England for a kind of happy ending, even though France is defeated. This ending also continued to draw parallels between the French and the English and the actors from Quebec and Ontario, suggesting that harmony was possible in both situations. Removing the threat of future unrest within the realms attempted to gloss over both the war that followed King Henry V's reign during his son's rule as King, and the continued turbulence of French-English relations in mid-twentieth century Canada. During the staging of this production,

Maurice Duplessis was the premier of Quebec (1944–1959). This time is now referred to as the “Great Darkness” by historians. According to Harold Troper,

Duplessis successfully led his Union Nationale Party to five consecutive electoral victories. Ruthless in dealing with opponents, the life-long bachelor dominated Quebec through a period of unprecedented economic expansion. [He was] an outspoken champion of conservative Catholic values. ... While some remember the Duplessis era as one of ‘social stability’ and prosperity, others recall his years in office as *les années noires*, dark years that stifled progressive change (39).

Duplessis’s death in 1959 set in motion the Liberal reform and the beginning of the Quiet Revolution. For his 1956 production, Langham may have drawn upon the relative quietness in Quebec to suggest harmony might develop between the two groups.

However, he was also still clearly aware of the unrest that was slowly building during the late 1950s before the social, economic, and political changes that took Quebec by storm directly following Duplessis’s death. Overall, the end of this production showed a particular optimism for French-English relations in Canada, but only by dramatically cutting the unsavoury lines at the end of the play. Langham’s first production of *Henry V* clearly demonstrates how to modify the play to present a heroic, sympathetic, and ultimately inspiring king.

Ten years later, Langham strongly felt the need to take the play in a different interpretative direction, and his new staging offered a darker, more disturbing image of Henry V. By the mid-1960s, the FLQ was a fully active organization, committed to achieving Quebec sovereignty, and Langham did not shy away from alluding to the turbulence within Quebec. In the production’s program, Langham asks, “What has this jingoistic national anthem of a play to do with our age? It glorifies war, exploits the

inaneities of nationalism, is offensively class-conscious, and — as if to encourage philistine thinking in Canada — is patently and exultantly anti-French. Why then are we performing it? — Just to satisfy those who only think old-world Establishment thoughts?” (qtd by Berry, 72). This new production was decidedly bleak and anti-war, a marked contrast from the 1956 production. Douglas Rain played Henry as a gritty and unromantic figure. He was uninspiring in his speeches, and behind his back, his soldiers robbed the bodies of the dead French. The production’s programme quoted WWI poet Wilfred Owen and included a photograph from the Vietnam War. These added elements stressed the pain associated with combat. To emphasize the general miseries of war, Langham made the performance choice to slaughter both the French prisoners and the English boys onstage. These lines are often cut from productions altogether, and when they are included, the action usually happens offstage in order to downplay the horrors of war. By performing these killings in front of the audience, Langham ensured they would not be able to dismiss these atrocities, as was possible in his 1956 production.

Furthermore, when the body of Bardolph was dumped at Henry’s feet, Rain showed no recognition of, and no remorse for, the dead man (Bevington 89). It is unclear whether Rain’s Henry had actually forgotten about his old friend or if war had hardened him to the point that he could not even emotionally react to the body. All of Langham’s 1966 production choices presented a bleak but realistic view of war. Thus, in this production, the inclusion of the Québécois actors as the French underscored the misery of the French-Canadian people and the play ended by focusing on the strained political relationship between the two nations rather than their unity. Langham’s second production of *Henry V* was coded entirely differently than his staging years before. It

focused on the monstrous aspects of war, attempting to evoke in its audiences similar emotions of despair.

The 1956 and 1966 productions provide a varied backdrop for interpretation of the Stratford Festival's most recent version of the play. But they point out, more specifically, how politically charged *Henry V* can be — regardless of which aspects of the play a director focuses on. Like Rabkin, McAnuff recognized the conflicting images in *Henry V*. In an online promotional interview released by the Festival, McAnuff states

There are two opposing, diametrically opposing dynamics in the play. One is a patriotic theme ... and then there are the anti-war themes. ... What does Shakespeare think? I don't think we'll ever actually know. I think the most enlightening thing that one can say about this play, is that it's not a play for war and it's not a play against war. It's a play about war and so it involves paradox and at times contradiction and he asks you ultimately to judge as the audience. ... He doesn't ask you to leave the theatre with everything wrapped up in a bow. He asks you to leave the theatre in a turbulent emotional and intellectual state, while you yourself weigh out these rather heady and very serious life and blood issues.

(McAnuff, "Henry V: The Paradox of Conflict")

McAnuff clearly suggests the play has both pro-war and anti-war sentiments. Yet he also seems to imply that the play is *supposed* to contain both of these aspects, and that, to understand war in its entirety, one must see Henry as both a patriotic hero and a warmongering butcher. In the show's programme notes, McAnuff states that "Our aim, as [Shakespeare's] present-day interpreters, is ... to conjure up the perplexing moral fog of war, with all its glory, its horrors and its outrages, within the little 'wooden O' of our stage" (McAnuff, "The Moral Fog of War" 6). It is no surprise then that McAnuff's

Henry V, played by Aaron Krohn, makes ethical as well as morally ambiguous decisions throughout the performance to demonstrate this “moral fog.” Unlike the previous two productions, it is as problematic to condemn Krohn’s Henry as a tyrant as it is to celebrate him as a war hero. What was perceived as a want of personality by critics, like Robert Cushman of the *National Post*, could also be interpreted as a clear directorial choice not to present Henry as simply hero or villain but something of both. His speeches clearly do not inspire his soldiers wholeheartedly — some even choose not to go “once more unto the breach” — but neither is he portrayed as bloodthirsty or evil. He genuinely seems to wish to connect with the common man in the “ceremony” speech, even if he is not quite able to. Krohn’s Henry attempts to be something more composite than the ideal renegade or paragon.

In concentrating on the complexities of war, McAnuff rejects the idea that Henry is either a rabbit or a duck. Instead, he points out that the play itself is more complicated than either simplification would allow. McAnuff’s production focuses on the ambiguity and uncertainty of the play’s meaning, rather than attempting to present a specific moral for the audience. It is a play in which the audience must understand both the positive and negative aspects of war; thus, a candid representation of the play cannot concretely make either a hero or a villain of the main character. The problem with this, of course, is that it delays any emotional connection that an audience can make with the main character. Unlike either of Langham’s productions, which pushed the audience to particular, though seemingly opposing, emotional responses, McAnuff’s production generally shied away from encouraging the audience to feel emotionally for Henry.

As though to disguise Henry’s true motivations, and so to make them unavailable to the audience, the demeanour of Krohn’s Henry would rapidly shift throughout the

production. In Act 3.5, the scene in which Bardolph is hanged, Henry and Bardolph meet, face-to-face, and it is clear that Henry recognizes Bardolph as his old friend. He then realizes he must condemn this man. As comprehension dawns on his face, there grows onstage a particularly weighty moment of silence. Henry spends the silence simply looking at Bardolph, considering his options. At the end of this pause, Henry steps forward and slowly puts the noose around Bardolph's neck. Henry comforts a crying Bardolph, placing his hand on Bardolph's shoulder, and his tone is reluctant yet resolved when he says, "We would have all such offenders so cut off" (3.6.98). The scene makes it clear that Henry regrets this action as a friend, but finds it necessary as a king. The emotional moment between the two is quickly shattered, however, when the French ambassador enters. At this cue, Henry shifts focus and Bardolph is left waiting to die onstage while Henry talks with the herald. When their exchange ends, Henry neither remains for the hanging nor glances at Bardolph as he leaves the stage. He seems to have forgotten all about Bardolph after dealing with the French herald. In less than seventy lines, Henry has shifted from being a sympathetic, to an unfeeling, character.

But there were also moments in which Henry very clearly demonstrated that he desired nothing more than to bestow mercy (and receive it himself). Notably, the ultimatum Henry offered at the gates of Harfleur was one such moment: "First, Henry coolly described horrors awaiting the citizens if they would not surrender their town — an ultimatum that this Henry would carry out. However, after the citizens yielded their city, Henry fell down and kissed the ceremonial gown of the Governor of Harfleur as if thanking him for preventing the otherwise inevitable horrors" (Heijes 141). Henry's later actions would show that his threats were not a bluff. As I will show, this Henry was

willing to commit unspeakable horrors for what he deemed the good of his people, but he did not relish taking such action.

Like Langdon's second production, McAnuff's *Henry V* did not shy away from detailing the brutality of war. In Act 4.6, when Henry orders the death of the French prisoners to free up more fighting resources, McAnuff's production has these prisoners marched into pits, including one downstage centre, locked in, and then burned alive. Their faces and hands were visible at the grate until the light from the fire obscured the view. Yet even this most horrific deed is slightly tempered by Henry's faint hesitation before ordering the deaths. The pause is the same type of hesitation as when Henry decided Bardolph's fate. The stilted silence suggests that Henry does not want to make decisions of this magnitude, but also recognizes that those who take the moral high ground do not win wars. Ultimately, it is Fluellen — portrayed as a bully in this production — who closes the grate, locking the prisoners in the pits below the stage before throwing fire into the hold. The fire lit the stage and from the audience one could feel heat radiating from the closed grates.

The horror of this act is recognized by many of the soldiers who look deeply uncomfortable, but it is Pistol's reaction that notably stands out. This production's treatment of Pistol was unusual. While he can be played purely for comedy, Pistol developed into something approaching a tragic figure by the play's end, and his wife's death (and his own mistreatment by Fluellen) weighed heavily. Thus, in the French prisoner scenes, Pistol becomes an odd but fitting choice for the production's moral centre. Instead of allowing his prisoner, Monsieur le Fer, to be burned alive, he cuts his throat. As he walks Monsieur le Fer to the open pit, Pistol seems to realize what is about to befall the condemned men. With his mangled French — “coupe la gorge,” a line

typically played for laughs rather than to tragic effect — Pistol slits the man's throat and lets him fall into the pit. This production choice thus represents a strange act of mercy. Against Henry's callous desire to kill the prisoners, Pistol appears the better man. Fluellen, on the other hand, seems to carry out the order expediently and decisively, agreeing wholeheartedly with Henry's vengeance. In this scene, the audience is able to see aspects of Henry's conflicted character as represented by Fluellen and Pistol. The bloodthirsty but intellectual Fluellen is set against the generally cowardly but merciful Pistol.

The English, of course, are not the only ones in this play to commit war atrocities, and this production makes plain that Henry is not the only commander who fights immorally. Thus, directly after Henry kills the prisoners, the production shows Henry cradling Falstaff's dead pageboy in grief and regret. In his edition of *Henry V*, James N. Loehlin discusses the many productions of *Henry V* which have connected these two scenes (8). Some move the death of the boys to precede the killing of the French prisoners in order to suggest that revenge motivates Henry's war crime. Notably, in the source text, Holinshed's version of the battle does exactly this, situating the attack on the boys before Henry's killing of his prisoners. Shakespeare, by contrast, removes the motivation of revenge as the reason the prisoners are killed.

McAnuff's production did not emend the ordering of the action or even attempt to fully integrate the two scenes. Instead, it suggested that both sides made reprehensible choices, something that often occurs in war. Neither the French nor the English could claim they practised ethical warfare. The cost of war was further highlighted by deliberately displaying the bodies of the dead Frenchmen before the audience. While Henry read aloud the casualty lists in Act 4.8, the French carried their dead along the

back of the stage, buckling under the emotional and physical weight of the task. This mournful procession of the dead represented the “ten thousand French / That in the field lie slain” (4.8.74–75) and ensured that the audience was not allowed to ignore the consequences of Henry’s victory. Some of the French soldiers were clearly holding back tears or openly sobbing, while other Frenchmen looked shocked and were beyond grief. When Henry asked, “Where is the number of our English dead?” (4.8.96), and found the number was “But five-and-twenty” (4.8.100), he cheers at the result. The grief-stricken faces of the French, however, reminded the audience of the cost of winning.

This ambiguous treatment of character extended to the end. To balance the horrors at the play’s centre, the play’s resolution with the English King and French Princess was played with affection and flirtation on both sides. Henry seemed genuinely interested in winning Katherine’s heart and respect during his wooing scene. He resolutely followed her around the stage as he tried to converse with her both in English and French. On her side, Katherine blushed and smiled at her soon-to-be husband and led him on a chase around the room. It was a tentative romance, but it was far from simply a business transaction.

Overall, these kinds of performance choices complicate an interpretation of Aaron Krohn’s Henry as either just a warmonger or a hero. Krohn’s Henry comes across as both, or neither, and the constant shifts in tone within this production ensure that his Henry is not particularly loved or hated by his men (an effect that is picked up in reviews of the show, as I will show below). In many ways, the constant shifts make this Henry unreachable. Hurley argues that “feeling is what is most consequential about theatre. Feeling draws us into the symbolic universe of the theatrical performance by connecting us emotionally with its characters — we might identify with the hero or feel anger

towards the villain — and hooking us with its moving narrative structure” (9–10).

Without a clear emotional path to the main character, it is not surprising that many critics were unable to feel fully engaged with Henry. Gary Smith of the *Hamilton Spectator* calls Krohn “a cipher at [the production’s] centre” (Smith, “Henry V Needs Some Character, Not Tricks”). Similarly, Chris Jones of the *Chicago Tribune* suggests that “McAnuff’s leading actor, a young and hyperarticulate American (and that’s always controversial here) named Aaron Krohn ... constantly walks the line between arrogant youth of privilege and effective leader” (Jones, “National Pride, Unexpectedly, in ‘Henry V’ at Stratford Shakespeare Festival”). Although critics such as Smith wanted more charisma of Krohn, or perhaps just clearer signposting in terms of motivation, I would argue that Krohn’s portrayal as a cipher attempted to force the audience to determine their own perspectives on a play about war. The way Henry is presented ensures that the audience cannot simply align themselves with or against the main character. However, it may have denied them an emotional connection to the character throughout most of the production.

But even without an affective connection to the main character, the audience could emotionally connect with other aspects of the play. Like the previous directors of this play at Stratford, McAnuff believed *Henry V* was a play about nationalism, and not just war. As such, he sought to show how the play’s French and English relations map onto the current Canadian consciousness. Canadian undercurrents were evident from the production’s opening moments when, one by one, members of the cast wandered on stage. Some of the actors were reading editions of *Henry V* or miming conversation with one another. A few carried in set pieces on which to sit, while others stared contemplatively into the audience. What was most noticeable, however, was that all of

the actors were in modern dress. The clothing did not just situate the actors as part of the present day, but specifically as members of the Canadian community. Some actors wore Roots clothing, one man was in a Team Canada jersey, while another wore a T-shirt adorned with the classic CBC logo. There was also a clear colour scheme. All of the actors were dressed in red, white, or shades of grey. The first two pick up Canada's national colours, while the latter alludes to the play's moral ambiguity. All of the actors who were on stage then recited the Chorus's opening speech with the lines dispersed between them. The contemporary costumes reminded the audience that the play had particular resonance for those watching: the production seeks to remind audiences that Canadian society, like the world of *Henry V*, is founded on two nations. This choice, while a familiar myth of Canadian politics, is of course an oversimplification that elides, most obviously, Canada's First Nation or indigenous communities. It allows McAnuff, however, as it did Langham forty-odd years ago, to connect the binary politics of *Henry V* to a Canadian context and a still prevalent view of "Canadian" identity.

The rest of the play had the actors in period dress, but the theme of nationalism was emblazoned on their costumes and flags. The St. George's Cross proliferated in the English camp, and the French heraldry was covered in gold fleur-de-lis. This showed national pride but also highlighted the stark division between these warring nations. Flags were of particular importance in this production. The first English flag appeared in Act 1.2 when it was dropped from the fly to hang behind Henry's throne. The flag had an unusual cue: Henry's line, "Call in the messengers sent from the Dauphin" (1.2.221). The English flag was specifically dropped from the fly just before the French herald Montjoy was about to enter to give Henry the Dauphin's insulting gift of tennis balls. The specific

positioning of the flag shows its function in the production. The flag is not needed when only the English are present; it is only used as a display of power against the French.

A similar action occurs on the French side. In Act 2.4, it is only when the Duke of Exeter enters the stage at the King of France's line, "From our brother England" (2.4.75), that the French flags are brought out to decorate the stage. For both the English and French scenes, the national flags focus on the division between the two nations. For each nation, the flags become important when in the presence of the enemy; they are a way of visually positioning each group on opposing sides. Each king decorates his room — or creates the presence of authority — only when faced by representation from the other country.

The production's pervasive nationalism reached a climax when the English soldiers sailed for France just before the intermission. Large English flags transformed into the sails of ships and the soldiers left the stage to exit through the aisles of the theatre. The "ships" sailing through the audience was a particularly poignant effect as it positioned the audience space as representing the English Channel, a neutral space between the two warring nations. However, since the English sail through the audience on their way to France, and since England becomes the conquering nation, there is also a sense, perhaps, that the English ultimately conquer the audience as well. Certainly the audience was afforded closeness and intimacy with the English actors and heraldry that was not afforded the French.

The second half of the play furthers the use of flags in heightened diplomatic exchanges as the two sides come to war. During the intermission, the entire stage floor was covered in the French banner. The flag was then whisked away when the Chorus described "The poor condemnèd English" (4.0.22), so replicating the earlier pattern of

flag cues representing the separate camps. Removing the French flag revealed a stage-sized English flag beneath. Near the end of the Chorus's speech, the English flag rose slowly to hang as a large backdrop for the rest of the battle scenes. Flags were of such importance to the production that the Festival even released a "behind the scenes" video detailing their creation.²²

The symbols on the flags further link the production to Canada. The fleur-de-lis is still a part of Quebec's flag and is on the Canadian Coat of Arms. The red and white colour scheme of the St. George's Cross is also visually familiar since Ontario uses it on its provincial flag. The coat of arms of Montreal uses both a representation of the St. George's Cross and a fleur-de-lis. The French and English flags still resonate in modern Canadian culture, and these echoes perhaps explain why McAnuff and set designer Robert Brill made them so visible in this staging. The symbols and colours are able to remind spectators of Canada even while they watch a period piece. By means of these huge flags, the production took great pains to constantly remind the audience of the separate nations and their opposing colours and ideologies. Even the final wooing scene at the French palace was bathed in blue light, showing that, although the French lost the war and their princess, they retained their distance and sense of nationhood. Even though Henry had conquered France, there was no sense of unity between the two nations. That changed, however, at very end. It was here, at the production's conclusion, that McAnuff demonstrated that his theatrical impulses are in line with Hurley's observation that "via emotional labour, theatre intervenes in how we as a society come to understand ourselves, our values, and our social world" (10).

²² The video is viewable online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCiH17Fi4GM>.

When McAnuff's *Henry V* ended, it seemed the hints about Canadian nationalism and what that might represent, as well as the motivations of the ambiguous king, would remain a mystery. Both themes were important to the production as a whole, as I have outlined, but by the time the production staged the play's final speech, there were no conclusive answers revealed about these two aspects. Unlike Langham's first production half a century earlier in 1956, the lines that referred to the bloody division of England and France in King Henry VI's reign were left intact. In McAnuff's production, they were performed by Aaron Krohn, no longer portraying Henry V, but the Chorus, on a bare stage recently cleared of all flags and symbols of nationalism. Krohn was not in modern Canadian garb, but he had removed his crown and jacket. He was literally stripped of his signifiers. Without these accessories, Krohn's simple outfit echoed the costuming of the opening scene, and this in turn brought the audience back to the present historical moment. Yet the meaning of the play was still left open to interpretation on the question of war and the relevance of the Canadian undertones. It seemed that McAnuff would leave the performance open, as it is in the text.

However, this ending's open quality changed at the very end of the curtain call by focusing on affective response. Just before the final group bow, the cast turned upstage as a group and paused while a large Canadian flag rose to form a backdrop behind the actors. This Canadian flag was only the first of two extra endings in this production. With the houselights cue came a sound cue for The Beatles' "Revolution," which ushered the audience out of the theatre. Both of these moments were particularly jarring. During each performance I attended there were noticeable reactions from the audience. There were a few audible gasps or laughs for the flag, and more than one individual left the theatre singing or humming the song.

Since they have no parallel in the text, these two end pieces were unexpected. For all purposes the play had already concluded, and the audience had accepted the ending by applauding, regardless of whether they experienced closure or an emotional connection with the play's unresolved issues. Then, suddenly, with a single added set piece and a song playing over the speaker systems, unresolved issues of Canadian nationality and war were called back into question. Bruce McConachie and F. Elizabeth Hart would argue that positing this moment as a surprise and creating the opportunity for affect, suggests these moments are more important and should be weighted more heavily:

Because the mind/brain is a part of the body — and because emotions and feelings (which are emotions brought into consciousness) produce physiological responses — affective responses become an ongoing part of the feedback loop of spectating. In effect, the body's pro-active biochemistry shapes each percept and “tells” the mind/brain what is important, enabling the spectator to “pay more attention” to moments in a performance that are more emotionally charged than others. (6)

Each of these two end moments complicated the rest of the performance and provided the audience with an opportunity to look back on the production, re-evaluate the material that was presented, and reinterpret the political and social implications of *Henry V*.

The Canadian flag fit in well with the production's opening image of Canadian actors, but asked the audience to consider how the nationalism that is inherent to this production maps onto current Canadian politics. Certainly, the Canadian flag image is compatible with the immense number of British and French flags used throughout the production. However, because this production's Henry is so ambiguous, and because it is unclear if Henry's claim to France is just, if his methods are moral, and even if his final-

scene wooing is effective, the Canadian flag encouraged each audience member to ask the question: What does *Henry V* have to do with me, or Canada, in 2012?

The Canadian flag does not simply position Henry's conquest of France as a parallel to the British conquest of New France. Nor does it indicate that Canada represents the ideal union of French and English that Henry failed to achieve. I argue that the way the production uses English and French flags to show national divisions establishes the meaning of the Canadian flag in the staging's closing moments as ominous, as a warning. Canada may be currently united under this one banner, but it is a tenuous unity. The inclusion of the lines referencing the weak reign of Henry VI and the impending Hundred Years' War just before the end of the play likewise cautions that our country, too, can be torn apart.

Some critics, such as Robyn Godfrey, rejected the flag as pandering to the Canadian audience ("Review"). Others, like Christopher Hoile, questioned why, if the Canadian angle was so important, McAnuff cast Krohn, an American, in the lead role ("Henry V"). Regardless of whether audience members read deeply into the Canadian flag image or simply saw it as a nationalist gesture, the flag reflected Canadian politics and its relationship to *Henry V* back onto the production, after the performance's formal ending.

The Beatles song playing after the curtain call similarly conditioned an interpretation of the rest of the production. The houselights were already lit and many audience members were standing to exit the theatre when the first line of "Revolution" played over the speakers. Numerous critics mentioned the song in their reviews, noting the connection to the play. J. Kelly Nestruck of the *Globe and Mail* stated that "Only when the Beatles' *Revolution* blasts as we exit the theatre does McAnuff ever tip his hand

as to a possible moral to this story” (Nestruck, “Stratford’s Henry V is Suitably Ambiguous”). For Nestruck, the inserted music shifted the production towards the anti-war camp. Notably, however, this was something that the rest of the performance, and even McAnuff himself, seemed to resist. The *Waterloo Region Record* also seemed to suggest that this final song tipped the scales towards a notion of peace. Acknowledging the ambiguity of the production, Robert Reid nonetheless felt McAnuff’s “production is more of a peace anthem,” specifically citing “The Beatles’ peace song *Revolution*” (“‘Henry V’ an Anthem for Peace”).

While it may be unwarranted to say that a Beatles tune completely decided what the entire production was about for the whole of the audience, the song’s lyrics provide a strong reminder of the kinds of destruction that occur throughout the play. The hanging of Bardolph, the violent slaughter of the French prisoners, and the parade of French bodies all showed the devastation caused by Henry in his pursuit of France. If one interprets the performance through the song’s lyrics, then it no longer matters whether Henry has a legitimate claim to France, because the end cannot and does not justify the means. The song brings the atrocities of war to the forefront, although the lyrics can sound or be interpreted as ironic in this specific theatrical context: “You say you want a revolution / Well, you know / We all want to change the world” and “But if you want money for people with minds that hate / All I can tell you is brother you have to wait” (Beatles). The song suggests a condemnation of Henry, which perhaps tellingly could have been avoided if McAnuff had chosen a more ambiguous song, or even a more ambiguous version of the same song.

There are two recorded versions of The Beatles’ “Revolution”: “Revolution” and “Revolution 1.” “Revolution 1,” which appears on the *White Album*, is slightly slower

and more inconclusive on the notion of war than the more popular rendition on the *Hey Jude* album. It modifies the most condemning line, “But when you talk about destruction / Don’t you know that you can count me out” (Beatles), by adding the word “in” immediately after Lennon says “out.” This version of the song makes it uncertain whether the narrative voice is “in” or “out” of the violent revolution. Playing “Revolution 1” over the speakers would have sustained the uncertainty about war that was established throughout the performance. Notably, however, McAnuff chose the more popular version at the cost of ambiguity. This clear choice positions the song as encouraging a more condemning reading of the war.

The lighthearted quality of the song also added another element to the staging: it is energizing and catchy, and, ultimately, it creates feelings of nostalgia and cheer. In choosing the more popular version of the song, McAnuff resisted the kind of uncanny feeling that might have resulted from playing the lesser known version. The slower pace and slight variations in the less popular version might have asked the audience to listen more closely to the lyrics rather than simply singing along. Instead, this song provided a tongue-in-cheek way for audience members, if they were so inclined, to simplify the question of war.

Performance endings are nebulous creatures; they can take one by surprise and they do not necessarily correspond with the last word of the play. McAnuff’s *Henry V* gave its audience three distinct endings, two of which push the meaning of the play beyond the final blackout. While these endings — or end pieces — do not entirely neutralise the “moral fog” and ambiguity that McAnuff attempted to portray in *Henry V*, I would argue that McAnuff’s penchant for big effect at the end — similar to the endings of *Tempest* and *Twelfth Night* — destabilises his otherwise delicate treatment of politics

and ideology on war. By focusing on affect and creating emotionally charged endings, McAnuff's production diminishes the politically or socially engaged aspects of the text in order to appeal to a wider audience base.

Endings do not always provide audiences with the closure they expect, and they can open up new problems to be solved. Endings can even recalibrate a production's politics: a show one thought was about English and French relations from a long time ago is suddenly about the audience's own nation right now. Because of their nature, performance endings have the ability to go beyond expectations and create emotional resonances within the audience. Endings can shift, change, and push our understanding of the material past its usual boundaries and allow the play to ask old and new questions, and even occasionally, to attempt to provide answers.

4.4 Emotional Relevance

In conclusion, each of the final three productions of Shakespeare that Des McAnuff directed during his tenure as the Festival's Artistic Director from 2008–2012 attempts to evoke an emotional response from its audience at the ending. McAnuff uses stimuli — whether in the form of images, sounds, or costumes — to catch the audience's attention. They are all disruptive, slightly surprising (or even jarring) endings which allow the audience to respond to the production in new ways simply because they have elements which unsettle the expected flow of the play.

These three Shakespearean productions by Des McAnuff have visually stimulating endings, but they ultimately weaken the more interesting political/sexual aspects of the plays. This demonstrates how McAnuff's productions navigate the

complex struggle between showing politically engaged material while still appealing to the Stratford Festival's audience base. While McAnuff chose stimulating and often politically charged productions, perhaps out of a desire to create culturally relevant Shakespearean theatre in a Canadian context, his endings demonstrate that the objective for creating emotive experiences in his productions may be at odds with the narrative of a socially conscious production.

Of course, this might have been a problem that the Festival recognized from the start. Originally, McAnuff was not set to be sole Artistic Director but to hold the position as part of a triumvirate alongside Marti Maraden and Don Shipley. Of the three, McAnuff's area of expertise was aligned with his ability to tour productions and create commercial success: "McAnuff had mounted some Shakespeare at La Jolla, but was best-known for taking shows such as The Who's *Tommy* and *Jersey Boys* from there to Broadway; he would provide the successful musicals that pay Stratford's bills" (Posner and Taylor "Applause (mostly) for Stratford artistic director Des McAnuff"). Maraden and Shipley, by contrast, balanced the economic focus: "Ms. Maraden had been artistic director of the English Theater at the National Arts Center in Ottawa and knew the Canadian theater scene as well as anyone; Mr. Shipley, who had been artistic director of the Dublin Theater Festival for two years, had a Rolodex of names from Europe" (Robertson, "At Stratford Last Man Standing Runs Show"). However, due to "artistic differences," Maraden and Shipley resigned their posts, leaving McAnuff to take full control. Thus, while these competing end goals — presenting Canadian cultural and/or political relevance, and achieving economic "feel-good" production values — are both important to the Stratford Festival, it seems that McAnuff's expertise and the direction

that the Festival valued most, was to create affective experiences which led to economic growth.

McAnuff's Shakespeare productions for the Stratford Festival always ended with spectacle — whether visual or auditory.²³ In his *Tempest*, his *Twelfth Night*, and his *Henry V*, McAnuff focused on endings as a way to emotionally stimulate the audience, to provoke a reaction. By spotlighting a particular song or an individual prop or character — a feather, a wronged Malvolio, or a Canadian flag — McAnuff encourages the audience to measure the rest of the production against this final sound or image. But behind the affective response that the spectacle provides is an opportunity to reflect on the production's themes and interpretation. In particular, these moments allow the audience to consider whether the ending rewrites the message or reconfigures it. Thus, each production references its social and political meanings at the very end. Sometimes the return to the theme attempts to “solve” the problem of the play, concealing the play's complications in favour of a unified message. In all instances, however, the endings inspire emotion and, most importantly, applause.

23 McAnuff's *As You Like It* and *Macbeth* – two Shakespearean productions not discussed in this chapter – both included music leading into the curtain call as a way to augment the production.

5 Conclusion: The Promised End

It would seem more than a little irregular for a dissertation that is so concerned with the importance of endings not to make the most of this final opportunity to provide one last impact on the reader. The examples analyzed throughout my dissertation establish that endings within performance have the ability to modify, complicate, or even upset a staging's politics or themes. Occasionally, this is because the themes of the text are disharmonious with those of the final moments of the performance, and they shift and twist the performance into presenting new potential meanings; other times, the very way a performance ends creates alternate meanings, deepening or modifying an understanding of the play as a whole, and shaping the intangible "work" in innovative ways. The way that closure and endings are complicated by performance endings is especially noticeable in productions of Shakespeare. This is both because Shakespeare leaves his endings especially open to interpretation and because there are so many levels of interpretation layered into his endings after 400 years of analysis and production.

In this dissertation I have discussed how outlier performances which deviated significantly from the rest of their respective productions caused these individual performance to become a separate and unique entity: *Hamlet* (1937, Old Vic); *Merchant of Venice* (2013, Stratford Festival of Canada); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1999, Stratford Festival of Canada); and *Richard II* (2000, Royal Shakespeare Company). On the nights in question, an altered experience was created for the audience specifically because of the radically changed ending. I have also tackled textually modified productions which resketched the expected or established ending in order to pursue a particular political or social message, taking as my examples Gregory Doran's *Titus Andronicus* (1995, National Theatre), Trevor Nunn's *Troilus and Cressida* (1999,

National Theatre), and Sidney Berger's *The Taming of the Shrew* (2004). These changes inform how an audience receives the work as a whole. They may seem like small modifications designed to promote a particular concept, but they also had the ability to upset each production's social politics. Finally, I have discussed the affective endings to the final three productions of director Des McAnuff's tenure as Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival of Canada: *The Tempest* (2010), *Twelfth Night* (2011), and *Henry V* (2012). McAnuff's endings strove to evoke an emotional response from the audience through the inclusion of particular visual or auditory stimuli. These provocations were designed to lead the audience from the play and the performance into the curtain call and to create a lasting impact which would positively influence spectators' memory of the show, while also speaking at the last possible moment to the political, racial, or gendered questions at the heart of each play.

These productions represent a focused spectrum of unconventional endings. However, there are any number of ways that Shakespearean endings can shape the way a performance is read or received. Nigel Wood, in discussing Shakespearean plays, has argued that "Performance study is more than just a history of theatrical precedent. In a significant sense, plays do not end as neatly as that final *exeunt* would seem to suggest." (34). There are silences at the end of Shakespeare's plays. Some are easy to spot; there are characters of a few plays who might have said more at the end if only given the opportunity, such as Hermione, or Isabella, or Cressida. These characters have had their voices silenced. Other kinds of silences potentially invite spectators to read against the grain, to open the text to new possibilities. For instance, new stagings allow us to consider the potential fate of the Goths in *Titus Andronicus* or the potential afterlife of Shylock.

Although a number of these moments have been analyzed in recent scholarship, most theorists have largely focused on understanding Shakespeare's endings from the point of view of narrative or genre. This research tends to isolate the "problems" or "questions" which bear on textual endings, and then discusses how performances have tackled these issues. My work has sought to understand how performance endings trouble textual conclusiveness, especially with Shakespeare's plays. Thus, what I have tried to accomplish through my dissertation is to locate performances with unusual endings to demonstrate how theatrical components such as performance ephemerality, textual adjustments, or affectual signifiers can change the meaning of endings and of closure.

Before turning back to performance-centric analysis, I want to interrogate how narrative- or genre-based analysis has informed the current understanding of Shakespeare's endings and how it propels my own conclusions. In his article "Shakespeare and the Idea of the Future," Clifford Leech compares how endings in plays function against Aristotle's idea of narrative structure in his oft-quoted passage from *The Poetics*. Here, Aristotle suggests that "A beginning is that which is not itself necessarily after anything else" and an end has "nothing else after it." Leech rejects this absolutist definition by stating "Now, the only kind of dramatist who has used such absolute beginnings and endings is the mediaeval writer of miracle plays. If you begin with the creation and end with the last judgment, you can claim to have dramatized the whole story of Time" (213). Leech discusses Shakespeare's works particularly where, at the end of the play, the dramatist tells us, "things both about the past, as we have seen, and about the future" (215). Leech specifies that some Shakespearean genres — notably tragedies since most of the characters are dead by the end — seem therefore to suggest a kind of closure. However, no matter the genre, Leech reminds us that "it will be as well to

remember that, in the future that in some sort lies ahead at the end of a Shakespeare play, there are some things kept firmly from our knowledge” (220).

For most Shakespearean plays, what might seem stable at the end is very easily destabilized through more in-depth questioning. Indeed, Brian Richardson states that with open endings, “the work resists the resolution of its various instabilities and disharmonies. Shakespeare is particularly adept in producing an impression of finality in the theater that is readily problematized by additional analysis” (Richardson 186).

Richardson goes on, tongue-in-cheek, to remark on how his students are always nervous about Prospero’s return trip home, given the condition of the seas at the play’s opening (186). One might equally question Pericles’ ability to safely travel back to Tyre without incident, or the quality of the love between Helena and Demetrius, given that the latter is still under the effects of the love-potion. Malvolio’s revenge is still very much an issue — even if he is portrayed as a fool throughout the play — and even Iago lives on past the ending. Although Iago “is promised a protracted death; yet for the moment he ominously survives. Obliquely it suggests that the principle he stands for, the human impulse to destruction and defilement, is indestructible” (Leech 216). There are any number of possibilities to the end of Shakespeare’s plays, depending on how they are read or staged. Even though the text has ended, the issues frequently still remain.

What is perhaps more crucial to the idea of these open endings is not that Shakespearean narratives are interpretatively unstable, but that when an audience is added to the text, the way of understanding each ending changes. So while narrative and structure in genre have proven to be excellent grounds for initial analysis, they focus on what is absent from the text rather than the transformations that occur once audiences are added. As such, my project is more concerned not with dividing the Shakespearean plays

into groups and categories and figuring out which plays are potentially closed or open, but with understanding how performance enables new potential readings more generally. Paul Prescott notes that “The audience is a key constituent of Shakespeare’s endings. Not only are we required to liberate Prospero or pardon Puck, but we are also capable of intervening in the performance in ways limited only by the extent of our imaginations. We might through the quality of our silence serve to magnify the intensity of the closing moments” (66–67). It is through performance that the challenge of interpreting Shakespeare’s endings is truly brought to the forefront. To locate and even create silences or other kinds of interpretative opportunity is, I suggest, a condition of performance, a way to bring the text to life. Actors search for “character motivation,” directors hunt out the implicit meaning behind the themes or ideas, and audiences question what follows the final lines. Whether or not Aaron’s child dies or lives is a question that can only be answered in performance and can only have repercussions for performance. Whether Fortinbras looks or acts as if he will be a good leader for Denmark is equally something that only performance brings to light. Shakespeare’s endings in performance provide an opportunity for audiences to reconfigure their understanding of the work as a whole. The endings I discuss both speak back against silence (the silence of closure or of silencing particular kinds of voices) and yet further demonstrate that silence can also operate, for performance, as a potential means of developing innovative ideas. This is because staging the work creates new opportunities for making the material relevant and new according to the social, economic, or political expectations of its audience base. Beginnings and middles may provide like opportunities, but it is the ending which does so while breaking the barrier between fiction and reality, simultaneously sharing a final moment with the audience and returning them to reality.

What I hope to have touched on throughout this work is that although Hamlet claims that “The rest is silence,” looking ahead to his own ending, even Shakespeare knew that was not quite the case. Forty-seven lines follow Hamlet’s proclamation — including, perhaps, the sound of shooting cannons. Clearly, within production, there is more that can be staged or presented to an audience in order to develop a sense of closure or, perhaps, in order to help the audience re-evaluate the work as a whole. In *Poetic Closure*, Barbara Herrnstein-Smith states that “there are few things, good or evil, of which we can say without some emotion of uneasiness, ‘the end will never come’.” Haunted, perhaps, by the specter of that ultimate arbitrary conclusion, we take particular delight, not in all endings, but in those that are designed” (1). While most of Herrnstein-Smith’s work is concerned with how poems end, Smith also speaks about the motivations behind endings in general and states that the ultimate goal of an ending is to create an opportunity for the reader — or in our case, audience— to re-experience the piece as a whole:

Although stability implies composure and the absence of further expectations, this does not mean that our experience of the work ceases abruptly at the last word. On the contrary, at that point we should be able to re-experience the entire work, not now as a succession of events, but as an integral design. ... [T]he “ultimate stability” of the work refers not to a point at which the observer’s or reader’s experience is “finished,” but to a point at which, without residual expectations, he can experience the structure of the work as, at once, both dynamic and whole (35–36).

For Smith, the idea of stability is a moment when the audience can understand the work as a whole alongside the ending. However, this is the moment, I argue, when the work is

most subject to reinterpretation. Thus, it is because of these moments — where the work becomes “stable,” to use Smith’s term — that the implications of an ending can function to destabilize the production. Thus, the closing moments reinterpret the rest of the play according to the new information, images, sensations, or questions that are, in that moment, brought to the forefront. Within the closing moments of a production, any presumption of a static nature of the text — of a single kind of “authentic Shakespeare” — is fractured. For it is here, above all other positions in the play, in the dying moments of the work, that some kind of sense of the ending can actually breathe new life into the production.

Gower: So, on your patience evermore attending,
New joy wait on you! Here our play has ending.

(Pericles Scene 22.124–125).

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