



**GLOBE
EDUCATION**

INTERVIEWS WITH THE RED COMPANY

The 1999 Season

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General Preface

Mark Rylance welcomed members of the Red and White Companies for the start of rehearsals on April 6, 1999. In his opening remarks to the acting companies he described the 'pursuit of eloquence' as his primary aim for the upcoming season. Mark had read a definition of the term 'eloquence' in the Oxford English Dictionary that had inspired him as an actor and as an artistic director: to speak or move or act with force, fluency and appropriateness; to move the emotions and affect the reason. Mark asked the members of both companies to consider this as a shared aim. The plays are written with extraordinary eloquence, he noted, and actors need to find a love of eloquence, in every action, in every movement, to match the plays. Mark stressed the need for clear and involved storytelling – something he described as “a simple truth easily forgotten”. Central to this storytelling has to be an attention to antithesis: Shakespeare loved antithesis, said Mark, because it represented a “marriage of opposites which can create something new”.

I took Mark's opening address to the companies as the starting point for a series of interviews. Actors, stage managers, Masters of Play, musicians and even a playwright generously gave of their time to talk to me about what that “pursuit of eloquence” meant to them. The resulting discussions touched upon related matters from verse speaking and physicality, to tiring house practice and authentic clothing. These diverse responses were, without exception, sensitive, informative and freely given, in the spirit of continued learning about this remarkable space.

The interviews were conducted in late August and September 1999, at the end of the 400th anniversary season. I am indebted to all those who took part in the interviews, as well as to the staff of the Research and Theatre departments of Shakespeare's Globe.

NB: The majority of actors in the 1999 Red Company played several roles over the course of the season. In the interests of brevity, I made the subjective editorial decision to list a maximum of two roles for each actor, though I realise that this in no way reflects the diversity of work undertaken by each actor. For a full list of parts and doubling for the 1999 Red Company see the forthcoming Research Bulletins on Julius Caesar and Antony and Cleopatra.

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Interview with Mark Rylance

Master of Play, Julius Caesar
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Eloquence

I thought that eloquence meant a kind of “fancy talk”, that was used to hide the truth and obscure phoniness with florid speech. When I was young I felt that some actors were admired –and I admired them too – who were “eloquent” in this way. After a while I decided that they didn’t sound like anyone I had ever met. I didn’t believe they really felt the emotion they aimed to show, and I thought that instead they were just speaking very beautifully and fancifully. I thought that kind of acting was like a painting that was a purely decorative piece on an office wall, rather than a painting that teaches you to see something different about life. I looked up “eloquence” in the O.E.D. with that prejudice. The definition of eloquence that inspired me and surprised me described it thus: “to speak with force, fluency and appropriateness” (those three words were fascinating to me).

“In order to affect the reason and to move the emotion”- I can’t remember the exact definition, but that is the gist of it. The force, fluency and appropriateness made a lot of sense to me in terms of the constant kind of relationship of finding the emotional, psychological force within a line you have to say within a script.

Then the importance of expressing that, and that expression being fluent in the way it comes forward, made sense to me. In my experience, that force comes from an unspoken place. There exists a something before you speak, that isn’t yet spoken, to which we put words, which really starts out as a desire, as a need. Sometimes the digging for that can affect the fluency with which it comes out. To illustrate this by the simplest and most extreme contrast, you could say that perhaps Sir John Gielgud is the most fluent of speakers, and Marlon Brando the most forceful of speakers. At their worst, when those two actors are tired, or not doing what they do so brilliantly, the fluency lacks force, and the force lacks any fluency, respectively.

How to find a fluency in the writing? The Shakespeare plays are a gift, because they are written to be fluent; it’s an articulate and complicated, refined fluency, more so perhaps than you encounter on the street. But I do believe that the verse is written as a very natural part of the speech and the prose is less natural.

The search for the force - that is driving someone like Hamlet to say, “How all occasions do inform against me”, for instance- that is a difficult kind of digging process. One uses one’s reason, memory and imagination; I personally use a lot of pretend, or play, throwing myself into things, trying things. The difficulty is that you find something in rehearsals, or performance, and it is a challenge to keep reviving that thing you have found. What I find is that often the fluency “clogs up” after a while. I get less fluent, as I become more self-conscious about what the force is, and my consciousness of it starts to muddy things. The words don’t come up like spring water, and I feel that I slow down as a result.

Lastly, appropriateness, is often the key in releasing and refining fluency. When I look out to the other players, or to the audience, and think “What do I want? Why am I saying this to them?” I will often find a kind of tow-rope to hook onto, that will pull that moment out of me with more fluency. Or, I will sometimes find a different force. The appropriateness of the tone of a person’s speech defines in many ways the way in which they speak. It’s a part of eloquence; matching the situation or forum in which you’re speaking, to the tone in which you speak, is a key to eloquence. Always adjusting one’s speech to the appropriateness of the situation in this theatre is crucial. The other appropriateness that the actors in this theatre have to struggle with concerns the acoustics on the actual day: is there a lot of dampness in the air? It’s more of an instinctive feeling than an acoustic science – people like John McEnery will often comment on

how “live” the acoustics feel on certain days, or how “dampened” they feel on others. When a plane goes past overhead, a part of you (the actor) listens, and appropriately pauses, or lifts the tone momentarily. I think we over-speak (or speak too loudly) as much as we under-speak here. In fact we under-spoke very much less this season than we have before, but over-speaking closes ears and offends the listener’s soul.

Appropriateness is ultimately concerned with the constant search for the ways to be present. We have to continually strive to convince the audience that this is happening now, in the present, and that they are not watching a discussion or a display of why Brutus and Cassius killed Julius Caesar. They are there with them, when the conspirators do it. They get caught up in the panic after the assassination happens, and they are there with a chance to voice their own thoughts, caught in the trap of time and fortune just as much as Brutus and Cassius are. The audience should learn by experiencing things. So, I find that as an actor I am constantly trying to shed skins, trying to shed the solutions of yesterday, trying to keep the rhythm irregular and fresh, and yet at the same time not throw the baby out with the bathwater (which is something I used to do when I was younger). It’s important to find the right thing to hold on to, the right preparation to come out and be able to play in a very live and present way, in a similar way to the way sportsmen are so lucky to be able to do, because they don’t know the final score of the match, or the moves of the other players. Sportsmen have positions and roles to play to help the team as a whole play with force, fluency and appropriateness, but they don’t usually have to plan things in the way that we do as a team of actors. Part of eloquence is how to play together with others, not just to make sure your own heart, body and mind are working together.

All of these things are things I’m thinking about when I’m out there on the stage. It’s such a blissful experience when you discover that kind of eloquence. It leads to more discoveries, over and above those made in rehearsals or through study of the text alone. If one is present, and not frightened, or just using “solutions”, then one can make many discoveries in the midst of performance. Unfortunately, I do feel that most of the time I am just using solutions, that I become enamoured of the way a scene has gone before, and I aim for that way again too many times. One way to counteract this is to open yourself up to each specific audience, and realise that they are part of each specific event. The Globe is very helpful here, because of the powerful presence of the audience (they have a much larger effect on the play than audiences in other theatres I have played), and the powerful presence of Nature in her elements and random play of light, wind, rain, birds, bells etc. If one opens one’s consciousness to these fortunate occurrences, it keeps you awake and present. Nothing is ever the same. I feel that some of my fellow actors who become tired are the ones who are not letting themselves connect with the amount of energy that comes into the theatre with each audience. There’s an enormous energy there, and even if you are tired before the show, if you go out there and breathe in that energy, and imagine their innocence of what is to happen, then time goes as quickly as it does in life. I’ve found it very useful to fool myself that I don’t know what is going to happen next. That’s partly why I feel that early in the rehearsals, when I don’t know much about the scene, a more natural pace and sense of play can develop than when I’m more knowledgeable about the scene.

I still feel that generally in the theatre we speak more slowly, and with less variety, than we do in life. This could be because we work mainly to “lock in” meaning, to “learn” it, and make it conscious, when we should really be working out ways to “forget” it. We should lock in only on why we’re there, and what we want. The choices should seem that they’ve never happened that way before. As a Master of Play I have been able to see that this is a frightening prospect for actors. I haven’t yet been able to find the right way to encourage this freedom, without sacrificing the necessary structure to prevent everything becoming muddled. You do have to retain some sense of tracks, of movement through objectives. However, though the effects are more guaranteed when you simply “plot out” a performance, there are longer term effects on the eloquence and the reality of the acting, which are to be avoided.

The Globe is a very helpful space to the actor, because of the real people who are there, because they are so empowered. Because the architecture is so unusual, it will take some time, I think, for the audience to fully explore how they should behave here. They do sometimes become annoyed by the distractions here compared to other theatres, but also they are open to discover that they may be able to behave differently here. As the actors become more confident, they realise that it is OK to pause for a moment and wait for the drama that is happening amongst the audience to play itself out, before picking up and carrying on with the drama on the stage. There's such a lot of social interaction going on inside that space, and our play is only a part of that.

One lady wrote to me to tell me that her son had bought tickets for her husband and her to see Julius Caesar, and the week before that performance her son had been held at knifepoint, in Hackney, I think. The family had just kind of put this to bed as "urban violence", and not really expressed anything about the incident. When she saw the conspirators pull their swords and knives on Julius Caesar, she told me she just wept uncontrollably, and had a huge outpouring of emotion at the realisation that people could indeed do these things to each other. So, as well as the drama on the stage, there was a huge drama going on for that family. She wrote to thank us for the catharsis that our play had provoked between her husband, her son and herself. This had really helped them to encounter fully what had happened, and to move on from it. They did not leave it lying dormant in the unconscious as a paranoia. Those things going on in the audience of course go on in other theatres as well, but this theatre seems to suggest that these things need not be confined to the dark. They can come out and happen in the open. We can pick up on each other's emotional reactions just as much as we pick up on each other's physical reactions to the drama.

I think that may be something that Shakespeare and his fellow actors were more appreciative of. It would have been more difficult for them to gather in big groups like this – the authorities were very wary of large gatherings in a common area. It must have been unusual for so many different ranks of society to gather, as they did here. What I find one of the loveliest things here is when old and young people gather here, for matinees, and see each other's behaviour. As actors, we have to change our attitudes about "ruling" an audience. We should learn instead from people who raise and train horses. It is necessary for us to ride the audience, and not for them to ride us. But we should also be aware of the possibility that the horse is the story, and perhaps the audience can ride with us too. I don't know. It could be equally appropriate for us to ride them, and not to panic if at times they want to stop and drink, or buck, or jump over something. We should take that on board.

This came up between Terence (Maynard) and myself after an interruption from a man in the audience. Tez said to me that he wasn't sure if he felt it was right to turn to an audience member and directly involve oneself in conversation with them, to resolve a matter. He wondered too, whether it was just me that was doing that. This year we've seen fewer actors directly addressing the audience on such occasions. I try always to stay in character when I have to speak to the audience – say, if someone has fainted and the audience is concerned. It's best to ask if the individual is alright on behalf of all of us, before we go on. It's more difficult for smaller characters to take control in this way, but there are in fact times when the whole story is channelled through a single "insignificant" character, and on those occasions they are the leading actor on the stage. I don't yet know how to fully prepare actors for that experience. We tried bringing individuals into the rehearsal rooms, a practice that some actors liked more than others did. I had hoped that having members of the public in rehearsals would help us to tell the story of the play more clearly. I think now that maybe it would be helpful to have a professional storyteller come in on the first day of rehearsals and tell us the story of our play, rather than have a read-through. I dislike read-throughs generally, as many directors do.

Original practices, new discoveries

Very few lines were cut from Antony and Cleopatra, and we moved the scenes very close together; in play we discovered that this was not detrimental. It was a benefit to connect the scenes as fluently as possible. With Giles's help we spoke as fast as we could as a group, given the rehearsal time available to us, and yet Antony and Cleopatra still ran way over two hours. I think that our experiments with speech this year have strengthened in my mind the idea that Shakespeare's company cut the plays for performance. It is difficult for us to speak much faster in that space. The actual acoustics in the space would make it very difficult to speak much faster. When an audience is in the Globe, there's a certain amount of space that is needed between the words, if the story is to be clear. I don't think it would have been possible to lose the whole hour from Antony and Cleopatra that would have been necessary to get the play down to two hours. I would be happy to add my voice to that part of scholarship that suggests that they printed the plays at longer length, or indeed played the plays at longer length indoors during the winter, for those people who would understand the many classical and social connections and reverberations. There are many references to the powerful in the country at that time, contained within the plays. So, how they cut, and what would have been the ethics of cutting is an interesting area. We did so much more work on speech this year, compared to any other year, and we achieved audibility as a result, but I don't think we could have gone much faster. Early on, before rehearsals began, we did a lot of experiments with rushes. I think we proved with those experiments that it was unlikely they played on rushes in the outdoor theatres. Rushes may have been strewn for certain scenes, to suggest indoors. Otherwise, they were hazardous, entangling and not quite right.

I think that I'm more convinced that the inside of the theatre needs a unified design. I don't think that it is right that the stage has a trompe l'oeil, illusionary effect, while the rest of theatre is unpainted, "au naturel" so to speak. This creates an impression of a separate stage and auditorium, as in modern proscenium arch theatres. The fourth wall should be the back wall of the theatre. We've removed the wall of light that creates a false fourth wall in front of the stage, but I'm increasingly convinced that the remainder of the theatre was also decorated.

I learned more about the dynamics of the plays this year. The audience teaches me each year to be more confident, to let the play swing into comedy, in order for a bigger swing back into tragedy to occur. I'm starting to feel that maybe we have a bit of a hangover from an age between Shakespeare's and our own – perhaps the Victorian age – when there was a reverence for death and for tragedy. Tragedy became grand, or "serious", in a romantic sense. Shakespeare's plays come from a time that I believe observed tragedy differently, in a way that I have observed in Northern Ireland, for instance, where tragedy is woven into the fabric of everyday life. I have observed there (and in Shakespeare's plays) an enormous wit, a humour married closely to that sense of tragedy, and I think this might be truer to human nature than the Victorian view. It is perhaps for this reason that we find Shakespeare's plays truer to life today than the Victorian melodramas, which are no longer in the repertoire. As I wonder about the relationship between the audience and the actors in Shakespeare's time, I start to become aware of traditions of playing, and of audience behaviour, and I think that some of these have been inherited by us from times between the two. I think that with both Julius Caesar and Antony and Cleopatra Shakespeare's wit is ever present, and the audiences here - perhaps because they are not as "reverential" as audiences elsewhere – seem to respond strongly to that antithetical relationship between comedy and tragedy in both plays. I know that some people criticise that, and say that we are down-playing, or making things cruder; this is something to watch out for, something to avoid, something we never consciously work towards. But I'm starting now to think that part of this kind of criticism is a false attachment to a style of play from a more modern theatre that may not be correct here.

If I had played in a film version of Antony and Cleopatra I would never have made the kind of

discoveries I made this season. This is because I would not have had an audience to teach me that it is alright to laugh at Cleopatra's line 'How heavy weighs my lord!' (IV, xv, 32), because the release in laughing opens them up and catches them unaware; fifteen seconds later they see her howling in despair as Antony dies suddenly in her arms. An image I've used to describe this is that of a boxer, who learns where his opponent defends from. He punches a little further out from that spot with every jab, and unconsciously the defendant is moving his guard further and further out, until he becomes unguarded. It is then possible to hit straight in the middle. Shakespeare writes stories very cleverly like this. He removes people's guards, so that a powerful moment can hit them unprepared. Often he achieves this through humour. Often the wisest philosophical statement will be put in the form of a bawdy joke. This is perhaps to do with his deeper observance that the divine is ever present, in our most sensual life as well as our most spiritual.

I think that the extended balcony we built this year works much better, and so from experience I would say that we now have a more likely design of the frons scenae than we had originally. I think there are unanswered questions about how much the actors then changed their clothes. If these clothes were so expensive it doesn't seem right to me that they should change them backstage as often as we had to do this season. So, I'm very curious about how they cast the plays – does that mean they had a lot of hirelings to play the smaller parts, and that they didn't double up as much as we have done? If they did double up as we do, how did they make the story clear without recourse to multiple clothing changes? In a way it is unfortunate that I'm not allowed to have hirelings here. There is a lot of controlled research that could be done in these kinds of areas, to discover how the storytelling might be made clearer.

I'm a little concerned that the team of us who have been working with original practices have, in an inauthentic way, sublimated our own instincts, and tried at times to do something that didn't make sense to us, because we think it made sense to them. Sometimes, we haven't, like in the case of costumes and quick-changes: we said no, if we do what it looks like they did, we just haven't got the whole picture, and it will undermine us in our storytelling. Sometimes I feel that I've been a bit too respectful about exploring a theory of what they might have done. Though it has to be said, if Sam had not been respectful of scholastic research we would have a roof over the Globe and seats in the yard, destroying the two best features of the place. The hope is that some funny-sounding original practices will be forgotten gems of theatre-going. How to find them is the question. Instinct, even modern instinct, must have a place. I feel a need next year to let my instincts go a bit more in the space, in the way that I've allowed other artists, with other shows. I think that is part of the importance of the project. People have thought about this theatre for a long time, and it is time now for the actors to come in with their own instincts about how to tell a story, even if these are modern instincts. You can't think these kinds of things through – these are things that you can only try.

Interview with Marian Spon

Company Manager

Last year I was a Stage Manager for the Red Company, which meant I dealt with only one company, and I worked all of their shows, in a very hands-on way. This year, as Company Manager I am responsible overall for four shows and both companies. So I don't work the shows, although I do oversee them. I had less contact with rehearsals this year. This job has a greater administrative component, although there are similarities to the job of stage management. I'm still troubleshooting, making sure what needs to be done is being done. This theatre is still developing. Everyone who works here has to be very adaptable. You can't

come in with too many set ideas about how things should be done. I suppose the same could be said of most theatres, but this theatre is particularly different, so to speak. For example, when we got to the technicals for Julius Caesar it came as an enormous shock to most of the actors and some of crew to realise how difficult it could be to control the show. It was utterly alien for many to run a tech without somebody backstage on book, without a cue desk and cue lights, and without any single person “in control” backstage. We can’t work in a conventional way here. Because our only means of communication are radio cans and headsets, we can’t have somebody calling the show. Therefore, each person in the crew has to be responsible for his or her own particular bits in the show. There are no “stand-bys”; you really have to know the script. This holds for both the original practice shows and the non-original practice shows. That’s why we don’t have a hierarchy. Each stage manager has to be a responsible individual, as well as a collectively responsible member of the stage management team.

In one sense, I am the only safety net that the stage management team has. I try to make sure that everything is being done according to the team’s plan. However, I never prescribe or allocate tasks, as that would reduce everyone on the team to the level of ASMs. People like working here because you feel a part of the whole production, your contribution is considered to be very important and you’re given a serious level of responsibility.

“Authenticity” and stage management

Trying to assess the level of support that actors in 1599 might have enjoyed, I suppose, depends a great deal upon how much room we think they had backstage. In order to offer the kind of backstage support that we provide they would have had to employ a great number of staff. If we have built the tiring-house to the correct size, we know they couldn’t have accommodated that number of staff, so we can assume that their productions were quite different in that way. I assume Shakespeare’s company had people backstage to help them, but whether these people were apprentice actors or the Elizabethan equivalent of stage managers, I have no idea. One of the difficulties with what we do here is that we tend to ignore aspects of original staging that don’t suit us. I’m sure, for instance, that they didn’t employ teams of dressers such as we need here.

The work of stage management was easier this year than in previous years. Like everyone else, we’re more familiar with the space and its requirements, and I was acting as the safety net this year, which I believe helped the situation. Last year, as a stage manager, I felt rather out on a limb; there were the actors, and then there was the stage management team. If anything went wrong – particularly at weekends when no other staff members were in the building – you could easily feel really exposed. This year, problematic situations were generally less stressful, because you knew there was some kind of back-up. Because my time is not totally taken up with the running of any one particular show, I have the time to think through contingency plans – for example rain days – on behalf of the stage management teams.

Working as a Stage Manager last year, I never saw any of the performances of my own company. It’s surprising to discover how removed the tiring-house feels from the events on the stage. It is such an enclosed space. In other theatres the DSM occupies a space very close to the action on the stage – usually, in the wings. Here, if the flanking doors are closed it is very difficult to hear what is going on, and you have to be extremely alert to follow the action. Inside the tiring-house is a different world. Never seeing a performance inevitably cuts you off from what is going on, and you feel as though you’re “working blind” – it takes a bit of getting used to, but it’s one of the things which is special about the Globe.

If you try to artificially “improve” the working conditions at the Globe, all you really achieve is an artificial alteration to the Globe itself. The quality of tiring-house atmosphere is absolutely incredible, and though the candles we have tried this year have not proved a sufficient light

source for the actors, they made for a quiet, dark, intimate atmosphere in the tiring-house which must be unique. This compensates in a strange way for the feeling of being removed from the action on the stage; instead you feel part of an intimate world inside the Globe itself, and I wouldn't want to change that at all.

Eloquence

The quality and clarity of verse speaking has improved immeasurably this year. I'm sure that is largely due to the attention to detail that Giles' work entails. I know there must be an element of improved vocal preparation on the part of the actors too, but I think the main difference this year is that the actors really understand the words that they are saying so much better, and that means that they are much more easily understood. Giles' work involves not just a general but a specific understanding of what the words mean, so in turn the audience understands not just the general direction of the play but each specific event. If you don't do this, Shakespeare comes across as rather inarticulate; in fact, his ideas are articulated very well, and it is a case for the actor making an effort to understand and convey those ideas. I think we've come a long way in this area from last year.

I don't have any problems understanding what is being said in Augustine's Oak, but that may be because the language of that play is more modern. You could tell in *Errors* those moments that Tim Carroll (as Master of Verse) had been able to help the actors, but I think his time with them was limited, and he needed more, to be able to make the kind of impact that Giles made with the Red Company.

We tend to assume that all actors have a sophisticated understanding of Shakespeare's language, and of how to speak it. This assumption is neither correct nor helpful to the actors. Most of the population of this country does not understand Shakespeare, so it is unfair to expect actors to be so very different; they form a fairly representative cross-section of the population, after all. Actors tend to feel that they should have an instinctive understanding of Shakespeare, and if they do not, they feel too embarrassed to ask for help. Then you get the endless theories offered up on "how to speak Shakespeare" and these offer actors something to cling to as a kind of safety harness. As a result, you often get beautiful-sounding verse that is totally unintelligible. It becomes like listening to music, because you hear all the cadences and rhythms, but no words.

Original Practices

I'm wholly in favour of exploring original working practices, but I think that what we do here is to look in depth at original clothing, and only superficially at original stage practice. So much of the emphasis is on the clothing that, when it comes to putting the production on its feet, we tend to pick and choose what suits our tastes in terms of original stage practice. There has been, of course, a great deal of discussion on this subject – Should we really use the yard? Should we fly in stage managers through the trap in the heavens? – I cannot imagine however that the Elizabethans managed the scale and complexity of costume changes that we currently employ. We know that the clothing was expensive and highly prized, but I think that clothing inspired by portraits may well prove too stiff and too formal for our actors. I believe that the Elizabethan actors would have adapted their clothing, were this the case, to make it practical to work in. We make our lives difficult by overreaching in this way. We could spend some of the large clothing budget on ensuring that the actors all have a spare shirt instead. That way, the shirt can serve its purpose as an effective absorber of sweat that would otherwise harm the expensive doublet. To have only one shirt per actor is a nonsense. We really need to have stocks of spare shirts, garters, points and stockings, instead of spending vast amounts of money on multiple garments for multiple costume changes. Given the state the clothing ends up in at the end of the season, spending tens of thousands of pounds seems quite wasteful. We need to find a workable balance

between finery and feasibility, so that the actors look appropriate but are still able to act in their clothing without destroying it. The need to research and experiment with original clothing is undeniable, and the Costume Department produces stunning work; at the same time, this remains a working theatre with practical needs that also have to be taken into consideration. That said, I seriously believe that if we abandon the authentic clothing, we do so at our own peril. It is one of the prime reasons that people come here to see a play. I think we can rein in our ambition slightly and still produce unique work of a high quality.

Interview with Bryan Paterson and Paul Williams

Stage Managers, Red Company

Original working practices

BP: I think the experiment this year with original working practices is a great idea. I wish it had been even more consistently and thoroughly followed through, even though it means that our job becomes more awkward in some ways.

PW: Our modern idea of theatre is much more “spectacular” than I think Shakespeare’s was. By that I mean that we expect to have many quick costume changes, for instance. If we experimented with one costume per actor, with a cloak, for example, to signify a change in character, then we could work “authentically” in the tiring-house. We wouldn’t have the troubles connected with using the stairs, fire alarms going off because the doors are open, etc. We could also address the problem of the light in the tiring house. We tried the candle experiment this year, which was fine, but constituted a high-maintenance fire hazard.

BP: I feel that the candles in the tiring house would actually have worked if there hadn’t been so many costume changes, because the actors couldn’t see properly. There’s enough light back there for us to see, to walk around and do our jobs, enough for an actor to find a hat and put it on their head, but not enough to fiddle with hooks and eyes or buttons, or to lace up points. It’s just not practical.

PW: Henslowe’s Diary contains lists of what was in their wardrobe at the time, and it seems to mainly list umpteen cloaks and hats, sticks and swords, but nothing about multiple sets of doublet and hose. I think that our desire to be both authentic and creative takes over a bit, and we want everything to look beautiful a bit too much.

BP: Works of art today are created by the production values, and not by the practical considerations of running this kind of theatre. It has been 400 years since people created theatre like this, and obviously our tastes and whole way of thinking have changed since then. We have to re-educate so many people, and I think it is going to take a few more years of experiments before we really get it right.

Technicals

BP: The technical side of the job is different, for instance. There are no lights or sound, and these elements usually occupy most of the tech week in a conventional theatre. Technical weeks here are concentrated on the actors, which makes a big difference. The whole philosophy of the theatre seems directed towards actors more than you’d expect to find elsewhere.

PW: The physical aspects of entrances and exits become the core of the technical rehearsals – we spend most of our time working out how to get the actors in and out! We tend to appear on stage in costume more regularly than at other theatres too, but I personally think that makes the show a bit more fun for us. We’re not just opening doors and running around backstage, this way. At the Globe you definitely feel much more part of the company.

Role of Crew

BP: The Globe has many unique “standard practices”. The role of musicians and stage managers here can involve appearances on the stage as part of the action. This can be a really intimidating prospect for many. Actually, the same principle could apply to a lot of actors and directors who work here. The length of the season here could put off a lot of actors – it is a long time by most standards, to be working in one place, with a lot of shows to get through. Being able to see the audience up close – to see the whites of their eyes, so to speak – can be very scary for anyone who isn’t used to it.

PW: Although stage managers are supposed to be cool and calm as part of the job, we’re not performers, and so seeing a great crowd of people staring at you can be very odd!

BP: The first time I went on stage (last season in *As You Like It*) I was intimidated, but after that I didn’t think anything of it. It felt very natural, in fact.

PW: The backbone of a “normal” show is the DSM who has a script in front of them, and the show is called from this. That is something that we don’t have here; we work as a kind of “four-limbed machine”. We work with a script in much the same way that a DSM would – the script has all the cues numbered on the corresponding area of the page – that’s how you start. In our case there are four of those scripts. We don’t communicate with each other in the way a normal crew would – we all have our own roles that we determine amongst ourselves, towards the end of rehearsals, before the technicals. So, within those four identical cue scripts, we have our own tasks that we have agreed upon between us.

BP: So in effect, this season we had four DSMs, four ASMs and four SMs, all rolled into one. The normal demarkation of jobs doesn’t really apply here. There’s no hierarchy as such, and instead we have a kind of corporate responsibility.

PW: You can’t go down the line and complain “I didn’t get the cue”. It’s up to each of us to make decisions for ourselves on the spot. You can’t dither around and wait for someone to tell you what to do. All we have to rely on is our preset check, and our memories and powers of concentration. We’re not on cans, so we can’t go off for a cup of tea and stand by, waiting for our next cue.

BP: We use radio cans at the top of the show only, to get clearance from Front of House. The dressers need radio cans because the sheer number of costumes they have to deal with means that they are always running around. If we had fewer costumes we could store them in the tiring-house, and eliminate the need for radios altogether.

Experience

BP: Because we worked with the all-male company, our female stage manager (Tamzin Gibb) couldn’t appear on stage, and so she quite naturally accepted responsibility for the area backstage in the tiring house. Her experience with the Globe (she’s been here every year) has really been invaluable. To try a show as ambitious as *Antony and Cleopatra* without her would have been a big mistake.

PW: Andrew Jolly was technically new this year, although he had covered for someone for a month last season. Bryan has been here before, but this is my first time as a Stage Manager here. I think if we had had more than one person who was new to stage management at the Globe, we’d have been in big trouble. It isn’t a situation that four new stage managers could be expected to pull off successfully.

Rehearsals

PW: Even while we are in rehearsals in a different building, we are thinking about the Globe space. We have to, because the actors won’t. Although the *Masters of Play* know the space very

well indeed, they have a number of other things on their mind, too. That's our job, actually: to keep the performance space in mind and point out problems that may arise from certain choices because of it.

BP: We have to let the Masters of Play know what is feasible. For instance, we're more aware of the distances between exit doors and the length of time it takes to do a quick change, so we can usually tell if an actor is going to have enough time to do what they're being asked to do.

PW: There's no point in waiting until technical rehearsals to mention something like that, as by that time there's little time to fix it.

Production meetings

BP: This is one of the few elements of a Globe production that resembles those of other theatres. We are responsible for technical input at production meetings, as we would be in other, conventional theatres. The main difference is the degree to which the discussion centres around costume here. Obviously, a larger proportion of the budget is allocated to the costume department than you'd expect elsewhere.

PW: We also have to remind other members of the creative team about modern health and safety rules, when appropriate. For example, the authentic way to deploy the kind of fireworks we used this season would probably have been to set a tube over a candle, and drop gunpowder into it. Obviously, we can't do that today... which is a shame! The pulley used to hoist Antony uses a combination of authentic hemp and modern nylon ropes, as the time needed to get the authentic hemp rope rated for the task was too long, unfortunately. We know that the hemp rope alone would easily have held the weight required, but had the actor accidentally fallen from a harness that wasn't rated, we would rightly have been sued. So, though the authentic rope is the one that takes the actor's weight, the rated, nylon rope is ready as a stand-by.

Recommendations

BP: We can continue to stage spectacular productions, if we trim back on the number of costumes. We need to do research into original maintenance practices for the building. We need to know how they prevented their stage floors from becoming too slippery, for instance. Did they treat it like a ship's deck, and keep it wet and swabbed down? Would they have left the floor unpainted?

PW: I don't think we should simply resort to rubber soles to stop the shoes from slipping. Perhaps we could allow the actors to wear their shoes outside of the theatre, to wear them in. Using antique fabric is wonderful in theory, but in practice it is impractical, as it so quickly becomes damaged as actors roll about on the textured floor.

BP and PW: Our modern tastes in theatre – for example, elaborate costumes, furniture – mean that some of our modern non-authentic machinery (lift, radios, etc) have to continue to be used. If we abandoned the need for big production values, we could abandon too the more intrusive modern mechanisms we currently tolerate.

Interview with Tim Davies

Cinna the Conspirator, Julius Caesar
Lepidus, Antony and Cleopatra

Eloquence

There are two parts to eloquence: to speak fluently and clearly, and to speak with some

understanding of what you're saying. I certainly think that we've been working at the first element in a quite technical way. With Giles as Master of Verse we have learned to really play the line through to the very end, and to mark the end of the line because the last word may be important. We have also learned to consider whether the first word of the next line needs to be thought about perhaps for a fraction of a second before you begin to speak. We have had to bear in mind that the speech should always drive on, too, and I think the playing time of just over 3 hours for Antony and Cleopatra reflects the work we have done in this area. I think we've achieved something similar with Julius Caesar, although I noticed that it was a good deal slower when we brought it back after a 5-week hiatus. However, audiences for both shows seem to have heard and understood everything we have said very clearly indeed. I think that is one of the major strengths of the work this season.

Using the Globe space

Open spaces are exciting to play in. I have been lucky enough to play in exciting open air spaces around the world, including: Epidauros, Herodes Atticus, in front of the Sphinx in Egypt and on the top of an old castle in Dubrovnik. These spaces are exciting to play in because they each have a particular atmosphere that makes them wonderfully focussed spaces for playing. The Globe space shares in the special, festival atmosphere of those spaces. Open spaces are less formal, less polite, and there is an added excitement to playing in such conditions.

You need great clarity of diction to play in this space. There is a good deal of ambient noise that you need to cut through, as there is in any open space. Depending on the style of the production, it is possible to make quite large, extravagant gestures here. Our concentration seems to have been fixed more upon speech than movement, and I don't think that we have yet explored a really strong physicality in the space. Our movement has been fairly efficient and clean, but I don't think we have really explored particular dynamics of movement there yet. I think movement needs to be well defined in an open space, but as is the case with all movement for any kind of theatre, it needs to have some kind of organic base to it. Movement should grow out of the need, intensity and action of the performer, but it can be "bigger" in an open space, as the plays that are written for open spaces tend to be more epic. These can lend themselves to larger movements, whereas if you're doing a naturalistic play in a studio, of course the situation is very different.

I suppose that the only absolute rule is that there are no absolute rules, and one should always experiment with different types of movement, different scales of gesture, and different types of staging, in the space.

One moment in Julius Caesar that I think works well is the aftermath of the assassination. Everyone on stage is moving around in different directions and calling out. We developed this in rehearsal in a very improvisational way, to retain an essential spontaneity and energy that I think has sustained itself throughout the run.

Lepidus

It's strange, but Lepidus in Julius Caesar and Lepidus in Antony and Cleopatra are two quite different people! I thought, coming back to Lepidus in Caesar, that I bring in qualities I found in Antony, but I'm not sure that has happened, actually. Lepidus in Caesar only has about three lines, and yet you still see antagonism between him and Mark Antony in that play. In Antony and Cleopatra you see a much closer bond between the two; indeed, Lepidus becomes an apologist for Antony. In Julius Caesar Lepidus is really a bit of an "odd man out", but in Antony and Cleopatra the situation changes and it is Antony who is the renegade within the triumvirate, and it is Lepidus who pleads for him. The two plays are written seven or eight years apart, and I think the two characters are conceived in two different ways.

The Master system

The rigorous text work that we did with Giles, combined with the much freer, improvisational work with Mark, seemed to me a very effective way of approaching a play. I think that there may be times when you need to run a play, and let it run quite fleetingly; Caesar was quite slow to start with, and we seemed to lose a lot of time, which I think was a result of a lot of the improvisational work. Caesar tightened up very quickly, however, and I do think it helped the company for the long haul ahead to have worked in the way we started out. I think it made it easier for Giles to direct Antony and Cleopatra, to get the company up to speed, because we had done all that preliminary improvisation beforehand in rehearsals for Caesar.

I found Giles's verse work rather good, because I know that when I hit problems in a scene, I went back to the text and realised that I had lost the thread of it a bit, usually because I had forgotten to mark the line endings. At times I felt I was doing that too technically, too self-consciously perhaps, but that was probably because I wasn't making the right choice about why I was choosing the word that followed, or why I was lingering on a certain word. If you're making the right choices, and motivating them, the verse will come out well, but there are times when I know it gets purely technical, times when I'm tired and not thinking freshly and spontaneously.

Mark's approach is that everything must come from a need, and this is also very good, as it is something that actors can often lose sight of. With classical texts in particular, we too often think, "Well, I have to say this in certain way", and we concentrate too much on a certain style, which on its own can be very empty. Line-feeding (an exercise with which we began rehearsals for Caesar) is a time-consuming way of working, but it really helped me to concentrate on the need.

Original practices

I think that one of the interesting things about working here is that it gives you a chance to remember that Shakespeare was not just a writer, but an actor within the company he wrote for. When I hear Cleopatra's line "How heavy weighs my lord", I wonder if it is something that Shakespeare threw in at the last minute, because the scene was getting a bit of a laugh anyway, and he thought he'd ride along with that. Shakespeare knew what worked here, and what didn't, and he also knew which jokes worked here and which didn't. I love the in-jokes, about a "squeaking Cleopatra/Boy my greatness", and when Toby says as Portia "I have a man's mind, and a woman's might". Those are good gags, as they not only express very accurately a state of mind, but also provide a joke for the groundlings, which you become aware of working here, with original-practice casting.

Costuming is a vexed question. I think that in Shakespeare's time the actors probably wore one set of doublet and hose, and added little accoutrements like a hat or a cape, to suggest different characters. I think that modern audiences would find that practice rather difficult to accept. They aren't used to listening with the necessary intensity to differentiate characters; they need strong visual clues, it seems to me. Unfortunately, in meeting those audience demands, we incur tremendous costs and impose tremendous levels of stress in the form of quick changes, between costumes that were not designed for quick-changing at all.

I think it might be worth exploring a simpler costuming solution. At the moment we seem to be working with a contradictory approach. The clothing that Cleopatra wears changes frequently, to support the actor and to establish changes in situation and mood. That is a comparatively modern way of thinking about costume. Antony, by contrast, wears doublet and hose for most of the play, which is closer to what we think they did in Shakespeare's time. I think there is a contradiction there in terms of style, which needs to be resolved somehow. I think it is fine to follow our modern predilections for multiple costumes, but if we do, we should extend that

approach to every character, and be consistent.

I sometimes feel that “authenticity” should not be revered too much. I think that we should look at how they might have done the plays in Shakespeare’s time, in order to find new information, for a new, fresh, exciting production. I don’t think we should get too bogged down in what we consider to be “authenticity”, in terms of costuming, production style or anything else. I think there is potentially a danger that we could lose sight of the contemporary meaning that the play may have to our audiences, if we were to expect “authenticity” to be meaningful in itself.

Interview with James Gillan

Lucius, Julius Caesar

Iras, Antony and Cleopatra

I’ve done a lot of musical theatre, which of course is very different from working at the Globe, but I thought I would be totally intimidated at the prospect of pursuing that necessary eloquence, and remain so throughout the season. But I’ve really felt a great deal of warmth and support, throughout the season. As a result of that support, I’ve been able to grow as an actor in many different ways. I’ve grown in confidence, especially, because nobody here tells you that something is “wrong”, nobody tells you that “you’re doing something terrible”, or that “this is not the way you were directed”. It’s a very natural, loving way of working.

Most of my lines are straightforward and easy for the audience to understand. It’s the lengthier speeches that offer a way of testing out that “eloquence”: Brutus’s soliloquy in the garden, for instance (Act II, Julius Caesar), takes some making sense of, for actor and for audience.

Original Practices: playing a woman

I play an Egyptian (Iras) who is part of a world that we have created in our imaginations. When we came to the previews, only then did we have advice on how we should be moving, sitting, etc – it seemed that we should have known, somehow, how to do this as women. Jenny pointed out that some of our movements didn’t fit well with our costumes; I think that it would have been useful to have had a “crash course” in walking, talking, sitting and standing as a woman, early on in rehearsals. Basically, I see Danny (Charmian) and I as being Mark’s right and left, so we tend to follow and mirror his movements as Cleopatra. I found this both logical and freeing: as Cleopatra’s attendants, her thoughts, her movements should be ours. In the few instances when we are not on stage with Cleopatra, we are trying to be her, so every thought is really to her.

So much of what other characters say of the women is revealing, in constructing Iras’ character. Enobarbus says “transform us not to women”, as if this were a shameful thing to be. It shows us how the men regarded us, and seems to suggest that the women were merely “things for men”. He also says “an Eunuch and your maids manage these wars”, which is very telling. We have to be very strong as women if indeed we do have any influence on Cleopatra whatsoever. It’s just like the situation today: women have to be both strong and feminine, and hugely responsible.

I have a lot of feminine influences in my life, and always have done; plus, I’m a gay man. I was always very in tune with my feminine side, and always enjoyed those influences. So, playing Iras was not a great feat, for me. My dance training has meant that I’ve become more comfortable in myself physically, and maybe am more able to express myself in a more graceful way. I think too that years ago it would have been the little feminine man who would have played the female parts. I really don’t think the audiences of Shakespeare’s time would have responded well to a “blokey” man in a dress – they would not have believed in the illusion.

Mark asked me one day, “Why doesn’t Iras speak as much as Charmian?” and we discussed this during that day’s rehearsal. We came to the conclusion that when she has got something to say... well, there has to be a reason why some of her lines are some of the most beautiful lines in the play... if she was just a fool, standing there watching the action, agog, the lines would be more basic. Charmian has a lot of practical lines, whereas my lines are a bit more spiritual.

That sort of sums up the two different sides of Cleopatra, which is what I believe we represent. I think that during rehearsals all of the men playing women were playing on the same level of “boys playing girls”, towards the same perceived result. However, since we got to the stage, we have all developed in very different directions, towards very different kinds of women. Perhaps that’s something that the audience has directed us to do, by showing us what they want, by their response to us. The audience has really enjoyed the knockabout, “laddish” side of Charmian, for instance. My energy has been quite different, as Iras; I hope that this has shown two sides of the same coin – two sides of Cleopatra, in fact – rather than separated us into different worlds.

I learned a lot back stage, about the way in which men and women differ! I learned that people treat you differently when you’re wearing a dress! Even if it is only silly things like people opening doors for you – it’s still very bizarre! The whole company (being an all-male company) treats me differently; it’s easy to feel quite empowered, actually, dressed as a woman.

I think that because we created our own Egypt out of our imaginations, a lot of the “rules for women” of Shakespeare’s time may not have come into play so much. I also think that the original audiences must have been quite shocked to see the way that Cleopatra and her women behaved – quite different to the standards of their day. These unusual values seem to be upheld and championed in the play, which must have been very liberating for the actors playing the female roles, and for the women in the audience!

Interview with Liam Hourican

Trebonius, Julius Caesar

Eros, Antony and Cleopatra

On training: Does it prepare you?

I think I was lucky to come here straight out of drama school. You do so many more exercises in drama school than you do once you’re out of it – nobody’s there, once you’re out of school, to tell you to do your movement and voice exercises. I think a lot of actors forget these very quickly, and never do these exercises at all. I know I might sound like a bit of a novice to say this, but I find that lack of preparation quite shocking. I certainly feel at least 30% difference in my performance between when I’ve really warmed up properly, and when I haven’t warmed up. I’m just much more on the ball, in the moment and versatile, having warmed up. When you come to the Globe, it seems even more vital to prepare in this way. If you’re out of shape, if you’re in bad condition, if you’re hung over, or not warmed up, you get completely exhausted on that stage within half an hour. And so in that sense, I was glad that I was just out of drama school, because I wasn’t out of those habits, so to speak.

As long as you are connected, you can’t really be “too big”. There’s no limit to how big you can be. That was something that was really impressed upon us in school by our movement teacher, whose classes I really applied myself to. That was an important thing that she taught me: as long as it is connected, there’s no limit to how much energy can go into a movement or gesture – it can be huge, even in a very small space. In the Globe, it has to be big. I was lucky that in school I had been taught how to work in big spaces. But once I was here, I had to go back and do all of those exercises that we’d learned in drama school again, and start doing other exercises that I’d been taught since then, by the teachers here, because halfway through the season I became

completely exhausted. I wasn't living well, or taking care of myself, and I was just appearing on stage with no energy, and I really felt that I had to do something about this. I knew that the Globe can just swallow you up, if you're not in shape, and so I went back to the exercises. You'll get nothing from the space if you don't have any energy – you'll just hate it – but if you have the energy and you put it out, you get it back, and it's a great feeling.

You can't really separate movement and voice, but if I had to, I would say that I start with movement as the first step in finding my way into a character, or into a scene. For me it's movement-based, to begin with. That's how I tend to work. I would have thought, funnily enough, that working in the Globe would mean that I would change that somehow, and start instead with the verse, but I don't, in fact. Often I don't learn the text until quite late on, I find it quite difficult. Instead, I start off by finding what I think the movement should be, and from that I go to the text.

Having said all that, I know that I am still learning, I'm learning all the time, and this place has taught me lots of new things, and this has been a great place to develop, for me. In retrospect, I know now that I should have started more with the text, and really made the text my own at an earlier stage. I hope that I will generally do that more from now on. I thought the exercise of "feeding in" the lines that Mark used at the first stage of rehearsals for Julius Caesar might have helped, but to be honest I think that it might have been better for me if it had been introduced at a slightly later stage. At that very early stage we had nothing, we didn't know who we were, or what world we were in, and we didn't know who the other people were. When you're in that kind of situation it's actually impossible to create a scene, an action even; until you have some sense of who you are and where you are, the choices available are far too broad. You hear a line, and that line could be delivered in any number of ways. What I'm trying to say is that as far as I'm concerned, I just feel that specificity is of vital importance, and I can't do anything before I'm specific about who I am and where I am, and what world I'm in. It's only when you know who you are that a line can really be given colour.

An example of this is one of my characters – of my many little characters – one with whom I'm most comfortable. The Cobbler/Plebeian is in modern dress, and I've given him a Northern Irish accent, so his details are quite specific. I feel that any line I deliver with that character is very coloured. There are other characters that I play that I feel less sure about. They tend to end up as vague "Elizabethan types", or my idea of an "Elizabethan type", and I feel that they are too broad, too unspecific.

To Kill a Poet

The audiences seem at first to be surprised to see that the Plebeians are dressed in modern clothes. They find the Plebeians very funny, and then they seem to split into two camps: those who don't really like the fact that we're seen to step out of the rest of the play in that way, and those who really like that aspect of those characters. I think that quite a lot of the young people really liked the Plebeians a lot. I've had young people coming up to me afterwards and say "That was great, man... I saw you come in at the start, in your jeans and shirt with your can of beer and I thought, 'Oh, here comes trouble!'" But I can understand those who don't like it too. There's a film called *Blazing Saddles*, and it's a Western, but at the very end, they step out of the Western and start having this punch-up in these Hollywood studios. Suddenly, you're out of the story, and you're out of the world that has been created, and in a sense that might be happening for some of our audience too. The myth is suddenly dispelled.

The reactions to the "To Kill a Poet" scene have changed as we've developed more control over the scene. The first few times we performed it, the response was largely one of hilarity. People found it very funny. They may have found it unpleasant in some sense, but the overriding emotion was one of hilarity. That upset us a lot at the start, and we weren't sure what to do

about it. Obviously, that wasn't the reaction we wanted to provoke. But gradually, we got more control over the scene, and whether the audiences just became better behaved, or whether we made them better behaved, by leaving them less room to take control of the scene, I don't know. We were wrestling with the audience at the beginning, to see who had control of the play. The audience realised that they had quite a lot of influence, and they enjoyed that, and they started to use it, and then some started to abuse it. We became aware of how some of the audience seemed to enjoy throwing the play off balance. We seemed to solve the problem by becoming more focussed, and more concentrated, making sure that there weren't so many moments available for them get in there and disrupt what was going on.

We tried to concentrate less on the audience in that scene, but in other "crowd scenes" we tried to get them going more than we used to. But on the whole, I'd say that as the play progressed in performance, we tried generally to keep the play more to ourselves. At the beginning our idea was to really inflame the audience, to really get them going, and I think we gave them too much as a result. We allowed them too much room, and we had to start making it more our own, and protect it.

I think the way in which an actor refers to the audience, and what he projects onto that audience, are crucial. I know that the audience identifies with our modern costumes immediately, more so than with the period clothing perhaps. The scene is also written in a style which is less rhetorical than the rest of the play. We're dressed in modern clothes, and we're acting like a bunch of thugs, really. I think it is a very familiar spectacle; this kind of thing happens every day, sadly, but it could be why the scene works.

Honour

Honour is certainly not a concept that strikes you as particularly relevant on a day to day basis living in London. It is an idea really rooted in family, in clans, in the land. You find this notion is much more current in less urban places, in Sicily, in Crete, and to a lesser degree, in my own family in Ireland, for example. That's how I relate to the idea of "honour". People would relate to that through films like *The Godfather* – we all know what it is, but people don't really live by those codes in London any more (if they ever did).

As an idea, it is difficult to communicate to this fairly cosmopolitan crowd, because we've never really identified it, actually. We haven't created an immediately specific world – it's "Elizabethan", but we don't really know what that means. We all have our own impressions of what "honour" and "duty" and "loyalty" are. I think the only way to convey that sense of the importance of honour would be to develop a very strong sense of "clan", of kinsmanship and survival, because that is where all those things are rooted. If you don't show those things very clearly, then it's a bit ridiculous to start layering in an idea of "honour" on top of everything else. I think that is something we haven't really tackled fully. I suspect that we all have a slightly different world in our minds; some of the acting looks very modern, and some of it looks more stylised.

At the beginning of the season, I was really trying to act my way through the suicide of Eros. I kept thinking to myself, "OK, this is a point of crisis. I've got to put so much in here, and show his emotional crisis here." But, more and more, I think that the more you can just let the text do the work, the better. It's easier and more effective that way. In my attempt to crank up this emotional energy, I was fighting the text, and not using its natural rhythms. The more I've been able to just let go, the easier I've found the scene to be. I had been jumping to the situation too quickly, and I needed to start owning the text first. Like I said at the beginning of this interview, I needed to discover that the movement will come out of the rhythms of the text, if you take time to make the text your own, at the beginning.

Interview with Mark Lewis Jones

Mark Antony, Julius Caesar

Pompey, Antony and Cleopatra

Eloquence

I think that if you describe eloquence as “force, form and appropriateness” then it surely represents the three main elements that should be pursued by anybody who tackles any play, especially a verse play. I don’t think the need for eloquence is peculiar to the Globe; the RSC, and the National Theatre tackle the same thing in their own ways. What is peculiar to the Globe is the active and conscious pursuit of this eloquence.

That said, this notion of eloquence came as nothing new to me. If you do not relish antithesis in language, for example, you may not fully grasp the meaning of the line. In a very pragmatic way, if you get the antithesis right, nine times out of ten, you get the meaning of the line right. We have certainly gone a long way towards achieving a “vocal eloquence” this season. From the first season on, there have been leaps and bounds made in this direction.

I think there is another element to eloquence as Mark spoke of it. You don’t just think the line through, make the line sound right, or make the line believable; throughout the plays there is a great eloquence in the arcs of the play, the journeys different characters make, and these too are elements of eloquence, I think.

Clarity, it seems to me, goes hand in hand with eloquence. Julius Caesar is a much easier play in one sense, because its eloquent arcs are much more clearly defined. I think that Antony and Cleopatra is more spread out, and the arcs are less clearly defined. Friends of mine would disagree, however, and many of them having seen this production told me it is the clearest they have ever seen. I think that the separation of Master of Verse and Master of Play for Julius Caesar worked very well indeed. Of course this work inevitably fed Antony and Cleopatra, and to start us off like that with the dual focus of verse and play really helped Mark’s aims of clarity and eloquence. It was an experiment that worked; Giles’s brief was to make us understand what we were saying, properly and clearly. Once you truly understand what you are saying, and you know what your intention really is, you can then achieve a kind of eloquence. You can’t impose eloquence on anything; it can only be worked out. With two weeks remaining of the season, I think we can look back in retrospect and say that we have achieved those aims that Mark set out at the beginning of the season.

The signs are very good for the Globe, in terms of its maturity. We have nothing else to concentrate on here; the Globe is bigger than all of us. What we have to work on is telling the story. We have only the words we are given; that is all we need here, so I think to concentrate on telling the story is a very sensible plan.

Original Practices

I think that for actors, original practices are new trades that we have the opportunity to learn, and I think that is great. If you take that approach, and accept these practices for what they are, they can only feed your work. I now have knowledge that will remain a part of my armoury, whatever I do next. I have learned a lot of technical things this season, like how you tie points for example. But at the end of the day, I don’t particularly care what I’m wearing, as long as it fits in with the show, and I feel comfortable in it. The clothes I wore this season more than fulfilled those criteria, and so I was very happy to wear them, but I do have to admit that what is going on in the play is far more important to me than what clothes I am wearing.

To be honest there is a part of me that really doesn’t care “how they stood on stage then”. That element of the original practice work gets laid on top of our work at a late stage in rehearsals, and I think that things like “authentic” posture need to be achieved more organically. The

costumes themselves dictate the way in which you stand, and that for me is enough. You cannot help but improve your posture if you are wearing these costumes, but if you change all of your natural movements, you end up walking like a robot on stage.

I find it very frustrating, rather than helpful, and I worry that the piece starts to look like a fashion show.

Use of the space

There are times when I think we are physically using the space well, but more times when I think we are not. It is very easy to suddenly find yourself in the line between the two pillars, for example. We are not yet as physically eloquent as we are verbally eloquent. In the first season I saw the Umabatha, and I was intrigued to see how they used the Globe as a complete circle. We don't do that. We tend to shut off the back bit – the Lords' Rooms – and though there are only a few people sitting there at any one time, by having your back to them, you are making a statement about who is included in your storytelling. It stems from a long history of playing that we have of course inherited over the course of the century, because we have so few theatres in the round to play in on a regular basis. Some actors adapt to the Globe space quickly and naturally, and they somehow make it work; that is their gift. There are other actors who just don't have that immediate gift, and need some help. As we have a Master of Verse, I think we also need a Master of Space. We need sessions in the space that are devoted entirely to working out effective places to use to tell the story. In front of the pillars at the corners of the stage are strong positions, as is centre-stage, below and above. I worked on *The Maid's Tragedy* with Lucy Bailey and I remember how effectively she used strong diagonals on the stage. Mark (Rylance) knows the space very well, and this shows in his movement on it. We need to work to lift our physical eloquence, to match our verbal eloquence, to help us tell the story.

Interview with Tom Lees

Trombone, Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra

Here at the Globe, you have to be open to the whole experience. We're so integrated as musicians with the actors here. Usually, we find ourselves stuck under the stage wearing black; musicians aren't able to see or to be seen, and this tells you something about the role that we have in most "conventional" theatres. I've done West End work and shows and musicals, but this is quite different: there, we very rarely get to go on stage and interact. We're very separate from the actors – we rarely get to meet. To wear these fantastic costumes and be right up there and be able to receive the response that we get, we feel really valued.

As far as the skills that we bring, we have to be very open minded, and I'm lucky to work in an environment that allows us to have a say in what we do. It's very creative. For instance, Claire has ideas about what she wants, and yet she is very open to our suggestions about instruments and the ways we can move with the instruments and things that we do on stage. That's growing all the time – the show is very different now, compared to what it was at the beginning of the run.

We have quite theatrical instruments as well -- the big trumpets, for instance. I think the procession in *Antony* was, at first, quite serious and wooden; Giles encouraged us to think of an Egyptian bazaar and now there's lots of dancing moves, as much as we can with these instruments. It's much more of a visual thing.

For *Antony*, Claire had very definite ideas about the sound world she wanted to create, and Keith McGowan was instrumental in that. He brought in lots of ideas and recordings of ethnic

music, and his input was huge. So we developed the idea of being Elizabethan musicians who had discovered this “other world”. Perhaps we’d met some musicians from that world, who could have come in on a boat, and we’d discovered these different sound worlds. That would be our inspiration for the Pompey’s barge scene. At other times we’d be doing “straight stuff”, then we’d get these crazy instruments out - the little shawms and the long trumpets.

We play on very good copies of original instruments. In terms of the detail and techniques for making them, they are hand-beaten and the brass instruments have no solder. All that work has gone in beforehand. It’s just a thrill for us to find that they work so naturally in the Globe space. When I’ve come in to see Julius Caesar there appears to be such a natural projection, acoustically. I think the position of the gallery has really helped us this year. Set forward, we feel much more a part of the performance, but acoustically as well I think it projects the sound in a far more successful way and you hear more detail. I think the music has to be very tight and when it’s not you can hear all that as well.

At the Great Hall at Hampton Court there’s a minstrel’s gallery which is absolutely perfect for the music. I mean, it’s the amplified music of the time. People say, “Oh, you’d never hear it,” and then you go up there and it’s just fabulous the way it works, and it’s the same in here as well. I’m not an acoustician, but it’s interesting to note how the sound changes when the yard is full. Theatres that have rows of velvet seats can sometimes sound very dead or be difficult to play in. This is a very easy place to play in.

Last year we did quite a lot of work playing different cues in different parts of the theatre. It was a thrill to wonder where the sound is coming from, but one of the things we find in the gallery now is that it is so directional. If someone points an instrument at you, you just hear that instrument and nothing else. We find that with the big trumpets. This directional sound is something that we play with now much more; you sort of pick people out who are really getting into the music. We point a trumpet at them, and that must be all they hear! You can see people getting quite excited!

Each show has an MD who is responsible for making sure we start and stop together. Someone in the group directs from within. It’s what this music’s all about, really: we’re all equal parts within the texture. Playing the audience is something we just do more and more and develop as the season goes on. The preshow music for Julius Caesar has developed into a much more active, raucous performance, and that’s a real thrill. Friends of ours, colleagues and musicians, are incredibly envious of what we have to do here, because nowhere else in this country do you ever get response like that.

I remember the first performance of Julius Caesar came at the end of an incredibly long day. We got behind in the tech and the dress, but at the end of the show we did that jig, with the impressive sound and the trumpets, and the whole thing came together. There were a few damp eyes in the musicians that night! We were running on pure adrenalin and it was an incredible buzz to be part of that whole thing.

At first when we’d do the preshow, it would just expand according to how the audience reacted. Different audiences react in different ways, and this makes a big difference to your performance. Sometimes the sense of expectancy in the audience is tangible; sometimes people are talking amongst themselves, and sometimes they are absolutely silent, just looking at us. The preshow is brilliantly structured. We picked out good pieces that we thought would work, and the way the drums work with the metre of the pieces always gets people going.

When we play these instruments we try to be as historically accurate as we can; there are compromises made occasionally, but we try to keep these to a minimum. In the fanfare the top trumpet parts are played (authentically) without holes, so that makes them naturally slightly out of tune. However, it’s a fantastic sound. The musicians try to lip it into tune as much as they can, but I know Claire really likes the natural sound of that unadulterated harmonic series

that naturally has notes that are sharp and flat. These are things that we have to work with when we use these instruments; modern instruments are acoustically more accurate. People do experiment with playing without holes with varying degrees of success. But in this show we make a real play of it and I don't think you could do that in any other context. It liberates us really. I think the challenge of overcoming the natural difficulties of instruments made in this way can only help your interpretation of the music. When it's all there, you've got an instrument that can play these things perfectly well ... it's difficult to explain. These instruments lend themselves to certain articulations and phrasing: it's certainly much easier to play it on the natural instrument, which it's not on the modern instrument.

It's part of the show and people accept it. It's an incredible response.

Keith researched all the drums calls for alarms and retreats, and the trumpet calls as well. They're very specific and are the sort of thing that audiences then would instantly have identified. I think people were much more familiar with the military signals of that era. The military drums do have a primeval sound that people must identify with. I play on the lower trumpet and I think the low trumpets suggest war – that something's going to happen. Even specific calls - they naturally do suggest that the charge doesn't sound like retreat. Maybe it's because we've become familiar with it now.

It's been some time now since the work of David Monroe, pioneering work. We really are part of a second generation of early brass players (people who've studied these instruments that didn't exist). I think there are certain musicians who lean towards this type of music. I think the players in this company aren't the sort who just want to sit in an orchestra. I think they want to contribute, play off each other, use their ears more, making it sound as close to how it should sound as possible. playing these instruments, with all the challenges that come with them.

Interview with John McEnery

Enobarbus, Antony and Cleopatra

Storytelling

Ideally the story should take care of itself; if it isn't then we're not doing our job properly. I remember that once in Henry V Mark had to stop the show because there was a bunch of (too young) children, who were just talking freely amongst themselves, just ignoring us, as if we weren't there. The noise got so bad that Mark had to say, "Look, I'm sorry but we're trying to tell a story and it's very hard to do that when there's this distraction of people's voices distracting our concentration." He elicited a round of applause from the members of the audience, who were also very pissed off by the noise. Fortunately, that's the only time that it's been necessary to do that.

However, today it has been a bit hairy, as the audience is a bit unfocused. There are some deaf and dumb children, a sign language group in there, and I don't know whether it's coming from them, but there's a sort of continual chatter going on which really can interfere with your concentration. So that's happening today, but it is nothing like as bad as it was on the Henry V occasion. Those kids were really unruly and their teacher wasn't doing anything to stop them, which was pretty infuriating.

At a theatre talk I gave the other day one of the ushers said that during the very first season, people felt much more free to participate, interact and say whatever came into their minds. She maintained that people in the galleries joined in this way, not just the groundlings. She said that audiences now don't do that, and they might as well be in an ordinary theatre; they just sit down and are very quiet. That sounds a bit sad to me, and I hope it's not true. Henry V is a

nationalistic, patriotic play, and maybe it naturally elicits more of a reaction than Antony and Cleopatra. I asked her if the ushers tell the audience when they come in to refrain from doing things like that. She told me the ushers wouldn't dream of doing that.

Verse and Text

When I tackle blank verse, I have a very simple formula and it's called "five points". I just see five dots on a dice and I lay the line across that symbol of five points. That's all. That's what the metre bounces on isn't it? So that's all I do. Just count to five. Sometimes I think, "Well, this line is a bit difficult to fit into that five, how does it sound? The last six words are de DUM de DUM de DUM so that's three beats, so that means the beginning of the line must be two beats." So therefore I can work out how the stress works out. It's something I've done for a long time. It's pentameter and it's five beats to the line, and it's no more complicated than that.

After working with Giles, people are sort of clued up now about what a caesura is, an alexandrine or what the capital letters mean. That was a little new to me, not having ever worked on a Folio text before. I still rely on counting the five beats over the line, and whether it's an alexandrine or a caesura you can still find the five beats. I did appreciate Giles's meticulousness about it, stressing that you must recognize when you are at the end of a line. Also, he stressed that if it's a shared line you have a mutual responsibility with another actor to complete that intent.

You have an obligation to serve the text and get it through as deftly and succinctly as possible. It's really just like diving in at the deep end. You've just got to get on with it and start, no matter what your character is, or what the speech is, be it famous or not. In *As You Like It*, when I played Jaques, I didn't really have a character, I was just saying the lines, I was letting the text serve me, and consequently serve the audience. But with *Enobarbus* I've slightly characterised him into this sort of military chap. I've given him a sort of English quality, a military thing, so I've got that to lean on, if you like.

Playing conditions

I can't say I have noticed any difference in the acoustics over the past few years. My voice seems to be doing now what it was doing three years ago. When you're speaking on stage you've got to think of the people who are behind you, and for that you do need plenty of voice. If - on a speaking scale of one to ten - shouting is ten, you've got to be speaking at around seven most of the time. Often as I enter I find I'm using all my voice because there's so much clatter and noise coming from backstage. I sometimes can't tell how much I am using it, and I run the risk of hurting my voice. But so far I haven't!

I've done a little theatre in the round, and that has a very similar feeling – you do need to speak up for those people who can't see your lips. I would think that an awareness of people behind you is something that comes over time. I noticed some of our more experienced performers tend to do that in a more naturalistic fashion. I think it would be easy for someone new to the stage to look like they were moving excessively to take in everybody in the space. You can't simply present your face to all 360 degrees of the auditorium, because as soon as you've moved one way you've still got the same problem – they've still got to hear.

The Globe requires the same use of the voice, and makes the same demands on the voice, as a one-faceted auditorium. The crucial differences here are not being illuminated, and being able to see the audience and knowing that they can see you. It helps to be able to see the audience, especially if they are looking like they enjoy what you're doing! You can't see the effect the play is having on your audience in an ordinary theatre -- you're drenched in light so you don't know what they're doing, whether they're falling asleep or reading the text or what. Consequently, you have to be so much more on your toes here: there's no hiding place. One of the cast had a bit of

a bad cough this afternoon, and as he automatically turned upstage to clear his throat, he found himself facing the Lord's Rooms. Of course, there are people there, so there's no hiding place! The groundlings are really vital. Take away the groundlings, and those people in the gallery would not absorb their enjoyment. I'm sure excitement ignites through the groundlings and then passes into the galleries.

I like to talk directly to the audience, if it is appropriate to do so. If I talk to faces, it seems to increase and encourage concentration in the audience. I've sometimes sort of thrown the lines up to the sky, but it generally works much better using people. One of the reviews for this show said that Enobarbus's death scene would have been more potent if I had made eye contact with the audience throughout. However, that's not the kind of soliloquy that you can really address to an audience. It's a man on his own in a desperate state, and you don't need to make contact with anybody. I just look at the thatched roof for that one.

Interview with Quill Roberts

Pindarus, Julius Caesar/Mardian, Antony and Cleopatra

The work that Giles (Block) did, particularly on Julius Caesar (as Master of Verse) was brilliant. The story is fantastically clear in Julius Caesar, and I think the actors have benefited tremendously from the specificity of Giles' approach to the verse and the prose, in making the difference between them. The interesting thing for me was that Giles seemed to say one thing in particular that was the opposite to anything I had heard before: that is, that when you hit the prose, you've really got to think that much quicker than with verse. In previous situations I had been told that the prose offers room for manoeuvre, time to pause, and so on; in fact, Giles said completely the opposite, which took me by surprise. When I then looked at a little chunk of prose on my own, I found that it really does lift, if you attack the prose from that basis. So that was quite exciting. Giles was asking us to be...well, "rigid" is not quite the word, but we certainly had to adhere to his approach: we marked line endings, kept the line running, kept the thought running right to the end of the line without breaking the line up.

Giles' reprinting of the First Folio was very useful; he changed all of the punctuation to just commas and colons. It was quite freeing, actually, because it was unhindered by generations of editors and their opinions! So, I think a lot of us found release as actors, to delve deeper, and to make the text our own. What I got from Giles was that the comma gives a little emphasis to the previous word, and the colon is a gear-change, or a change of physical or emotional nature, or a pause. It's a matter of identifying what that change signifies, for you and for that particular situation. So, I found that very, very useful. And I'd love to work in that way again.

It was a shame, actually, to find that when we came to work on Antony and Cleopatra – it being such a big play – that we have a Master of Verse to work with. Of course, we were expected to do it ourselves, and did, but I think it still helps to have a Master of Verse to assist you, to help clarify things that we may all have missed. It's a fascinating way to work, and I found a lot of value in it. I think the storytelling really benefited from this work. The storyline of Antony and Cleopatra takes so many twists and turns that clarity in storytelling becomes of paramount importance for the audience, if they are going to allow themselves to be taken along by the story. In this particular production I feel that a lot of the audience really have grasped more than just the basic storyline; they've been able to enter into the play more, and not be overwhelmed by a load of language being thrown at them.

Eloquence and physicality

I have a particular view on physicality – and I suppose gesture is an integral part of that – and

I don't think that the physicality of storytelling has been fully addressed. The textual aspect of storytelling has been addressed, and the verse has been made very clear as a result. But I do think that we could look further at gesture, at physical awareness, in other words, at how you tell a story with your body as well. I think that this particular space, given its size, demands attention to physicality – to use your whole body to communicate – in order to affect the audience, which of course is what any production is seeking to do. The more you can communicate with them, the greater their response.

My way of working is generally from a physical basis. For instance, when (as Pindarus) I kill Cassius, that particular moment is not particularly text-led, but I feel that what I do there enhances the text. (Pindarus kills Cassius with a sword in a highly stylised manner, and then stretches out his dead body on the stage before executing a symbolic “grasping of the spirit”, which he appears to then launch towards the heavens.) I hope it says a lot about my character. Pindarus is from somewhere else; he has been captured by Cassius. The two have entered into a bond (that Pindarus will kill Cassius, if requested to do so), but there is on top of this a kind of mutual respect, and Pindarus is genuinely reluctant to fulfil his bond. However, being an honourable man himself, he has to, and so he goes through with it. I felt that this episode in the text contained only tiny references to Pindarus' being Cassius' bondman, and that in this day and age, most of the audience would probably not realise what a bondman is. So you have to give them something which says, “Something here is different – we're entering into a different area here”, just to colour what is going on in the scene.

So, the way that I killed Cassius – my decision to honour the bond, my journey through the killing of Cassius and then how it had affected me – involves a big journey that the text doesn't really help you with. So, I've introduced this piece of storytelling without words. The fact I appear to send his spirit up to the gods immediately places me somewhere else – it's a very “un-Roman” (indeed, un-English) thing to do.

On Mardian the Eunuch's song:

Well, I'm very aware of movement, of dance, and of pictures. I try and bring all that kind of thing that I've done before to a given scene. I felt that Mardian too was from “somewhere else” other than Cleopatra's Egypt, and so he has a different quality. I felt that his hand-gestures needed to be kept neat and contained – in contrast to Pindarus', which needed to be quite big and strong, emotionally extended gestures. For Mardian the gestures were more refined, because of his position in the palace, his relationship with Cleopatra, etc. His song is more of a “personal performance” - he has created this song that he is dying to sing for her! – and his gestures are created to enhance that.

The lyrics for the song, that Claire gave me, are from *The Mad Lover* (play, ca.1617), and the music is from a Macedonian folk-song. She said in fact that all music stems from Macedonia. She has melded the two elements, and I think they work wonderfully together. It is very emotional, in a simple, “folk” sort of way. (I suppose that's why it's a folk song!) Claire also gave me a sheet of hand gestures that were specific to the time (ca. 1600). I found that a lot of them - were I to string them together - would have been rather melodramatic, so I looked at the lyrics I had, and started off from there. In fact what I do is to trace out half a heart. It's nice shape to then move through into something else, from which to conjure up other images. The audience may well not understand what exactly it is that I'm drawing with my hands, but I believe in the gestures, and the audience believes that I believe something. You enter into a pact with them. The audience will go anywhere with you if you believe in what you're doing, if it is full of integrity.

Original practices

As far as men playing women is concerned, the guys have done a fantastic job. I think it goes to show you that these are roles that are being played, and that gender doesn't have to be so specific, in the same way that race doesn't have to be specific. If you really play the role, the audience will see you in that role. I remember seeing an RSC production of *The Last Days of Don Juan* many years ago, with a multi-racial company and a huge mix of dialects and international flavours, and you watched characters and forgot about everything else.

On playing at the Globe

Playing here is very exciting, because there is nowhere to hide. That's what's so marvellous; it's a very "dangerous" space – the energy reserves required to play here are so much more than for anywhere else – you are exposed completely to the audience. When you're in a scene you can feel the response immediately – it's palpable. You don't often get that in a modern theatre, and it is what is so uplifting about this one.

It's amazing how small a gesture you can use, which will still register across the distance. It's a space that gives you a great canvas to paint on; you can use great subtlety and grand scope of gesture too.

Focus has to be very important in this space. Because a physical language can be so commanding, therefore it can also be very distracting for an audience. So I think focus is of extreme importance here. Characters go through a physical and emotional journey, and the more of that you can bring out and register, the better.

Plebeians in modern dress

Playing in modern dress gives you a different body language. So, when I jump up out of the yard as Artemidorus, I can have a different "laddish" manner about me. However, that is the one time that I have no idea what the audience is thinking when I jump up onto the stage. We set the convention that the plebeians would wear modern dress right at the start of the play, but from that point, a great deal of time passes before I get on the stage in modern clothes. I don't know how many people realise that Artemidorus is the same man who shouts out that he is a carpenter, at the start of the show – only a tiny group, probably - and so I really find it very difficult to feel what they are feeling, and how best to play the scene with them. My worry is that they may be so busy wondering what is going on, that they may not hear what I am saying. It's an on-going concern of mine. I think that when I get up on the stage as Artemidorus, I have to have some kind of endearing quality. It is a difficult episode for me to gauge – it's one that changes from show to show – and their reaction to that character sometimes comes in later scenes, when I reappear. I sometimes get laughed at, though not cruelly - one lone, little man in the crowd, trying to protest against the conspirators. I suppose that's to be expected, really, but at least it's a reaction that I can use.

Interview with Danny Sapani

Brutus, Julius Caesar/Charmian, Antony and Cleopatra

The Globe is an inescapably theatrical space, and so it allows you to play with many different levels of reality, or truth: the truth in the story itself, the truth in the relationship between the actor and audience, and every truth in between. Because there is no technical support (lights, set, etc.) to "make the moment happen", the moment is solely reliant upon the concentration

and focus of the audience and players. Its uniqueness as a space is only heightened by the experience of playing outdoors; exposed to the sky, you really are aware that anything could happen! So, a whole layer of “tricks” that one might ordinarily rely upon has been stripped away, right from the start. This cannot help but lend an extra degree of honesty to the work. You can see the shape of the theatre and you can see the audience. You can see this very elaborate, painted stage, with images that allude to debate and thought - the heart, mind and soul – all of the things that the plays remind us about humanity and its ideas. The debate of the plays is heightened through language, and I can see why Shakespeare wrote this particular language for this particular space.

Playing at the Globe requires you to keep several elements in balance. You cannot demonstrate your emotional pain, in a naturalistic sense, because it is the words that carry the weight of your thoughts and feelings. You also have to avoid purely presentational acting, telling the audience what the story is. You cannot go the way of angst, insularity and introverted acting either. The further you go down any one of these roads, the more you find yourself being untrue to the story, to the space, to the audience and to the writing.

Playing Brutus

Brutus’s soliloquy comes after a whole Act of people presenting the situation – the state of Rome – very clearly. On the page, his soliloquy may seem confusing; I go through each line and try to express my dilemma, both as a player and as Brutus. I try to express my/his honesty, and be kind of naked in that. I have only the situation and the words to try and work it out for myself. There’s licence and the necessary space to do that at the Globe. I could come to whatever conclusion I want at the end, and whether the audience agrees with that conclusion or not, at least they’ve been taken along the journey with me, and they understand why I’m doing what I’m doing. I don’t try to simplify issues that aren’t simple; I try to live through the complications, emotionally and intellectually.

Brutus throws out thoughts and ideas that are not yet concluded or even justified in his own mind, and he waits for a response of some kind, from the heavens/ from the audience. Sometimes the response may be so strong that he needs to change his mind, or reconsider something, and sometimes he may feel nothing at all, and yet he has to move on, regardless. He’s a man who thinks a lot – some would say too much – and he’s caught in a situation where he has to act. Just like an actor! He makes decisions almost by default, and sometimes through trial and error. I don’t think that the answers really come until the very end of the play, when he kills himself. Does Brutus kill himself as a result of coming to a conclusion, or does the answer ultimately come after he is dead – in a kind of spiritual realm? Brutus is dead, but the actor continues, and resurrects the character the following night. I believe that Brutus is neither a slave to Fate, nor does he control his fate, he is simply part of the fabric of the expanding universe. Unlike Cassius, there’s a kind of detachment about Brutus that allows him the opportunity to communicate directly with the audience. Among the conspirators he is regarded as the most “reasonable”, and indeed he supplies the audience with the reason behind the conspiracy itself. I don’t think he has the same need to manipulate the audience in the way that Mark Antony does. Brutus seems to be concerned only that his argument is laid out fairly. He’s a lover of philosophy, a lover of thought, and he thinks that this situation is best dealt with philosophically. Stoically, when he realises that he is wrong, he kills himself.

Charmian

Cleopatra is an ambiguous character who can be very confusing at times. Charmian opens the door on Cleopatra’s character for the audience. In the relationship between these women we see how the Queen of Egypt behaves towards “ordinary” people. Charmian anchors the enigmatic Cleopatra somewhat, and it is she who gets the final word to explain what Cleopatra is really

“about” – she is a “lass unparallel’d”. She is unique and elusive, exactly as impossible to define as she appeared to be. Charmian’s line (above) is perhaps the most beautiful way to capture the essence of Cleopatra, coming as it does from the person who knew her best. It’s a very touching moment because we see Cleopatra through the eyes of another character, which we trust. I felt totally liberated playing a woman. We really played throughout the rehearsal period for Antony and Cleopatra, and so by the time we came to production, I felt I had a great number of possibilities to draw on. Since we went into performance, I feel she has grown as a character; she’s also been directed by the audience- to a far greater extent than Brutus.

As a man, I found it is much easier to play a woman. In no sense did I attempt to “become”. Play is a beguiling activity, which persuades rather than prescribes. We beguiled the audience so that they believed in our characters without having to believe that we were women. This I found particularly easy with Charmian as she is a clown, a creature of play, a theatrical animal. I found it easier to be “hopeful” as Charmian earlier in the season than I do now, at the season’s end. She has gone through many changes throughout the season - sometimes more maternal, sometimes she is more playful – but I feel that at the moment she is has become less “involved”. Though in her own eyes she has looked after Egypt, suddenly everything has been taken away from her, it is all out of her control, and at the end of the day, she is just a maid. There is no room for play; the game’s up. That her only real “hope” in life comes at her suicide, is something that really saddens me. I’ve come to understand that all of her outward cheerfulness hides a profound sadness that is there from the beginning of the play.

Shakespeare is most effective when – as in life – there’s a spontaneity and an innocence to what is being said and done. The structure of Shakespeare’s language allows an actor to make decisions as he speaks, to be safely guided by the impulses of the character, towards some kind of revelation. Understanding grows as the character grows. That is when Shakespeare is most vibrant, most like life. When you realise that, there is nothing to fear.

Interview with Paul Shelley

Caesar, Julius Caesar / Antony, Antony and Cleopatra

Working first on Julius Caesar prepared us for Antony and Cleopatra in many ways. Not only did the Red Company get to know Mark (Rylance) and each other during rehearsals of Caesar, we also became accustomed to some of the specifics of “original practices”, as well as Giles’ approach to verse speaking. This gave us a kind of grid of reference for Antony and Cleopatra, which was extremely useful. The work that Giles did on the verse I found enormously positive, as it was a very specific kind of approach, being his interpretation of what Shakespeare was trying to do, rather than just another “method” of speaking verse. While I was working on Antony, I remember only very few occasions when Giles would get into his Master of Verse “mode”, as he had established a very effective shorthand for discussions about the verse, throughout his work with us on Julius Caesar. I thought having Giles in from the beginning as Master of Verse worked very well indeed for this reason.

“Authentic” clothing

With regard to clothing, Caesar helped us to anticipate issues or complications that might arise for Antony. For instance, after Caesar I was more aware of the implications of authentic clothing on movement and on quick changes, and I was able to request that I had many fewer buttons on my clothing for Antony! I also insisted on getting into my Antony costume as soon as it was made, and rolling and leaping about in it, kneeling, falling in it, etc. That way, I was absolutely

sure of its ability to withstand all those kinds of movements. I also had a few adjustments made to the clothing to facilitate movement, and the stocking legs had to be made longer because I found that my thighs showed at the top when I knelt down. Again, the prior experience I had with authentic clothing (as a result of work on Caesar) meant that I was better prepared to consult with Jenny Tiramani on any clothing issues that needed looking at for Antony.

Soliloquies

If I had to describe Antony's job in Antony and Cleopatra I would have to say that I think he carries the bulk of the action of the four Acts in which he appears. Cleopatra, of course, has to carry much of the play, but often she tends to respond to what Antony is doing, or where he is, and how he is. This becomes increasingly the case as he gets closer and closer to his end, to his apotheosis, you might say. The physical demands of this need to drive the action are every bit as noticeable as the demands on my concentration. There are sections of the play that I find more tiring than other sections, too. The "All is lost" section (Act IV, Sc. 12) has always been terribly difficult, because I don't know where everyone is. Giles and I have both tried to solve it together, but I think the problem lies in the fact that instead of explaining things outwardly to the audience, Antony is speaking here in a very inward manner; yet he has to tell someone, and he tries to tell the audience. However, it doesn't hang easily at all. I don't think I've solved it at all; it's not a "problem-solving" soliloquy, because he's in an emotional state, within it. It's not a clear-cut soliloquy, in any sense, and yet Antony wants to share this with someone. I've had such difficulty with this section, more than I've ever had with any soliloquy in Shakespeare, ever! And no doubt I won't solve it at this point in the season. I've tried it upstage, as well as downstage; Antony is talking about something that has happened, which he has observed, but he's looking at those events taking place in one location, describing them towards a different direction, and Giles wants me to direct a certain degree of anger towards the audience too. His emotional state is so extreme, and it's a very long speech to sustain such emotion throughout. It's very difficult, and I haven't solved it to my own satisfaction, yet.

It doesn't discuss something in the way that "To be or not to be..." discusses something; that is a pensive soliloquy that Hamlet really feels a need to share with the audience. I feel that Antony's problems in "All is lost..." should also be shared with the audience, but I haven't found the right way to do that, and I find that frustrating.

I love the opportunity that soliloquies give you to make direct contact with the audience, as well as the chance a soliloquy gives to an audience to make direct contact with a character. Soliloquies are distinctly Elizabethan, I think, as they lie right at the heart of what we think of as Elizabethan drama. Whenever we use soliloquies in the modern theatre – and this goes for anything from Chekhov to the present, I suppose – we are going back to Elizabethan techniques which predate our supposedly "naturalistic" theatre of the 20th century. It seems to me that the Elizabethan theatre is really all about that relationship between actor (or character) and audience, and that is so apparent in the soliloquies. The energy is terrific – you start it, but they (the audience) then take up the energy and give it back to you. It is the best fuel you can have, especially if you're really tired – I watch the audience when I am about to commit suicide, and it is a terrific moment.

I think that kind of direct address was probably necessary – perhaps Hamlet can only stop his audience making so much noise if he turns to them and grabs their attention by asking them, "To be or not to be?" I'm sure they would have cried out, responded very noisily indeed – "Kill that Claudius guy!" or similar!

In the daylight theatres (like the Globe) the audience is visible, and visible to each other, as well as to the actors on the stage, and therefore to the characters – I don't particularly feel I have to distinguish between actor and character on this point. So, everyone is visible to each other, so if

they have problems...

I always feel that there are some characters in Shakespeare who speak first, purely in soliloquy – Cordelia is one. She’s standing there, we don’t know who she is, we sort of start to gather that there are three daughters, and that she must be the youngest. The first time she speaks, she speaks to the audience: “What shall Cordelia speak? Love, and be silent.” It’s an extraordinary device! I don’t think that Shakespeare when he wrote these plays thought of those soliloquies as “devices”; it was because Cordelia has no-one else that she can confide in. She confides in the audience because they are not yet on anyone’s side – they may be later, or maybe they will change sides throughout the play, but at this point they are impartial. Certainly, the audience is a body of people that you (the actor/character) can confide in.

Antony’s first bit of confiding is in Act I, Scene 2 (and here’s a bit of bad writing, I think!- or maybe we haven’t found the answer yet). Antony hasn’t acknowledged the presence of the audience up until this point I think the moment when the character first acknowledges the presence of the audience is quite important, and Antony’s first and only strong line connecting with the audience is “These strong Egyptian fetters I must break,/Or lose myself in dotage.” Of course, I could come out at the beginning and look at the audience, and acknowledge them directly with “Let Rome in Tiber melt...”, but I don’t do that.

It’s the daylight thing, really. If they’d had stage lighting, theatre lighting, and house lights, I suspect their theatre would have been written differently, and there wouldn’t have been so many soliloquies, because they would have been able to create the “fourth wall”. They may have created something entirely different, if that had been the case, something that they may not have shared in the same way, had the audience been hidden.

At the Globe, the audience is visible to each other, and there is no point in trying to pretend that they aren’t there. The play wouldn’t be taking place if the audience was not there. It’s when it “bubbles over” that there’s a problem; it’s normally a problem, actually. Iago (in Othello) doesn’t see it as a problem – he likes to show off, really – and yet he also uses the soliloquy a little bit to say what his problems are. But, at the same time, his main joy is using the soliloquy to say to the audience, “Watch this. This is what I’m going to do next.” Lear never soliloquises. Perhaps he doesn’t know that the audience is there!

Enobarbus is able to comment, observe, and soliloquise to the audience, whereas Antony soliloquises only a little in this play. “All is lost” is not really a soliloquy, as Scarrus does not have an exit – we have given him one because it feels right for him to go. Giles’ point is that Antony is in such a state that he needn’t involve himself with the audience too much. However, I would argue that, if you look at the lines, Antony is explaining something. He seems to be saying, “Can you believe what has happened? Can you believe that she tricked me like that?” He has to make a connection with the audience there. But what he is telling them is something that they have observed, and it is not news to the audience. There are indeed few moments when Antony is truly “solo”, speaking to the audience. He has the “Be it art or hap, he hath spoken true...I will to Egypt” lines, and that is pretty much it, in terms of actual, solo, soliloquies.

Antony’s relationship with the audience seems to change over the course of the play. Perhaps this is a result of the audience becoming increasingly sympathetic to him – everyone has been in love. Perhaps they understand what it is like to be in love, to be not in control, and understand too that Antony is at the end of his life.

I think I am too young to play Antony, and I didn’t realise that early enough. I think Antony needs to be more “past it” than my stage persona is. I think he has to really feel that his grip is slipping, and I don’t really fully feel that, in terms of stage persona, right now. I think if I had realised that early enough, I could have capitalised on it, and gone much more in that direction. I should actually be an ideal age for Antony, and so on, but I don’t think I grasped that enough. Over the last two or three weeks I’ve realised that more and more, with a little bit of

disappointment...but what do you do? The audience does need to feel that Antony is somewhat over the hill, and that therefore Caesar is a terrible threat, and seems to have everything on his side. The problem is mainly that Antony himself knows that he has already seen the best of his life, and therefore the apparent loss of Cleopatra in the “Thidias” scene, is desperate...

Interview with Ben Walden

Decius Brutus, Julius Caesar

Octavius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra

The first production I've been involved in at the Globe was *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and for this Jack Shepherd, the director, wanted modern dress. It's very different doing it that way, but in my opinion, it works every bit as well because part of the authenticity is that the Elizabethans were watching people act in the clothes of their own time and that's what you get here, if you do it in modern dress. Also, it provides the plays with a very improvised, light quality, as if the audience were almost part of the action, and many other aspects of the Globe lean that way. If you come on dressed in Reeboks, sunglasses and a clubbing shirt, the audience immediately thinks “I know that bloke!” and it bonds them to the play. Obviously, the character has to have some justification for why he would be dressed like that in a modern sense.

There's an irreverence about playing in modern dress in front of the Globe's elaborate frons scenae, which is very suitable for this theatre. One of the things that I found is that it got the audience very involved, whereas if the audience sees actors in Elizabethan costume, it is easier to dismiss them as “guys from another time.”

The original playing practices, on the other hand, have the great advantage that the audience can see how the Elizabethan stage looked during Shakespeare's time, and how we think these people were dressed and it's very interesting to play the characters in this way. For example, as we speak, I am in Caesar's clothes and they demand certain things from you. They demand a certain kind of regality and open front. The way the clothes make you stand means your posture is excellent; the whole way the costume is set, demands that you can't slouch around and it's beautiful.

It's difficult to say whether and how much the Elizabethan actors made changes in their costumes for the stage. Some of our costumes are very hard to work with, and you find it hard to believe that the Elizabethans did not find ways of cutting corners. Because they also had fifteen actors in their company (and presumably had similar doubling duties) I find it hard to believe that they would have fiddled about with doublet and hose in the same way. Maybe they were more used to them, but in some of these quick changes we have, you're cutting yourself out of clothes in order to get down to the stage in time. I remember when I played Alice and Mountjoy in *Henry V*, who both appear in Act III, I had to be cut out of clothes several times. I can't believe that the original actors would have let that happen; their costumes were given by Lords and they were very valuable. They couldn't possibly afford to get them damaged, so you wonder to what extent they bothered with elaborate quick changes.

Other stage practices, rehearsals, authentic ways of working

You have to remember that this is a theatre in the round. The danger is that you get trapped between the pillars and you play everything up front; there are large percentages of the audience that are at the side, so you need a kind of mobility. You have to find a way to free up and move around things that you might ordinarily do just standing still. You also have to justify that movement, and be aware that there will always be people that are blocked by the pillars. The whole issue of voice, I think, is still being worked on here. If you just shout, the audience immediately switches off. If you are too quiet, and there's plane's going over and school parties

walking in and out, you can be just drowned out. There's a place you can get to, a kind of emotional centre, when you can speak clearly and hopefully relatively quietly, and you can hear a pin drop. Some audiences can be more attentive than others. The average Sunday show tends to be much quieter, and the audience is more attentive, than a midweek matinée full of schoolkids. The Sunday audiences come to the Globe to see some Shakespeare and they are really intent on enjoying it. They are such an easy audience to play to. Some of the midweek matinées with the schoolkids are tough going in comparison. When you have to compete with the noises of aeroplanes, helicopters, building in the undercroft, the general rustle and murmur of people talking amongst themselves, it can feel like a big uphill struggle. Most times you have to say to yourself, "Now what can I do to improve this?", but sometimes you have to say, "Well, it isn't all me, this is a tough house today". You get tough houses here. You get them everywhere, but they can be particularly tough here.

Historical and Cultural Difference

I think Elizabethans must have been drastically different from the modern English. I think people often assume that because we are English, and they were English, that we are the same English. But they are as different from us as any Latin race might be now. I think they were very emotional. If you look at the big argument between Brutus and Cassius (Act IV Sc. 3), it's all about their love for each other; it's a brotherly love, expressed in ways we would almost regard as sexual now. They were more open; these men might have held hands and they would certainly kiss, so they were hugely passionate. A moment later they are hurling stuff around and threatening to kill themselves! So the "stiff upper lip" Edwardian idea of an Englishman is not an Elizabethan notion at all. Their behaviour seems more "Latin", as we'd describe it now: passionate, even histrionic, with pasta flying around the kitchen!

I think too that the way in which you presented yourself was very important to them. We don't want to look like awful ham actors, but we do need to look confident and present, like trained dancers. A very confident, present body is important to the actor, because they are very proud to present themselves. I think that is a somewhat alien idea to us, because we like to dress down, we want to mingle in and be one of many. The Elizabethans were, by contrast, very keen on their individuality.

The soliloquy as an Elizabethan device on the Globe stage

Here it is powerfully evident that you are supposed to deliver a soliloquy to somebody out in the audience. I can't believe that Hamlet's speeches aren't supposed to be spoken to the audience, because they are so much a part of the play. Who else would you say it to? Soliloquies help you to engage the audience in the play, the audience should become your partner, and you speak directly to them. There is an intimacy between the actor and the audience here, which is undeniable. It's false to try and deny it. The soliloquy can become a kind of sharing, a communal meditation; Hamlet can tell you "I think I want to kill myself, so what do you think?" The audience becomes engaged and you can just feel that you're supposed to share the play with them. That doesn't mean mugging, or constantly trying to get laughs. This space has changed my mind about soliloquies. "Sharing with the audience" doesn't mean "to deliver it to them"; it means the creation of a relationship between the actor and the audience that makes the audience feel more part of the play. I think that happens here at a good performance.

Storytelling: verse versus prose

The most important thing for me is a sense of play. Eloquence is of course important, but the sense of play even more so. There is a sense of celebration when two actors start to play off each other, feed off each other and involve the audience. It feels like a wonderful game, even if it's a tragedy. I don't mean to dismiss the weight or depth of feeling of a tragedy, but whatever the genre, you're playing. The plays of Shakespeare should be enjoyed, not put on a pedestal in

some kind of cold reverence, with attention paid only to a kind of metrical speech pattern. Personally, I feel that I concentrated too much on the verse this season. That doesn't mean that I didn't need to do work on the verse, or that I haven't learnt a lot from Giles. However, I would maintain that the sense of play is vital too. Octavius Ceasar speaks in rhythms that are very complicated: so many line endings come in mid sentence; his speech staggers and breaks up quite a lot. This gave me an unusual speech pattern, and I have to be sort of softer with that. Most important of all though is that nothing gets in the way of that sense of play. I don't see why verse speaking should ever be at odds with the playing of the play, but if it is, the sense of play is more important.

Eloquence and Movement

Probably the best example of eloquence in movement is the jig. We are all holding their heads up and doing the dance, in a way calling attention to ourselves, inviting others to look at us. As actors today we are understandably scared of trying to reproduce this kind of movement because we don't want to seem vain, standing there thinking "I am fantastic". There is a thin line between confidence and posturing, and you need to get the right side of it if you are playing Henry V or Octavius Ceasar, for example. You have to find a real presence. Maybe in dance, people are less scared of being formal. You need to find that formality and make it real, and that's the challenge. But the sense of play is still the most important.

The main thing I've learnt from this theatre is that we have too much reverence for Shakespeare's plays. They're great not only because they are the best pieces of literature in our language, but because they were written for an audience that will show up on a wet Wednesday and want to see some action. The actors should come out and play like kids, with complete conviction, with a riotous sense of celebration, improvisation and innocence. That's the most important thing of all. When Marcello got sick and Mark came on with the book, everybody had to improvise because, like the Shakespearean actors, they had little or no rehearsal time. The cast had to rely on their initiative and intuition. Of course, I'm not suggesting that this becomes the norm, because we still need to learn our parts and rehearse them. But that situation created a tremendous sense of celebration, of play. The unique energy that for me is the best part of the Globe, came rising up.

The most important thing, I think, is to enjoy yourself. It's easy to become too serious about playing, and if you do that, you start messing it up. If you insist too much on being emotionally truthful, you start forcing it. That's not to say that you shouldn't be emotionally truthful, but if you are trying to concentrate on verse and eloquence too much, suddenly you notice it too much. If it's all about the movement, suddenly one can seem like a statue. No matter what you are, and who you're playing, you have to look for and celebrate that element of make-believe and imagination.
