<h1 style="text-align:center">PART XXVI</h1>

Shakespeare and the Performing Arts

Solange Ribeiro de Oliveira

Shakespeare's oeuvre has become a communal, transcultural, and transhistorical artistic monument, inspiring a reverence summed up in the term "Bardolatry." Just what is meant by "Shakespeare's works" is, however, by no means straightforward. To the literary scholar, as to the layperson, the phrase may bring to mind printed texts (see Part XXIV, "Shakespeare and the Book"). This simple solution is undone by the inexactitude of the word "text." Shakespeare's plays exist as *multiple* texts, whose variations may be accounted for by many circumstances, including alterations made for, or during, performance. (See Part XXII, "Production History.") There is no originary text, no perfect author-sanctioned script. Even the First Folio texts are, in a sense, copies, based on promptbooks, quartos, or foul papers, and mediated by scribes and compositors. (See Chapter 50, "The First Folio.")

To make the matter more complicated, in an age of recycling, the name "Shakespeare" calls up a host of interpenetrating works, multiple creations and re-creations that may be taken as tributes but also as attempts at supplanting the cultural oppression of "the canon," at winning cultural capital for new texts. Examples include dramatic rewritings (see Chapter 173, "Popular Adaptations for Theater") – plays like Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1967) or T. E. Bond's *Lear* (1971) – but also versions of Shakespeare's plays devised for other performing arts: theater, film, television, video, radio, music, and dance. All of these adaptations involve some sort of "intermedial" transposition. (See Part XXVIII, "Shakespeare and Media History.")

Performing, performance studies, and performativity

The label "the *performing* arts" originally served to distinguish art-as-enactment (theater, dance, music) from art-as-object (painting, sculpture, architecture). The distinction no longer seems as firm as it once did, since the rise of "performance studies" in the 1950s and 1960s. Almost simultaneously, writers in linguistics (J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* [1955]), anthropology (Victor Turner, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society* [1957]), and psychology (Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* [1959]) called attention to the way seemingly objective entities such as "word," "society," and "self" come into being only when they are performed. The stability of such entities has been further undermined by the work of politically committed critics such as Frantz Fanon (*Peau noir, masques blancs* [1952], *Black Skin, White Masks* [1967]), Judith Butler (*Gender Trouble* [1990]), and Jonathan Goldberg (*Sodometries* [1994]), who have demonstrated how race, gender, and sexual identities likewise exist only as roles to be performed – or subverted. "Performativity" is the critical term that covers these insights about the performance of identities.

Performance studies in the social and political worlds have inspired a rethinking of performance in the theater. Performance studies, originally inspired by the theater, have come full circle. In theatrical performance, each staging is a collaborative, radically contingent interpretation, dependent not only on scenic components but also on the contributions of actors and directors, who often rework play scripts in order to engage contemporary issues. The centrality of theatrical performance has been underlined by the emergence of stage-centered criticism of Shakespeare, traditionally traced to the publication of J. L. Styan's *The Shakespeare Revolution: Criticism and Performance in the Twentieth Century* (1977). The book forged a link between theater history and the imaginative re-creation of dramatic texts. In such studies, Shakespeare's scripts are regarded not as self-contained *objects* but as plans for *events*. Performance studies insist that those events, those enactments of Shakespeare's words, are embedded within the larger performances that constitute national identity, society, self, gender, and sexuality.

While critics of the 1950s and 1960s were extending ideas of performance *outside* the theater, actors, directors,

and designers were revolutionizing ideas of performance *inside* the theater, in the form of "happenings," "performance events," "experimental theater," narrative dance, and productions designed against the grain of the text. A mandatory historical reference point for the study of contemporary Shakespearean performances is Peter Brook's 1970 Royal Shakespeare Company white-walled production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Proclaimed as the theatrical event of the year, it presented Brook's innovative use of the empty space, nonillusionist theater as a means to recuperate the "authentic" Shakespeare. Freed from realistic representation by the cinema, the theater could return to the original simplicity of the bare Elizabethan stage. Brook's performance drew influences from Chinese acrobatics, the circus, and the theories of Carl Jung, providing a first template for an intercultural approach.

ADAPTATION VERSUS APPROPRIATION

Performance criticism relies on the idea of "text as process, as an interweaving of variable elements" (Bulman 2), reflecting a postmodern desire to replace the logocentric idea of theater with one in which performance becomes the site of cultural and aesthetic contestation. In the same line, poststructuralist criticism has called attention to radically destabilizing contingencies of performance, which make theatrical meaning a participatory act: the material conditions of performance, the dynamics of audience response, the possibility of error latent in live performance, and the physical presence of actors. On the other hand, as argued by adverse critics, performance criticism, under the influence of literary theories, tends to analyze productions from feminist, psychoanalytic, cultural, materialist, or deconstructive perspectives, which limit the free play of the imagination enjoyed by readers of Shakespeare's plays as literature. It comes down to a question of "adaptation" versus "appropriation."

"Adaptation" can refer to different forms of creative engagement with the canon, but individual adaptations are placed by critics in varying, often overlapping, categories. (See Chapter 138, "Translation, Adaptation, and 'Tradaptation.'") To simplify matters, it is helpful to consider two basic types of creative engagement: (1) adaptations respectful of the original written text and (2) appropriations for new purposes. As defined by Julie Sanders, adaptations "retain a kind of fidelity to the source-text but consciously rework it within the conventions of another alternative medium or genre," whereas appropriations "deploy Shakespearean texts as springboards for more contemporary themes as well as settings, often discarding his dialogue wholesale" (Sanders 2).

In adaptations and appropriations alike, the reception context determines changes in setting and style. Both changes are closely tied to how the work is modified over time and from one reception space to another. In the twentieth century, for instance, *Henry V* was reenvisioned

as a play about the Second World War, about Vietnam, about the Falklands crisis, and about the two Gulf wars. As Sonia Massai puts it, "[W]orld-wide appropriations of Shakespeare stretch, challenge and modify our sense of what 'Shakespeare' is.... Shakespeare can best be understood as the sum of the critical and creative responses elicited by his work" (Massai 6).

Adaptations and appropriations thus give us multiple "Shakespeares," ranging from comparatively straightforward renderings to radical transformations inspired by the tenets of feminism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, queer theory, and postmodernism rather than reverence for the literary canon. (See Chapters 250, "Materialist and Political Criticism," and 251, "Identity and Subjectivity.") The dramatist becomes inseparable from debates about contemporary issues, including the postcolonial mindset and the subaltern experience. Varying counterdiscourses seek to deconstruct significations of authority and power enshrined in the canonical text, "to release its strangle-hold on representation and, by implication, to intervene in social conditioning" (Kidnie 67).

MULTIPLE CULTURES, MULTIPLE PERFORMANCE MODES

The cross-cultural circumstances of Shakespeare adaptation since the 1960s have produced interlocked, mutually referential re-creations, which may transform a specific play through adaptations in multiple performance modes. Such is the case with *Romeo and Juliet*, which, besides the original text, has been rendered in myriad productions embracing film, television, video, symphonic and operatic music, ballet, musical comedy, and popular songs, as well as stage performances. Three plays have been adapted most regularly: *The Tempest*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet* (Sanders 52). *The Tempest* became canonical in postcolonial studies of the late twentieth century, harnessed as they were to thinking about the British imperial project and the role of the United States on the international scene. A few postcolonial appropriations stand out: David Malouf's *Blood Relations*, Philip Osment's *This Island's Mine*, and Aimé Césaire's *Une Tempête*.

Othello, by virtue of its connection with racism, has also become a source for re-creations reflecting on the tensions of modern multicultural societies, as exemplified by Djanet Sears's *Harlem Duet* (1997). A prequel/sequel to *Othello*, it tells the story of a first wife abandoned for a white woman by the protagonist, with hardly any citations of the play in the dialogue. Conversely, Robert Lepage's *Elsinore*, a one-man show described by the author as "variations" on *Hamlet*, only uses Shakespeare's words, but scenes are heavily condensed, occasionally spliced together, and overlaid with spectacular visual and theatrical effects.

Partly owing to the influence of Freud and psychoanalysis, *Hamlet* stood at the center of the twentieth-century
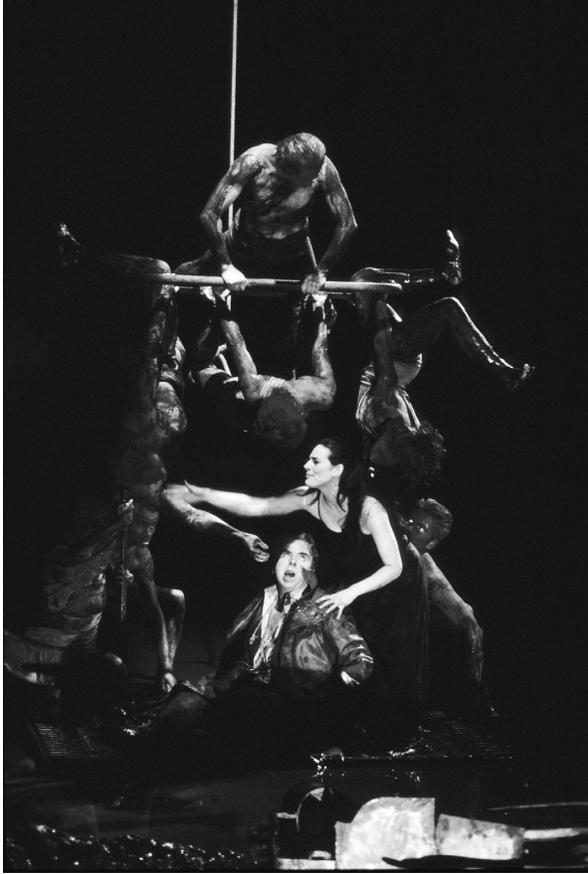
286. Robert Lepage production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, National Theatre, London, 1992. Donald Cooper/photostage.co.uk.

literary canon. There are even comic appropriations of the play, such as Charlotte Jones's *Humble Boy* (2001), so the prince remains the culminating role for aspiring actors. Indisputably, contemporary rewritings such as Charles Marowitz's *Hamlet*, Edward Bond's *Lear*, and Paula Vogel's *Desdemona* (*A Play about a Handkerchief*) disrupt Shakespearean production by making the new texts seem at once recognizable and strange. (See Chapter 171, "Shakespeare Spin-offs.") These adaptations raise an important theoretical question: whether the distance between a Shakespearean text and its re-creation is ample enough to allow the new play to be described as its own work.

Appropriation is well exemplified in Robert Lepage's postmodern production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, performed in repertory at London's National Theatre from July 9, 1992, through January 6, 1993. (See Figure 286.) The performance illustrated the Canadian writer-director-actor-designer's acknowledged skill as an image maker famous for radical acts of technological restaging that frontally oppose the grand theatrical narratives that would draw national and cultural boundaries around "Shakespeare." Foregrounding the traffic between linguistic and cultural identities, Lepage's multicultural cast included British, Québécois, Anglo-Indian,

Anglo–East Indian, and Anglo-African performers. The mise-en-scène deployed black upstage screens surrounding a stage covered with gray mud, with a watery pool at the center. The responses of audiences and critics, mostly unsympathetic, could be interpreted as the expressions of postcolonial anxieties about gender, race, and nationality, though minority opinion called it the most original production since Peter Brook's earlier version. Otherwise, the staging marked what has become a widely accepted distinction. In contrast with Anglophone productions, foreign-language performances such as Lepage's, unable fully to explore Shakespeare's verbal resourcefulness, emphasize scenographic and physical modes, which often redefine the meaning of the play.

Another Lepage production, intrinsically and historically interesting, is his *Elsinore* (1997), a one-man adaptation of *Hamlet* in which Lepage successively played Ophelia, Polonius, and Claudius in performances that ranged from Ottawa to London to Edinburgh to Brussels to New York. Again, spectacle was foregrounded at the expense of the text, with projected images, electronically rendered voice and sound effects, and doubling techniques. The revolving wall/floor/ceiling on and around which Lepage moved was raised and lowered. What was presented was a performance of Shakespeare's text as seen through its history of production. In short, Margaret Kidnie remarks, "Lepage was not playing Hamlet, but *Hamlet*" (Kidnie 99).

Across such different venues and modes, the cultural power enshrined in Shakespeare may be brought to serve the interests of different cultural groups. In formerly colonized contexts, transcultural adaptations often involve a change of language, place, or time period. (See Part XV, "International Encounters.") This transplantation can yield all sorts of offshoots, from attempts to present Shakespeare "straight" to radical, subversive rewritings. Illustrations of this heterogeneity are legion, so only a few examples must suffice.

In New Zealand, a disturbing meeting of cultures underlies *Te Tangata Whai-Rawa o Weniti*, a filmed version of *The Merchant of Venice* by the Maori director and actor Don Selwyn. Released in 2002 and subsequently screened both at festivals of indigenous films and to global Shakespearean audiences, the film foregrounds the negotiation between the "local" and the "global." (See Chapter 142, "Local, Global, and Glocal.") Aspects of traditional Maori culture and language accessible only to New Zealand audiences blend with international conventions and signifiers of high European culture: women wear Renaissance costumes, although Portia is presented as an indigenous princess. The script adapts a play in Maori, and the soundtrack includes traditional songs, relying on the sounds of violins and on the Maori waiata. Although not an aggressively postcolonial production, it reverberates with historical, colonial, racial, and religious issues. As the film ends, the camera closes in on a canvas displaying the word HOLOCAUST. The reference is pertinent both to

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Europeans and to the local audiences, who may associate it with forced evictions and massacres typical of colonial history.

Not surprisingly, in Latin America, owing to the diversity of cultures and of political situations, encounters with Shakespeare likewise take diverse, complex directions, which may be only briefly discussed here. (See Chapters 146, "Shakespeare in Iberian and Latin American Spanishes," and 272, "World Cinema.") Whether former colonies reverence his legacy or resist and subvert it depends on several variants, such as contrary trends of internationalism and nationalism. Particular adaptations may serve either to support or to contest the status quo. Parody often contributes to popularizing the plays. These adaptations may simultaneously explore cultural values to criticize local elites and their preference for European values over national ones.

In Mexico, since 1990, some stage directors have used the Shakespearean text without overtly relocating it. Others have turned to radical appropriations as vehicles for the exploration of local political agendas. In his *¿Tu También, Macbeth?* (You, too, Macbeth?, 1995), Ángel Norzagaray explores scenes and speeches from *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Richard II*, and *Henry V* to reflect on Mexico's political, economic, and cultural deterioration. Mexican theater director and performance artist Jesusa Rodríguez, has likewise explored Shakespeare for the discussion of social questions. Her *¿Como va la noche, Macbeth?* (*How goes the night Macbeth?*, 1980) is a minimalist exploration of sleeplessness as a political metaphor. So also in Chile, in times of military repression, Shakespeare could function as a vehicle "above suspicion" to contest the government. Pablo Neruda's *Romeo y Julieta* (staged in 1964 at the Instituto del Teatro de la Universidad de Chile to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth) had a broader target: family strife turns out to be a representation of international conflict and warfare.

Brazil, seconded by Mexico and Argentina, has proven to be fertile ground for the flourishing of Latin American Shakespeares. (See Chapter 194, "The Cultural Politics of Spanish Translations.") Besides translations, which even before independence in 1822 influenced the development of Brazilian theater, the nineteenth century added an important appropriation of *Othello*: *Leonor de Mendonça*, by Antônio Gonçalves Dias. The most important dramatic offshoot of Brazilian Romanticism, the play is likewise noteworthy because of its Prologue, in which the author discusses the relevance of the plot for the criticism of contemporary manners.

For Brazilian Shakespearean re-creations, a mandatory reference point has been *A Tempestade* (*The Tempest*, 1976) by Augusto Boal (1931–2009). Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008, this legendary political-theater director and author, internationally hailed as the inspiration behind twenty-first–century forms of performance activism, is best known for founding in Brazil The Theater

of the Oppressed, which evolved into The International Theater of the Oppressed Organisation, an institution against all forms of discrimination. In his writings, which have influenced many artists in new media, Boal expands Hamlet's argument on the theater as a mirror of human nature into a consideration of this mirror as a site where reality can be reached in order to be transformed. His *A Tempestade* (*The Tempest*) stands as a denunciation of North American neocolonialism, with Caliban as a representative of all oppressed minorities. Formally, the inclusion of typically Brazilian cartoons and country music adds to the interest of the play.

Brazil's celebrated *telenovelas* (TV soap operas) have also fallen under the Bard's spell. Working as bridges between popular and elite culture, they borrow from separate texts or re-create whole plays, in parodic constructions such as Aguinaldo Silva's *Pedra sobre Pedra* (*Stone on Stone*). In this *telenovela*, *Romeo and Juliet* becomes the story of the fierce rivalry between two lineages of powerful farmer/politicians in northeastern Brazil. The love story is duplicated: the lovers' parents, former lovers themselves, having been forced to marry other partners, witness their children's love. However, like most soap operas, the *telenovela* ends happily, with the young people's marriage.

LANGUAGES OF PERFORMANCE

In this cross-cultural, performatively free environment, the term "languages" can refer not only to systems of words like English, French, Maori, Spanish, and Portuguese but to systems of signification that include vision, music, and body movement. Conventional language can indeed be the problem when Shakespeare is re-created across cultures and across modes of performance. One privilege enjoyed by foreign productions is the new translations made for specific stagings. (See Chapters 185, "Canonization and Obsolescence: Classic Translations versus Retranslations," and 189, "Translating Shakespeare for Performance.") These have enabled directors such as Ariane Mnouchkine, Yukio Ninagawa, and Peter Zadek to explore the plays more freely, to adapt the source text to current situations, free from the concerns with textual fidelity that may lead Anglophone performances to preserve old techniques and methods. (See Chapter 142, "Local, Global, and Glocal.")

On the other hand, specific problems may beset foreign productions, especially for performers in postcolonial cultures like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, and South Africa. (See Part XVII, "Shakespeare as Cultural Icon," and Chapter 166, "*Coriolanus* in South Africa.") In the project of colonization, Shakespeare was often naturalized as a universal, timeless genius, whose plays should provide actors with unmediated, nonproblematic access to Western cultural values. Underlying such culturally colonized orientations is the belief that Shakespeare's texts hold immanent meanings, which directors and actors merely interpret rather than create. In fact, this proves far

from true. Texts may function as foreign objects, vehicles for imperialist domination embedded in the many ideologically coded theatrical practices that shape meaning. There is also no underestimating the force of acting conventions, voice training, and bodily skill, all of them potentially alienating to postcolonial actors. Feminist theorists, who have insisted on the analysis of the body as object of the male gaze, have provided important analyses of the ways in which actors' bodies bear cultural inscription, which will of course vary from culture to culture.

The main problem, however, concerns language as a system of words. To circumvent this difficulty, foreign directors sometimes emphasize spectacle rather than dialogue. They may even take a radical stance, disarticulating linguistic aspects, as did Robert Lepage in his production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the National Theatre in London in 1992. (See Figure 286.) Lepage did not require his troupe to strive for perfect delivery. His actors spoke Shakespeare's English as foreigners. As a gesture of ideological demystification, Lepage even dared to parody Laurence Olivier by instructing the actors playing the mechanicals in the play to do bad imitations of Olivier on the very stage of the Olivier Theatre, which the British actor had helped found. Not surprisingly, there were unfavorable reviews, including complaints against the excess of physical activity (which distracted attention from the dialogue) and the actors' carelessness with words, which made hearing difficult.

Performances across media

In addition to modifications of a text over time and differing receptions of adaptations in different spaces, each performing art presents its own specific problems. Each of the performing arts brought together in this part – opera, ballet, musical comedy, symphonic music, pantomime, puppetry, jazz – comes with its own media of communication, its own history, its own procedures, its own places and times of performance. Cross-fertilization among performance traditions has always characterized productions of Shakespeare's works. As W. B. Worthen observes, Shakespeare's plays in their original performances shared traditions, techniques, and physical space with other modes of performance such as bear baiting, jigs, and sword-fighting contests (see Chapter 22, "Entertainments: Baitings, Dances, Contests"), sermons (see Chapter 89, "Theater and Religion"), "dumb shows" (see Chapter 258, "Pantomime"), and puppetry (see Chapter 259, "Puppetry"). Shakespeare performance in the twenty-first century is no different:

> Today it shares that cultural horizon with a wide range of live and mediatized enactments, modes of dramatic writing and of theatrical and nontheatrical performance that define what we think Shakespeare – or any scripted drama – can be made to do as performance. As the

history of modern theatre attests, Shakespearean drama not only occupies the sphere of the "classic," but also has frequently provided the site for innovation in the style, substance, and practice of modern performance.

> (Worthen 2)

The distinction Worthen alludes to here between "live" and "mediatized" performance is not as stark as it might at first seem. Film may be fundamentally a recorded medium, and many people's experience of symphonic music may come primarily via CDs, iPods, and radio, but performance today, even in the theater, often involves a fusion of live and recorded elements. (See Chapter 202, "Visual Projections.") That seems particularly true of Shakespeare's works, which have proved highly adaptable to other modes of performance.

Television

Let us begin with a performative medium located on the curious borderland between presence and distance, between "live" and "mediatized." Adaptations of Shakespeare's plays to television have been a relatively neglected field of inquiry, despite the commonplace remark that Shakespeare, were he alive today, would be a cinema or TV scriptwriter. He would be drawn to the most popular performance venues available to him. In that case, he of course would have to make considerable adjustments in his art, since innovations in a medium inevitably shape perception. The variety of resources available to television include different genre styles, reminiscent of newscasts, soap operas, commercials, documentaries, filmic effects, or even a "retro" look from earlier generations of television programming.

Whether these prove suitable for Shakespearean adaptations is another matter. The possibility of reaching an audience as varied as Shakespeare's, and a much wider one in fact, of turning his works into a world heritage rather than a national one, may be an advantage. On the other hand, the use of mass media inevitably imposes concessions, including some negative ones regularly observed by critics. These include the unsuitability of the small screen for representation of the conventional play-within-the-play, the constraint of containing a play within a slotted playing time, and the difficulty of juxtaposing elaborate verbal, often metaphorical, constructions with an eminently visual and often realist medium.

Notwithstanding these and other problems, TV technologies have been used to broadcast Shakespeare's plays, or portions of them, as early as the beginnings of the television industry. (See Chapter 270, "TV and Early TV Audiences in Europe and the United States.") The best known may be the thirty-seven productions produced and broadcast by BBC/Time-Life in the late 1970s and 1980s. Adverse critics objected that although television with its small screen and poor-quality image is necessarily a dialogue-intensive medium, Shakespeare's heavily conventional stage language proved ill-suited to the typical

three-camera studio format. Others complained about the inevitably confined arrangements of actors within the small frame, and about distractions in viewers' homes, which would interfere with reception. After the conclusion of the *Complete Works* series in 1985, the BBC explored other ways of broadcasting Shakespeare on TV: the documentary format of BBC2's *Bard on the Box* series in 1994, the *Animated Tales* on BBC2 (1992–94), and productions of live theater transmitted on BBC4 (Peter Brook's *Hamlet* in 2002, and *Richard II* and *Measure for Measure* from Shakespeare's Globe in 2003 and 2005).

Each of these offered distinctive answers to the problems and opportunities posed by the medium, resulting in a wide range of overlapping possible formats. One of the most interesting was the configuration adopted in *Shakespeare Re-told*, a four-part sequence mounted in autumn 2005 and modeled on the award-winning *Canterbury Tales* series televised two years earlier. Unlike *10 Things I Hate about You* or *She´s the Man*, Hollywood films that hardly acknowledge their indebtedness to *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Twelfth Night*, respectively, the 2005 BBC series presented itself as "four modern interpretations of Shakespeare's plays" in ninety-minute productions of *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Macbeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The goal of these productions was to achieve the dramatic effects made for, not translated to, television. Setting, language, and action were reconceived, seeking to bring Shakespeare closer to twenty-first–century British TV audiences. The manipulation of image and sound aimed at making the production less dependent on long expository dialogue. Through wholesale updating of language and situation, the series tried to overcome the lack of fit between theatrical and televisual media apparent in previous attempts.

In general, the series drew on a familiar range of filming techniques: low lighting, tracking shots, extreme close-ups, camera positions strikingly above or below eye height, digitally enhanced images, and point-of-view shots. These had once seemed more cinematic than televisual but, through constant use, could be decoded and interpreted by TV viewers. The texts were fully rescripted, keeping only short and well-known phrases inserted into present-day dialogue. (See Chapter 195, "Shakespeare without Sweat: Updating and Simplifying Shakespeare's English.") As a consequence, some viewers objected that the loss of Shakespearean language made the plays unrecognizable, although others argued that Shakespeare's works and texts are not self-identical.

It can be argued that strategies of visual narration peculiar to the televisual medium like the ones adopted in *Shakespeare Re-told* may contribute to the interpretation of the works and to the emergence of a peculiarly televisual aesthetic. Camera work and editing thus help construct viewers as media-literate readers, who become aware not just of a story being told but *how* it is told. At key moments, specific techniques are linked to character and narrative. In the case of *Macbeth*, visual surroundings are often substituted for expository dialogue, and certain devices convey notions such as villainy and ambition. An artful and fragmented filming style is adopted so that, solely through camera work, the presence of the weird sisters can be suggested.

Equivalent devices come up in *Much Ado about Nothing*, a play largely dependent on the theme of the deceitfulness of appearances; encounters, either accidentally overheard or purposely staged to deceive a hidden listener, may have tragic consequences, as when Claudio is tricked into believing in Hero's infidelity. To drive this point home, in *Shakespeare Re-told*, viewers of *Much Ado about Nothing* are tricked by the camera into making false assumptions, which must later be corrected. Characters often obtain information through mobile phones, text messages, and television cameras, technologies of remote observation that, in our mediatized culture (the play suggests), may convey both reliable and false information. The solution of the various misunderstandings by face-to-face exchange, which finally exposes Don's (Hero's slanderer's) deceit, reinforces the suspicion of telecommunication, shown as seldom wholly reliable in our increasingly mediatized world.

When *Shakespeare Re-told* was first broadcast in England, it was used to promote the change from analog to digital television. Each of the four shows ended with an invitation to press a red button, so as to go interactive and have access to four options: (a) interviews with actors, writers, and authors who worked on the series; (b) a voice-over commentary on the choice of vocabulary while actors repeated their performance; (c) information about early conditions of theatrical production; and (d) a thematic comment relating the plays to modern contexts.

For those who had only analog television, the invitation to press a nonexisting red button on their remote controls led to the suggestion of the existence of another experience as inaccessible to them as the fairy world was to the young lovers of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The scenes are presented as if they were played on a theater stage. The viewer has the impression of walking through a stage door, not of entering a television studio; the set, the costumes, and the sound of a light breaker at the beginning and end of each sequence all contribute to the suggestion of a live theatrical, not a filmed, performance. The implicit suggestion is that the genuine production of Shakespeare's plays is theatrical and not televisual. In Michèle Willems's words, "producing Shakespeare's works with the resources normally expected on the small screen has too often resulted in attracting attention to the fact that Shakespeare did not write for television" (Willems 83).

FILM

Most people now first come to Shakespeare not through his texts or theatrical performances but through some visual representation: a film, an advertisement, or a subgenre of

fiction. The number of Shakespearean re-creations for the cinema is legion, as even a cursory look at the Web site of the electronic *World Shakespeare Bibliography* will reveal. One need only think of the multiplication of film spin-offs of *Hamlet*, from Laurence Olivier's Freud-imbued 1948 black-and-white rendition, through Franco Zeffirelli's Gothic version of 1990 and Kenneth Branagh's "full text" of 1996, to Michael Almereyda's 2000 *Hamlet*, set in a millennial Manhattan, a reference to Akira Kurosawa's 1960 play *The Bad Sleep Well*. (See Chapter 272, "World Cinema.")

Similar interactions can be explored between William Reilly's *Men of Respect* (1990) and Ken Hugh's *Joe Macbeth* (1955), both gangland ruminations on *Macbeth*. Here also belong Gus van Sant's transposition of the Hal–Falstaff relationship of the Henriad in *My Own Private Idaho* (1991) and Orson Welles's film version of those plays, his 1966 *Chimes at Midnight* (Sanders 52). As generally happens to articulations with the performing arts, such cinematic rewritings are often as much in dialogue with other adaptations as with the Shakespearean source text.

This proliferation falls in well with the notion of modern film as the most inclusive and synthesizing of performance forms, which fulfills and perfects the representational ambitions of theater. With the possibilities offered by its visual and performance techniques, by editing and camera effects, film also has the peculiar power to present personal, subjective visions, to subvert theatrical tradition, and to challenge conventional, "authoritative" readings.

A number of late twentieth-century productions particularly exemplify this deconstructive bent. One may mention here two definitely auteurist appropriations of *The Tempest*, Derek Jarman's homonymous film of 1976 and Peter Greenaway's fabulous if obscure *Prospero's Books* (1996). Sharing an antirealist aesthetic marked by an interest in the imagery of Renaissance hermeticism and a fascination with masklike styles, both films interrogate content as well as form. Jarman disrupts the play's status as an icon of high culture by mixing pop and high-cultural references while simultaneously stressing transgressive sexualities.

Greenaway's film, in agreement with postcolonial readings of the play, can also be seen as a reflection on colonial oppression. Its emphasis, however, is on form, spectacle being explored at the expense of the spoken text. The use of high-definition television and video paintbox technology, overlaying and recombining images, saturates every frame with visual references. Greenaway electronically manipulates images, animating pictures of books, inspired by those of Athanasius Kircher and sometimes overwritten by a human hand, a visual pun on the idea of "digital."

In Douglas Lanier's words, *Prospero's Books* "converts Shakespearean narrative into non-narrative, non-verbal bodily forms, into mime, acrobatics, static live tableaux, masque-like processionals, hyper-theatrical costuming and abstract dance movement in what amounts to a survey of bodily performance arts" (Lanier, "Drowning" 198). In addition, Lanier argues, "the interest in nudity in this production emphasizes the body as a medium, giving the cinematic image the physical immediacy of live theater, so as to overcome the textlike two-dimensionality of the screen" (199).

Paradoxically, the practice of recording performances has given rise to the canonizing power of video. Serious critical attention to performative differences emerged in the 1960s, at the same time as 16 mm prints of Shakespearean films became available. Recorded performances are raised to the condition of texts, stable artifacts rather than contingent, ephemeral experiences. As Lanier remarks:

> Even as we have hailed the death of the monolithic text in favor of performative variants, the technological apparatus that has encouraged this theoretical revolution, the VCR, has been subtly re-establishing, at another level, a new monolithic and stable "text," the ideal performance, recorded on tape, edited and reshaped in post-production, available for re-viewing. If the central insight of performance criticism is that performance is radically contingent, open to historical and material pressures that may not outlast a performance, the stability of the records … may be false to the historicity performance criticism seeks to address.… It thereby robs a live performance of some of its power, the sense that a potentially unpredictable situation has been made almost heroically to conform to an actor's bodily will. (Lanier, "Drowning" 202)

Music

Music, song and dance, and their attendant metaphors mark a strong presence in the Shakespearean canon. Shakespeare himself used recognizable popular songs of his day. Many of his plays include set-piece songs that either invite or require the provision of musical settings. (See Chapter 20, "Music.") In some cases, music functions as an integral theme and even agent – as with Ariel's magical songs in *The Tempest* or, in *Hamlet*, the sound of trumpets to signify martial or supernatural threats. This use of music as a producer of meaning and effect reaches Shakespearean performances in our own time, branching out under different guises, from central orchestral, symphonic, and choral forms to merely allusive glimpses in operas, films, ballets, musicals, and songs. As with filmic adaptations, it is next to impossible to trace all the afterlives of Shakespeare's texts in music, with varying sorts of filtration and mediation: quotations, borrowings, conscious citations, settings, and wholesale adaptations traceable to the lyrics, dialogue, plotlines, and characters of his drama. Apart from their manifestations in discursive genres like opera and ballet, many such compositions are not sustained responses to a whole play but mere readings of specific aspects.

Musical responses to the plays, initially in a theatrical context, frequently moved out into the concert hall or classical recordings. (See Chapter 257, "Symphonic Music.") Through the centuries, compositions by Henry Purcell, Felix Mendelssohn, Claude Debussy, Jean Sibelius, and Gerald Finzi take this course, as does Ralph Vaughan Williams's work for Stratford-upon-Avon productions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and the Henriad. In late seventeenth-century performances, certain plays, particularly *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*, were popular choices to which songs and music were added. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* inspired Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* (1692), crucial to the history of opera and particularly to the play's musical afterlives. (See Chapter 254, "Opera.") From both dramatic and musicological viewpoints, the spectral presence of Purcell's early baroque experiment has been noted, reaching modern creations such as Benjamin Britten's 1960 operatic adaptation. Purcell also authored *The Enchanted Island* (1695), a semi-opera based on *The Tempest*.

In the eighteenth century, Thomas Arne and William Boyce wrote music for the commercial playhouses, including some pieces for the leading actor-manager, David Garrick. Such was the impact of the compositions that even songs originally unconnected with the play texts became inextricably associated with Shakespeare in the popular memory, such as a dirge with lyrics by William Collins for a production of *Cymbeline*.

The nineteenth century provided one continuous Shakespearean source of musical reference: Felix Mendelssohn's *Overture and Incidental Music*, the 1843 score for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which has become virtually inseparable from theater productions, ballets, and films. Michael Hoffman's 1998 film adaptation includes snatches of this and other compositions. Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* likewise displays overt allusion and deconstruction of the familiar bars of Mendelssohn's *Wedding March*. Other musical descendants show up in popular music under the form of progressive rock: former Genesis guitarist Steve Hackett's 1997 suite for classical guitar and supporting orchestra is based on the play. Contemporary theater productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* keep on referring to Mendelssohn's score, as do ballets and films. With serious or parodic allusions, they reassert the centrality of Mendelssohn's composition in different media.

In the twentieth century, *The Tempest* alone has inspired several operas, among them Frank Martin's *Der Sturm* (1956). In 1985, the American composer John Eaton's version deployed the full range of technological advances to produce a fusion piece, involving taped electronics and a jazz trio alongside a more conventional operatic libretto. In 2003, The Royal Opera House saw the premiere of Thomas Ades's *The Tempest*.

In these and many other re-creations, music underscores central Shakespearean themes and characters,

often through the deployment of contrasting instrumentation. In Sibelius's suite for *The Tempest*, a combination of harps and percussion announces Prospero's ambiguous oscillation between malignant and benevolent action. For Shakespeare's tragic heroines, there has been a long-accepted association with the woodwind section of the orchestra, as in Edward German's *Symphonic Poem on Hamlet* (1897). Ophelia's presence is signified by the clarinet, suggesting femininity, in sharp contrast to the assertive, manly, and militarized brass and percussion typifying Hamlet. Woodwinds are also used by German to signify Juliet, as did Berlioz in *Romeo and Juliet* and Prokofiev in his ballet music based on the play.

Likewise, Antonín Dvořák´s overture on *Othello* (1892) resorts to woodwinds to vocalize Desdemona, while ominous bass notes signify Othello's intrusion into her bedchamber. The sounds of the oboe imply some assertion on Desdemona's part, suggesting her pleading her innocence, only later to yield to the submissive dying notes of the flute. Otherwise, woodwinds may function as general tragic signifiers, signaling mourning and melancholy. In Edward Elgar's symphonic study *Falstaff* (1913), the plaintive clarinet signifies the offstage death of the marginalized Sir John, following A. C. Bradley's interpretation of the character. This piece, set in the key of C minor, with its tragic connotations in the musical lexicon, exemplifies the influence of nineteenth-century literary-character criticism on musical adaptations.

In film scores, symphonic pieces provide one of the most prolific illustrations of the meeting of Shakespeare and music. It may even be that we should look to film and TV for both the past and future of Shakespeare in music. In silent film, music used to play a crucial part in the production of meaning, participating in what Jeff Smith has termed the "mutually implicative structure of music and image." The classical Hollywood film score relied largely on the resources of orchestral, symphonic, and choral music, with unusual instruments for particular effects. Nowadays, musical soundtracks have the added effect of a profitable sales afterlife in the form of accompanying CDs and mp3 downloads. Indispensable references as composers of the "classical" era of Hollywood studio theater are Dmitri Shostakovich, Patrick Doyle, and William Walton, the latter the author of epic scores for Laurence Olivier's screen Shakespeare.

Dmitri Shostakovich authored film scores for Grigori Kosintsev's Russian-language versions of *Hamlet* (1964) and *King Lear* (1970). This collaboration had theatrical provenance, for composer and director had collaborated on a stage production of *King Lear* in 1941. Shostakovich and Kosintsev sometimes relied on silence or limited soundscapes, realizing that on occasion such economy could work as well as, if not better than, emotional, overlaid orchestration. Patrick Doyle, one of the most prominent composers for Shakespeare on film, has collaborated with director Kenneth Branagh on *Henry V* (1989), *Much Ado*

1810

about Nothing (1993), *Hamlet* (1996), and *Love's Labour's Lost* (1999). Branagh's films are clearly informed by the work of his predecessors in filmed Shakespeare, including Orson Welles, Akira Kurosawa, and Roman Polanski. Kurosawa, like Polanski, was prone to making hybrid intercultural references, especially in musical terms. He blended classical musical signifiers from the Western tradition with Noh instrumentation and chordal sequences, as in *Ran*, his adaptation of *King Lear*.

A defining element in film soundtracks is the Wagnerian principle of the leitmotif, used as a kind of underscoring, explanatory device, particularly on set-piece iconic speeches, orienting audiences how to think and feel. In its function of dramatic punctuation and psychological reminder, music acts as an identifier of location, period, character, emotion, dramatic climax, and scene. A timely reference here is the refrain of "What Is a Youth?" in Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* (1968). The song underscores the theme of the brevity of love. Similarly, Elliot Goldenthal's score for Julie Taymor's film version of *Titus Andronicus* ventriloquizes for the silent and raped Lavinia, with music and image working synchronically to loud, dissonant sound.

The need to historicize artistic creations of course applies to the multiplicity of potential responses to Shakespearean film music. "What Is a Youth?" had a particular set of meanings for the generation who had heard Nino Rota's music for *La Dolce Vita* and witnessed the Italianate influences on European cinema in the 1950s and 1960s. To younger audiences, these meanings may be lost. By contrast, the soundtrack of Baz Luhrmann's much later *Romeo + Juliet* (1996) sounded assertively postmodern, with its consciously intertextual bricolage of quotations from classical music and contemporary musical genres, from indie pop to rap and hip-hop. In time, this "cutting edge" soundtrack will inevitably signify something quite different from what it originally did. Musical Shakespeare, a product of the sociocultural and technological moment, is as susceptible to changes of time and context as theatrical or critical versions.

A graphic example of the way in which Shakespeare, music, and historical events come to be bound in cultural memory is the performance of classical composer John Tavener's choral *Song for Athene* at the occasion of the 1997 funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales. Originally written as a commission for the BBC, the work's 1993 text amalgamates biblical lines and Horatio's tribute to the dying Hamlet. The composition was played along with pop singer Elton John's emotional interpretation of his own Marilyn Monroe–inspired "Candle in the Wind."

As in Taverner's memorable composition, appropriations, like songs in Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, often echo only bits of Shakespearean lines and are as much in dialogue with other adaptations as with the source text. In many pop and rock songs, Shakespearean names, lines, and play titles frequently have no specific relevance, merely functioning as part of common parlance or metonymical representations of literary culture. Explicit or implicit, such references stand out in songs invoking and constructing the images of Romeo and Juliet. Over the centuries, different performances of Juliet have illustrated shifting notions of identity and propriety for adolescent girls.

Such transformations keep happening in mass-market popular music, primarily in songs directed at young audiences. In the lyrics, the lovers became emblematic of youth during the second half of the twentieth century, following the emergence of a new conception of the adolescent as a definite presence in the consumer market. From the early 1960s on, representations are often influenced by the Broadway musical *West Side Story*. Songs register undeniable connections with changing social and economic issues. Romeo becomes increasingly more sincere and Juliet more assertive. Some songs, like John Davenport's "Fever" and "Soft Summer Breeze," by big-band and rhythm-and-blues veteran Eddie Heywood, illustrate the increased presence of African American performers. On Bob Dylan's album *Love & Theft* (2001), Juliet expresses frustration with the contemporary obsession with remaining eternally young. The relation between market forces and youth culture emerges in Freddie Gorman's song "(Just Like) Romeo and Juliet": the lovers' union here depends on Romeo's success in finding a job.

In the contemporary and popular music context, audiences, particularly youth audiences, may be visually and aurally literate, but their access to Shakespeare appropriations most often does not come through playhouses or concert halls but via mp3 downloads and the medium of film. One may well wonder how far the concretization of Shakespeare-inspired compositions depends on the audience's awareness and contextualization of the references. Audiences with different levels of knowledge bring different information to their interpretations. As with other appropriations, full recognition does not seem indispensable for reception, though for an adaptation to be successful in its own right it must be intelligible to both knowing and unknowing audiences.

Dance

The place of dance in the history of stage productions of Shakespeare's plays was well established from the late seventeenth century, when Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare and other early Stuart playwrights frequently took the form of ballet in London playhouses. In the twentieth century, ballet, perhaps the most elite of the song-and-dance incarnations of Shakespeare, was already an important component in the aesthetic of Max Reinhardt and William Dieterle's filmed version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1935). Performed with several contrasting choreographies, but always to Felix Mendelssohn's *Overture and Incidental Music*, this ballet, like the 1930 *Romeo and Juliet* with music composed by

Sergei Prokofiev, stands out in the world of canonical ballet. (See Chapter 255, "Ballet.")

As shown by Reinhardt and Dieterle's production, hybridization with ballet forms often informs twentieth-century musicals and film. (See Chapter 256, "Musical Comedy.") The 1936 Hollywood screen version of *Romeo and Juliet* included contemporary performances of ballets of the same play, deploying the music of Pyotr Tchaikovsky in its score. In 1948, *Kiss Me Kate*, the musical comedy version of *The Taming of the Shrew*, told the Bianca-Hortensio-Lucentio subplot through the medium of dance. Ballet also contributed to the dance vocabulary of later screen versions of Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*, the iconic re-creation of *Romeo and Juliet*, choreographed in both its stage (1957) and cinematic (1961) incarnations by Jerome Robbins of the American Ballet Theater.

Adding to this intersemiotic chain, Baz Luhrmann's film *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet* inevitably calls up *West Side Story*. In this musical, the high pirouettes of modern dance, used to represent urban gang warfare, recall their origins on the stages of London, Paris, and Moscow as well as Prokofiev's remarkable ballet. Also unforgettable is Peter Greenaway's deployment of ballet and dance in *Prospero's Books*, his postmodern baroque interpretation of *The Tempest*. An interesting millennium addition is Heinz Spoerli's adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Created in 2000 for the Finnish National Ballet, to a postmodern combination of music by Mendelssohn, Philip Glass, and Steve Reich, the new ballet illustrates the unbroken negotiation between Mendelssohn's music and re-creations of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Many ballet productions are not strictly full-scale dance dramas but simple performative interpolations, often inspired by *The Tempest* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The inclusion of a ballet sequence around the witches' cauldron in Giuseppe Verdi's *Macbeth* is one such, reminiscent of equivalent dance interpolations by Restoration and nineteenth-century adapters of Shakespeare.

Together with songs and occasional dialogue, dance makes up an important component of derivatives that rework Shakespeare's plotlines within the parameters of the modern musical. Among mid-twentieth-century North American musicals, which partly descend from the semi-opera popular in the English Restoration, mention must be made of Gilbert Seldes and Erik Charell's *Swingin' the Dream* (1939). Significantly, in this jazz- and swing-inflected version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the lovers and aristocrats' roles were performed by white performers, whereas African Americans played the mechanicals and the fairies. (See Chapter 260, "Jazz," and Figure 298.) This timid early attempt at an integrated cast drew complaints from critics, who argued that blacks could not deliver Shakespeare.

Jazz, rock, and popular rhythms

Ironically enough, T. S. Eliot in *The Waste Land* (1922) enshrined the entry of Shakespeare into pop music culture: "*O, O, O, O, that Shakespeherian Rag / It's so elegant / So intelligent.*" Eliot paraphrases a song in ragtime rhythm made popular ten years earlier in the Broadway show *Ziegfield Follies*. Some people might hear in the syncopated extra syllable added by Eliot ("that Shakespe-*he*-rian rag") the beginnings of rap. Cross-cuttings between high culture and popular culture less disdainful than Eliot's were part of the cultural project of modernism, but it was popular musicians themselves who established Shakespeare in pop music culture and helped him hold his place there. Settings of "O Mistress Mine" and "It Was a Lover and His Lass" were big-band standards in the 1930s and 1940s. Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn's suite "Such Sweet Thunder" (1957) inaugurated a tradition of jazz riffs on Shakespeare's texts that continues today. (See Chapter 260, "Jazz.")

The latter half of the twentieth century saw the emergence of rock musical versions of *Twelfth Night*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Othello*. In 1968, *Your Own Things*, created by Danny Apolinar, Hal Hester, and Donald Driver, updated *Twelfth Night*'s themes of androgyny and sexual possibility for the psychedelic era. Joseph Papp's 1971 score for *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, another updated version designed to appeal to a youth audience, was described as a mix of rock, lyricism, and Caribbean patter.

A 2008 hip-hop updating turns *Romeo and Juliet* into *Rome & Jewel*, a political allegory set in Los Angeles against a backdrop of interracial romance. Another hip-hop creation is *Da Boyz*, a rereading of a previous musical adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors*, the 1938 *The Boys from Syracuse* by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart. Iconic shows like *Kiss Me Kate* and *West Side Story* often become part of the world of the cinema, not only as filmed musicals but also in the form of allusions and pastiche. With their combination of song and dance and their oscillation between realist, nonrealist, and spectacular modes, musicals have influenced theatrical and film versions of Shakespeare's plays. In popular music, many contemporary allusions to *Romeo and Juliet* are filtered through references to *West Side Story*, one more illustration of the alliances and cross-pollenization instilled in the heart of contemporary popular culture.

Typically meant for light entertainment, musicals most often explore Shakespeare for the sake of prestige or as an expedient to get on with the genre's actual goal, to amuse. In the treatment of two frequent topics, sex and ethnicity, a certain bias toward transgressive desires about race and female independence sometimes taints Shakespearean musicals. With its problematic sexual politics, *Kiss Me Kate* tends to make comic capital out of domestic abuse. The rule is not without exceptions, albeit rare. Occasionally,

Shakespeare-inspired musicals deal with sociopolitical issues, for example *West Side Story*.

The musical stands out not only for its integrated deployment of different modes of dance (modern styles as well as ballet) but also for its politicized treatment of the Shakespearean subject matter. It responded to the question of urban gang violence in New York, in a specific moment of North American social history, the large-scale Puerto Rican immigration and settlement on the west side of the city. Along similar lines, *The Big Life*, a rewriting of *Love's Labour's Lost* staged by the Theatre Royal Stratford East in 2004, focuses on the plight of Caribbean immigrants invited to England by the British government to supplement the postwar workforce.

The subject of "Shakespeare and the Performing Arts" is not a matter of one-directional relationships: Shakespeare into opera, Shakespeare into ballet, Shakespeare into musical comedy, Shakespeare into symphonic music, and so forth. Rather, each of these performance modes demonstrates how performance in an artistic venue is implicated in performance as a factor in social and political life.

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254. Opera

William Germano

O F ALL LITERARY SOURCES, the works of Shakespeare have provided opera composers and librettists with the greatest and most frequent challenges. Shakespeare and opera may appear to stand at opposite ends of the theatrical spectrum. One is taken as the quintessential art of the dramatic spoken word, the other a complex musical-theatrical art form that, across its period and national variants, depends on the subordination of speech to music.

That simple dichotomy ignores both the inherent and the technologically acquired affinities between Shakespeare's dramas and opera. Each has long functioned as a sign of high culture; each explores the dilemma of the individual caught up in strong passions. Opera is given its distinctive texture through arias, theatrical moments that map almost directly onto the soliloquys and semiautonomous speeches of Shakespearean drama. The aurality of Shakespeare's