Stage Blood and Stage Kisses: The Eye of Childhood

Dr Penelope Woods
Research Associate
University of Western Australia

Playing Shakespeare with Globe Education at Shakespeare’s Globe
' . . . 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears the painted devil . . .'

Lady Macbeth

*Macbeth* (II.ii 53-4)
Child’s Left Shoe: Rose Theatre Excavation Site

Child Spectatorship: Credulity and Emotional Intensity

- Is it necessary to believe something is ‘real’ in order for it to produce an emotional reaction?
- If you are highly invested in the theatrical *illusion* will your emotional response to the performance be more intense?
Research into Child Spectatorship

- ——‘Did You Watch the Man or Did You Watch the Goose?’ Children's Responses to Puppets in Live Theatre’ *New Theatre Quarterly*, 24 (2008), 337-54
Matthew Reason

- My own research into child audiences suggests exactly this ability to invest fully into the moment (the narrative, the character) and also to sit back and maintain a level of aesthetic distance and appreciation of technique.

1599 Globe and the Reconstructed Globe Theatre

- In 1599 The Globe Theatre opens on the South bank of the Thames in London
- It is used by the Lord Chamberlain’s Men, who include William Shakespeare
- In 1603, with the accession of King James I, the company is promoted to The King’s Men
- In 1613 the Globe Theatre burns down when a canon misfires during a performance of *Henry VIII (All is True)*
- In 1614 the Second Globe Theatre opens
- In 1644 the Globe Theatre is taken down to make way for tenement buildings following the closure of the Theatres in London
- In the 1770s Hester Thrale recalls seeing the foundation of the ‘Old’ Globe Theatre in her diaries
- In the 1970s American actor and director, Sam Wanamaker, begins a project to rebuild the Globe
- In 1989 the site of the first Globe Theatre is discovered by archaeologists from the Museum of London
- In 1997 the reconstructed Globe theatre opens on Bankside as Shakespeare’s Globe.
Interviews with Students Attending Playing Shakespeare Productions
February 2009

John Kelly Boys’ School

PW: Have you been to the theatre before?
1: Only once. I went to see Cinderella with the school.
PW: And did you enjoy it?
1: Not really.
PW: What didn’t you like about it?
1: Too romantic.
PW: So you haven’t been to the Globe before?
1: No.
PW: Are you looking forward to it.
1: Yes.
PW: How do you think audiences know how to behave at the theatre?
1: It depends on the actors.
PW: So the actors indicate to the audience what they should do? So what might be typical behaviour? How did you behave when you were at Cinderella?
1: Sad, happy or sometimes both.
PW: Have you been to the theatre before?
1: Yes
2: I saw *The Lion King*.
1: Oh yeah, I saw that too.
PW: Did you like it?
2: Yes.
PW: What did you like about it?
1: It was special.
2: And also they had masks and ...
PW: What made it special?
1: Yeah and like it was really good.
PW: Have you seen the film?
1: Yeah. I saw it when I was a kid
PW: And was it different to seeing the live performance?
1: A bit.
PW: Not much?
1: Not much difference
PW: How was it a little bit different?
1: It’s got the same story, just a different way of doing it.
PW: Have you seen a film of *Romeo and Juliet*?
2: Yes. We saw it yesterday in class.
PW: Can you describe it to me?
2: It was really old.
PW: How were the characters dressed?
2: Just really old.
PW: Did you like the film?
2: Not really. It didn’t need to be so old.
What’s the difference between watching something at the theatre and on TV?

1: Theatre feels more realistic and watching it on telly feels like...

2: Lies

1: Yeah.

3: And watching it live you can actually shout out and they can hear you.

1: TV’s fake and theatre’s real.

2: They give you eye contact

Nice. And do you like the eye contact?

1: Yes I do.

And if you shout out does it make a difference what happens? to the story?

1: Yes because you show the actors that you like what they are doing.
Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank at Shakespeare’s Globe
*Macbeth*, dir. by Bill Buckhurst, 2010. Photos by Manuel Harlan©
Fergal McElherron, Globe Actor

‘[I] see audience members watching the audience, especially on the top gallery, and you will just see people looking over the top of the gallery down at the groundlings. There are all these different levels of performance going on; they’re watching the play, they’re watching the audience watch the play and they are being watched watching the play.
Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank at Shakespeare’s Globe
Bill Buckhurst as Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*
dir. Bill Buckhurst, 2008. Photos by Andy Bradshaw©
Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank at Shakespeare’s Globe
Natasha Magigi as Hero and Kirsty Besterman as Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing dir. Bill Buckhurst, 2008. Photos by Andy Bradshaw©
Girl 1: He’s gonna whack her.

[Claudio strikes Hero]

She feels bad now. I’d feel bad too if it was me.

Girl 2: I’d probably cry.

(Friday 14th March, 2008)
Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank at Shakespeare’s Globe
Shane Zaza as Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet dir. Bill Buckhurst, 2009.
Photos by Manuel Harlan©
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