



Newsletter

incorporating

Occasional Papers and Reviews

SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

<http://www.ru.ac.za/shakespeare>

DECEMBER 2013

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Shakespeare Birthday Lunch

Entertainment:

Dramatic presentations, and songs

presented by

**The Johannesburg branch of the Shakespeare
Society of Southern Africa**



**St Columba's church hall, Parkview,
Johannesburg**

**Saturday 20 April
12:30 noon**

(See 'Johannesburg Branch Report' pages 8-9)

Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa

(A project of The Grahamstown Foundation)

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[html://www.ru.ac.za/shakespeare](http://www.ru.ac.za/shakespeare)

Administration and Publications



Laurence Wright

Emeritus Professor of Rhodes University, Laurence Wright. (Formerly HA Molteno Professor of English and Director of the Institute for the Study of English in Africa, Professor Wright is a Founder Member of SSoSA and Honorary Life President of the Society, successor to the late Professor Guy Butler.)



Chris Thurman

Dr Chris Thurman, editor of *Shakespeare in Southern Africa*. He holds degrees from Rhodes, London and Cape Town, and lectures at the University of the Witwatersrand. His doctorate is on Guy Butler.



Warren Snowball

Mr Warren Snowball, President of SSoSA from 2010. Warren started out as a BSc graduate in Mechanical Engineering, University of Cape Town. After obtaining Classical degrees from Rhodes University and University College, London, he lectured at Rhodes in Latin, Greek and Classical Civilisation from 1974, rising to the position of Head of Classical Studies, from which he has now retired.



Hildé Slinger

Ms Hildé Slinger, former President of SSoSA (2000-2007), served as Convenor of the 6th and 7th Triennial Congresses 2003 and 2007. An alternative to emigrating to the UK, Hildé now lives in Gauteng. She has returned as Editor of the SSoSA *Newsletter incorporating OPaR*, with effect from September 2011.



Eddie Baart

Emeritus Professor of Physics, Edward E Baart, celebrated his 80th birthday on 6th September. Eddie joined SSoSA in 2007 as part-time Administrative Secretary and retired in August.



Bev Cummings-Penlington

Ms Bev Cummings-Penlington, Editorial Assistant since September 2002, has the responsibility of formatting SSoSA publications, the journal, *Shakespeare in Southern Africa (SiSA)*, and the SSoSA *Newsletter incorporating OPaR*.

Members of the General Executive Council:

Mr Warren Snowball	President
Dr Chris Thurman	Vice-President & Editor, <i>Shakespeare in Southern Africa (SiSA)</i>
Prof. Laurence Wright	Chairman & SSoSA Publications Director
Ms Hildé Slinger	Editor, <i>Newsletter incorporating OPaR</i>
Ms Louisa Clayton	Executive Director (Treasurer), Grahamstown Foundation
Eddie Baart	Secretary

Branch Delegates:

Mr Geoffrey Haresnape	Cape Town
Ms Nancy Church	Durban
Mrs Lynette Paterson	Grahamstown
Ms Jo Warner	Johannesburg
Mr Rocky Mann	Port Elizabeth

Shakespeare Feature Page

Brief Biography of Eddie Baart

Born in Kimberley and schooled there, Eddie Baart studied for his first university degree (a B.Sc.) at Rhodes, gaining distinctions in 1953 in all three of his majors, that is, in Maths, Applied Maths and Physics. He went on to do a B.Sc. Honours in Physics at Rhodes, again with great success, and as a consequence was awarded a Shell Postgraduate Scholarship which took him to Liverpool University to study Nuclear Physics. Having completed all the work for his Ph.D. there by 1959, he took up his first academic post in the former Rhodesia, working in Salisbury, as it was then called, for the next year. In 1960 he returned to Rhodes, skipping the first few rungs of the ladder to become a Senior Lecturer in Physics. His academic rise was therefore swift. In 1969 an extra professorship in Physics was created at Rhodes and he was selected for the job. He was Dean of Science from 1980 – 1983, and Head of Department from 1984 – 1994.

Eddie became renowned in the university as an outstanding teacher and was the first person to win the Vice Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award, and he is also a distinguished researcher. In 1965, he went to Florida State University on a Carnegie Fellowship to do both teaching and research, and took the opportunity to visit other universities in the United States.

While still lecturing at Rhodes, he gained a considerable reputation as an expert in reconstructing motor car accidents and testified in court more than 100 times, having investigated more than 500 accidents.

Apart from his academic life, he was, for a long time, a keen sportsman, representing Rhodes University in rugby, squash and hockey. On the cultural side, he acted in and directed musical shows and dramas for a great many years. After his retirement, he became the administrative secretary of SSoSA and held the position until August 2013. His work here has been invaluable to the society and it is with great regret that we have to say goodbye to Eddie.

Warren Snowball



Images at St Peter's building. 1. Eddie at his work station. 2. Tea time in the Garden Room. 3. Testing the newly installed handrail at the entrance of the building. 4. Farewell tea. 5. A younger Eddie Baart perhaps? (see bottom of page 15)



Reports

Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa Newsletter incorporating Occasional Papers and Reviews

We are pleased to report that every endeavour will be made to have the Newsletter ready for distribution before the end of November. Members who enjoy the email facility will receive their copy this way. We are also planning to have a Web Page installed.

Once again, Branch Reports display considerable activity which it is hoped will enhance membership growth. Branch Members are encouraged to persuade their friends to attend meetings and thus savour the offerings of guest speakers!

It is noted that the BBC TV Series of their 37 Shakespeare productions recorded on DVD are often used by Branches and Groups to entertain and enlighten audiences. "Ranging from traditional interpretations to adventurous stylised approaches and featuring such great artists as John Gielgud, Jane Lapotaire, Clare Bloom, Derek Jacobi, Anthony Hopkins, Prunella Scales, Patrick Stewart, Helen Mirren and John Cleese – the resulting productions form a magnificent and unique collection of the Shakespeare canon." (taken from the box accommodating the DVDs which I show once a month, using the title "Shakespeare for Fun". The event attracts approximately 13 folk, most of whom are not necessarily students of the Bard. Several have become regular attenders!

Judging from the number of Shakespearean live productions at theatres in the UK, USA, and SA, to mention a few, we can truthfully say that "Shakespeare will live for ever!"

"Shakespeare today, tomorrow and for ever".

Hildé Slinger
Editor

From the President

After last year's small but successful Triennial Conference in Grahamstown, this has been a quiet year so far. SSoSA is involved now with plans for the future. Our next Triennial Conference will hopefully take place in 2015 and we will be sending out the details for this later. Please give some thought to urging your Branch members to attend, if they wish, and even to present a paper. We would very much welcome seeing more of you in Grahamstown, and we usually add a little encouragement by scheduling the Conference either to coincide with, or to stand in close proximity to, the National Arts Festival.

Looking further ahead, there is a very exciting plan afoot to inaugurate a project called "Shakespeare in the World", and SSoSA has been invited to help with the publicising of this and even, possibly, to send a participant to Belfast in 2016 to represent our organisation. The project aims to focus on non-Anglophone Shakespeare, looking far beyond the boundaries of the UK and the USA to the world at large. The organisers argue that "the dramatist is significant as a figure and corpus of meaning shared between nations, regions and cultures. Indeed, he is the one writer, world-wide, appreciated in such a fashion." They are therefore creating partnerships with twenty international institutes and "mobilizing an international cohort of critics, readers, performers and practitioners" to share experiences and ideas. They hint that they might even send one of their exhibitions to South Africa if it can be managed. It all looks very exciting and we hope the project is successful.

Also planned for the significant year of 2016, but rather more tentative, is an international conference on Shakespeare to be held at Elsinore in Denmark. Once again SSoSA has been asked to help and we have agreed. We wait now to see if the funding can be found.

Closer to home, the Institute for the Study of English in Africa (ISEA) at Rhodes University, of which SSoSA is a part and where it has an office, will next year be celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. At the time of writing there will soon be an indaba of all the participating bodies of the ISEA to discuss plans for commemorating this anniversary.

Sadly, we have had to bid farewell to another of our stalwarts, this time Professor Emeritus Eddie Baart, who has served as our Administrative Secretary for a considerable time. Advancing years and failing health have obliged him to resign from a job he has performed with distinction. He will be sorely missed, but, needless to say, we wish him well in his retirement. His place will be temporarily taken by Ms Renee Brown until the end of the year.

A big thank you goes to all of you who have contributed in your own ways to making the SSoSA a success, but especially to Hilde Slinger, Laurence Wright, Chris Thurman, Louisa Clayton and Bev Cummings-Penlington.

Warren Snowball
President SSoSA

Shakespeare in Southern Africa (SiSA)

The material collected in volume 25 of *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* may provoke debate about what constitutes 'South African Shakespeare', or 'Shakespeare in South/southern Africa'.

The articles in the first section, by Janet Suzman, Ronan Paterson, Sarah Roberts, Peter Titlestad and Laurence Wright, were first delivered as papers at the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa's "Staging Shakespeare: Direction, Design and Reception" conference, held in Grahamstown last year (Wright has written an overview of this productive and thought-provoking gathering).

Two articles in the second section also emphasise performance: Derrick Higginbotham's focus is the recent staging in Cape Town of Cardenio, *Shakespeare's 'lost' play*, working from Gregory Doran's "reimagined" version of the text; Brian Pearce revivifies the neglected Shakespearean tradition at Springfield College in KwaZulu-Natal.

Eugenie Freed's article addresses the tension between theatre and text as it emerges in Shakespeare's narrative poems and sonnets. Geoffrey Haresnape's essay discerns some unexpected parallels between Shakespeare's plays and the Black Consciousness philosophy of Steve Biko. Bhekizizwe Peterson and Tony Voss contribute astute reviews of new books, and the volume closes with an obituary honouring Bruce Mann.

Christopher Thurman
Editor *SiSA*

Journal Contents—Volume 25

Staging Shakespeare: Direction, Design and Reception

JANET SUZMAN	On Playing Cleopatra
RONAN PATERSON	Box Office Poison?
SARAH ROBERTS	Sightlines: The 'limits of illusion' in <i>Oedipus Tyrannos</i> and <i>King Lear</i>
PETER TITLESTAD	Hamlet the Populist Politician
LAURENCE WRIGHT	Irreplaceable Acting

Articles, Essays and Reviews

DERRICK HIGGINBOTHAM	<i>Cardenio's</i> Three Rs: Revision, Rape and Rank in Shakespeare and Fletcher's 'lost play'
EUGENIE R. FREED	" <i>Vilia miretur vulgus</i> ": Shakespeare and the snipers
BRIAN PEARCE	The Springfield College Shakespeare Productions
GEOFFREY HARESSNAPE	Biko, Shakespeare and Black Consciousness
TONY VOSS	The "Tongued Monster"
BHEKIZIZWE PETERSON	The Problem with "Coconutteness"

Obituary: Bruce Mann (1930-2012)



SSoSA Branches

Branches are given a fairly free hand. However, it is vital that there should be a mother body to which they can refer, guided by a simple, effective Constitution. Founded in 1985, The Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa remains a project of the Grahamstown Foundation. The President of SSoSA is recognised as the director of the project and reports to the Council of the Grahamstown Foundation, SSoSA being one of its sixteen projects. The Financial Director of the Grahamstown Foundation is Treasurer, ex officio, of the Shakespeare Society.

The SSoSA Administrative Secretary keeps in touch with the branches, their chairmen, secretaries and treasurers, ensuring that the database is up to date. The two SSoSA publications, the Journal and Newsletter (incorporating OPAR), are distributed annually.

Close communication between the Honorary Life President, the President, Administrative Secretary and Treasurer (together with the Editors of the two publications) ensures an effective base for the smooth running of the Society.

Ideally, each branch is administered by its Executive Committee, the overall goal of Shakespeareans being to enjoy keeping Shakespeare alive through their chosen activities and to expand their commitment to the supporting of public, university and school productions, and ideally to contribute reviews and other matters of interest to our academic Journal and Newsletter. The importance of enrolling new members, including young people, cannot be over-emphasized.

Branch Reports

Snippets from Branches: July 2011-June 2012

Cape Town

Chairman's Annual Report June 2013

Meetings: The meetings held from July 2012 to June 2013 were :

26th August 2012: *The Tempest* (Helen Mirran).

21st October 2012: *The Merchant of Venice* (Al Pacino).

25th November 2012: *Coriolanus* (Ralph Fiennes)

17th March 2013: *Love's Labour's Lost* (Kenneth Branagh).

28th April 2013: Shakespeare Uncovered (Macbeth).

9th June 2013: Shakespeare Uncovered (Tempest).

We meet every 6 to 8 weeks. Lately, we have viewed the plays using a PBS production from United States exploring the approach taken by the actors and then viewing the play in its entirety.

Membership: Currently stands at fourteen. There was 1 resignation (Anne Kathan) and four new members. Attendance at meetings averages 12 members.

Subscriptions: The membership fees are currently R50.00. Catering at meetings is taken in turn by members. The only expenses are hiring or purchasing of DVDs and books.

Geoffrey Haresnape.

Durban (KwaZulu-Natal)

Chairman's Annual Report 2012-2013

I am happy to tell you that the Durban Branch of the SSoSA continues to fulfil the aim of furthering our interest and to entertain ourselves through readings and discussions about Shakespeare. We have made a particular effort to make our programmes inclusive of the participation of members themselves.

Special thanks to a supportive committee: Daniel Keyter for hosting the Shakespeare Birthday and the year-end function. During the year Hugh Thompson was our representative at the National AGM of SSoSA in Grahamstown, followed by the conference. He gave us an interesting report-back.

On two occasions we have watched DVD's at Patricia Devenish's home. They were *Richard III* (all the more interesting since the unearthing of Richard's remains) and *Twelfth Night*.

We drove to Ballito to the home of Richard Finch for our next meeting to hear about his visits to the Globe Theatre.

At Shakespeare's Birthday lunch members selected their readings, interspersed by classical guitar music played by Patricia Devenish.

And so our year's activities closed, well enjoyed by all our members.

Nancy Church

Grahamstown

Chairman's Report June 2012 to June 2013 presented at the Annual General Meeting 3 June 2013

It gives me pleasure to report on the events of the past twelve months.

For the most part they have been the usual enjoyable fare, with one exciting development in the Reading Group.

We reported at the 2012 AGM on a successful presentation of *Othello to matric learners* at Mary Waters High School. Later in the year we were able to follow that exercise up with a revision session at the school. This was undertaken by Malcolm Hacksley and Lynette Paterson. Although it is difficult to assess the direct impact on the learners' matric results, our input was much appreciated by an animated group, who also took the opportunity to quiz us on several of their prescribed poems. So far in 2013 we have been unable to repeat the outreach projects of the past two years, but we hope to get back in touch with Mary Waters in the second semester.



Guest speaker André Lemmer (left) in conversation with Mr Warren Snowball (President of the Shakespeare Society) at refreshments afterwards

This year's **Annual Shakespeare Birthday Lecture** was held on Wednesday 24 April in the Arts Major Lecture Theatre. In a talk entitled *Page, Stage and Classroom Floor: A Shakespearean Journey*, Professor André Lemmer reminisced about his life-long involvement with the works of Shakespeare. The change of venue from the usual Eden Blue was owing to a clash with an inaugural lecture. Forty-five people attended. Donations at the door were down on last year's, but several membership subscriptions were paid on the night, enabling us to cover our costs. These included an honorarium increased from R300 to R500. The lecture was

followed by the usual cheerful gathering around the refreshments table. Our thanks to the Classics Department for hosting us in their museum. Malvern and Rosemary van Wyk Smith accommodated the Lemmers for the night, and our thanks also to them.

The committee is engaged in a discussion regarding **future Birthday Lectures**, including factors such as optimal time, venue, speaker, subject, tenor. Any comments from the AGM would be valued. The year 2014 will be an auspicious one and should perhaps be marked in a special way. 2014 will be a celebratory year for the Institute for the Study of English in Africa (ISEA), and SSoSA is invited to contribute to their revels.

Since completing the full Shakespeare canon with *Henry VIII* at the end of last year, the **Shakespeare Reading Group** has tried a new experiment this year. We chose to read *Hamlet* at the time it was being taught to the first years, and to invite students to join us. With the encouragement of their lecturer, Paul Walters, at least twenty students turned up, several of whom volunteered to read parts. We had asked Andrew Buckland to read the Dane, and the general buzz of energy made for a most exciting reading. Tonight's DVD, *Discovering Hamlet*, should provide an interesting conclusion to the exercise. The idea may well be worth repeating with other year groups and their respective texts, though I suspect the core members may sometimes be glad just to return to the more intimate readings as usual. Other films we have recently watched have been the controversial *Anonymous*, and the very impressive *Coriolanus* (Ralph Fiennes).

The **branch committee** met three times for formal business in the course of the past twelve months. Malvern van Wyk Smith and Helen Holleman have together taken on the treasurership. I thank them and the entire committee for their services. Malvern, Helen, Eddie Baart, Andrew Renard and Lynette Paterson are all willing to stand for re-election. Warren Snowball in his *ex officio* capacity will also continue to be one of us.

Thank you to all members for their support of the Society, and to all present here for your attendance. Our thanks to the Rhodes English Department for accommodating so many of our gatherings, and to Ron Hall and Paul Walters for facilitating this evening's meeting. Thank you also to all who always bring just enough loaves, fishes and flagons to feed whoever arrives. Not to take away one jot from the Bard in whose honour we meet, it has to be said that our legendary Bring&Share suppers are undoubtedly a central feature of all our merry wassails.

Lynette Paterson

Johannesburg (Gauteng)

The Branch Annual General Meeting was held on the 16th June 2013. Once again our gratitude is expressed to the Ridge School for the continued use of the Hupen Centre. The support of Paul Channon, Principal, Nick See, IT expert and Chris Prelman, estate manager, is also acknowledged with gratitude. The Branch has enjoyed a full and interesting year of activities, with guest speakers bringing us some truly memorable evenings.

May 20: Sarah Roberts, academic and theatre director, gave a lecture on 'Visions and Voices: spectres, spirits and their staging'. Sarah always provides us with a stimulating lecture.

June 17: Hamish Peterson, military historian, gave us a talk on the Greek military campaigns, 'Return of Timon'. His knowledge is extensive.

August 19: showing of a DVD of the BBC production *Coriolanus*, with Alan Howard in the lead.

September 16: Camilla Waldman, actor, gave us some insights into her view of *Hamlet*, with her own interpretation of some of the speeches.

October 21: unfortunately George King had to cancel at the last moment. We showed, instead, a DVD of the excellent John Barton Series, 'Playing Shakespeare'.

November 18: Hilary Semple, academic, spoke on 'Shakespeare's Debt to Italy'. Hilary's research and scholarship is well known, and her lectures always secure the Society a large turnout.

February 17, George King came through from Pretoria, with a small choir, to give us a concert of a capella music, which more than made up for our disappointment in October. He suggested that the audience sit in the open courtyard, treating us to a memorable evening. The February evening gave us the opportunity of being out of doors. The concert was both entertaining and enhancing, as we sat beneath the summer sky, listening to George King and his choir. His knowledge and understanding of the background to the music of the Renaissance period is extensive.

March 17, we showed a John Barton DVD; First in the series of 'Playing Shakespeare'.

In April the Shakespeare Society, Johannesburg Branch, as has been its custom for many years, celebrated the Bard's birthday by giving lunch. This was held in the hall of St Columba's Church, on Saturday, 20th April, 2013. St Columba's has become the favourite venue for this annual event. The setting provides a spacious hall, a stage, ample kitchen facilities, easy parking, and above all, the atmosphere conducive to the celebration of Shakespeare's great plays. The hall, as always, was decorated with trails of ivy, and the charming table

decorations, had been specially devised for us by Francois Barnardo. Fifty guests, welcomed by the chairman, were treated to an excellent three-course meal, professionally catered. The live entertainment took the form of readings from a few of the plays, with interludes of music.



Jo Warner (centre left) and Eleanor-Mary Cadell (far left) with guests at the lunch

Camilla Waldman and Martin Le Maitre, both well-known actors of stage and TV gave readings from a selection of scenes from Shakespeare's plays, ranging from the comedy of *Much Ado About Nothing*, to the scene in which Seton announces to Macbeth that Lady Macbeth is dead, and Martin, as Macbeth, gave us his heart-rending response.

Eleanor-Mary Cadell, a Shakespeare Society committee member, arranged the music, which ranged from the traditional, 'O Mistress Mine', to a contemporary jazz version of 'Dunsinane Blues'. The singers were Eleanor-Mary Cadell, Maggie Mendelsohn and Lyle-Smith, with Maylin Stacey as the pianist. The birthday toast to Shakespeare was given by another committee member, Hilary Semple. This year we were honoured to have as one of the guests, Hildé Slinger, a past President of the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa. The Committee decided that we should invite, as Society guests, both Paul Channon, from the Ridge School, and the Rev. "Chunky" Young, of St Columba's, to the birthday lunch. Unfortunately, neither were able to attend, this year. We also had, for the first time, photos and a write-up in the Rosebank Killarney Gazette, of the lunch, and we would like to thank the two photographers, Susan Graham and Stasha de Lange. We were sad not to have the Committee Secretary, Josephine Voorhoeve, and her husband Anton, with us this year.

May 19, Dorothy Ann Gould and four of her students, none of them mother-tongue speakers, gave us an evening of insight into the role the director takes, in 'The Character IS the Text'. One of her students is a homeless youth who lives in the Hillbrow streets, and has developed a love of Shakespeare through her classes.

I would like, once more, to pay tribute to Anton Voorhoeve, who does the Society accounts, pro bono; two other members who do much behind the scenes, are Norman Blight and Savvas Georgeades, and my thanks to them. And to those many members who are always on hand to help, my thanks; your support is much appreciated.

Accounts And Finances:

This year we raised the membership fee to R180.00, and the guest fee to R25.00 for each meeting. Over the years the branch has often made a loss on the Birthday Lunch thus we are aware that we need to have a surplus in the bank account to cover this. I am happy to announce that our bank account is looking comfortable. We will keep the visitors fee at R25.00 and for the next year the membership fee at R180.00. The fee will be adjusted as our finances warrant this adjustment, subject to the agreement of our accountant.

Elections:

Eleanor-Mary Cadell, Hilary Semple, Josephine Voorhoeve, have all agreed to stand for election. Members who would like to make a contribution to the running of the Branch are encouraged to put their names forward. Forthcoming events are advertised in the Rosebank Gazette and over the radio.

Jo Warner

The Johannesburg Shakespeare Circle

For many years now members of the Circle have received the annual SSoSA Newsletter from Grahamstown in the post. However as virtually all our members now have access to email and in order to reduce the cost of postage to SSoSA, it has been agreed that the publication should be sent out either by email or possibly posted on the Society's web-site. The Newsletter must not be

confused with the SSoSA Journal which is now only sent to those members that request it and are prepared to pay for it.

In order to give the Newsletter more interest, members of the Circle are encouraged to contribute short (1 page A4 is fine) articles that could be of some interest to other members. The Newsletter is sent to all members of the branches and affiliates of SSoSA and should provide information on what is happening at these forums including the Circle. Unfortunately with the exception of Dr Jock Levy and latterly myself, this opportunity is totally neglected by Circle members. In other words the Newsletter needs you and your opinions to perform its intended function. The articles don't have to be very learned, erudite or even provocative and members certainly don't need to be nervous of looking foolish. Photographs may be included and are usually welcomed.

I hope that this will induce some of you to participate and provide stimulus to your enjoyment of the plays and poetry of Shakespeare.

JHB Circle's celebrated member Dr Joshua (Jock) Levy

Dr Joshua (Jock) celebrated his 90th birthday in October 2012 at joyous celebrations at the Circle's October meeting and at the Killarney Country Club. Jock is a truly remarkable personality and a devoted and very knowledgeable Shakespearean who has been a member of the Circle since its inception in May 1985. At the Circle's meeting Jock produced a number of programmes dating to the 1920's of Shakespearean productions in Johannesburg and spoke knowledgably, without notes, on the subject. (Jock is a compulsive collector who never discards a theatre programme.)

At that time he was still practising in his profession as a specialist radiologist at Raedene Clinic in Johannesburg. However in April of this year the clinic closed its doors leaving poor Jock without a job.

Guy Young

The Port Elizabeth Shakespearean Festival (an Associate Member of SSoSA)

Chairman's Report.

Report on "Hamlet" – January 2013

The PESF staged "Hamlet, Prince of Denmark" in January 2013. The production was directed by award-winner Linda-Louise Swain (see programme notes at the conclusion of this report).

It was hoped to return, after a year's absence, to our customary venue at the Mannville Open-air Theatre, St. George's Park, and rehearsals proceeded in the Athenæum with that in mind. Unfortunately when rehearsals moved to the Park the recently installed electrical connection did not function.

This resulted in a very apt political cartoon by Mark Wiggett (see below) in *The Herald* – great publicity!

At the eleventh hour, in association with PEMADS (Port Elizabeth Music and Dramatic Society) the play moved into the Little Theatre: necessitating re-plotting the production from an in-the-round open concept to a conventional theatre. The Director and actors made an amazing transition

It was a "vibrant and provocative" production with Andrew White in the title role "leading from the

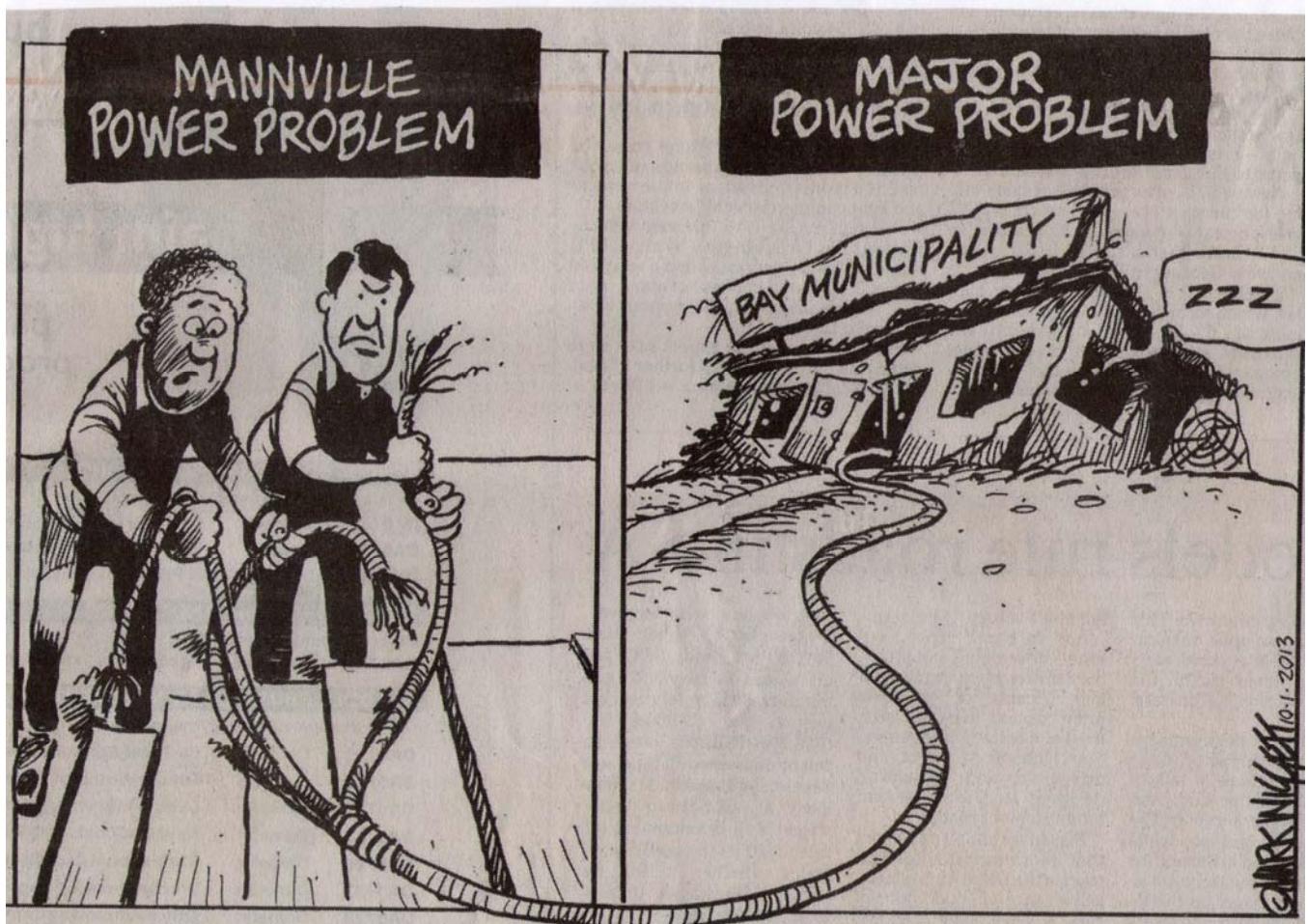
front" ... "with solid backup" from Cameron Robertson, as 'Claudius' "with his powerful stage presence and a voice to match." Lesley Barnard was a delightful and sensitive 'Gertrude'. "Another young star of the production is Jessica Rijs as 'Ophelia' ... "with innocence, playfulness and infatuation, only to slowly slip over the edge." The entire cast contributed to "this striking production that theatre goers would be well advised to catch."

(The words in italics were taken from the review by Brett Adkins in *The Herald* on Friday, 25th January, 2013.)

An innovative practice was led by Cameron Robertson (Claudius), who is studying drama at UCT, of warming up exercises for the cast, both oral and physical, in the foyer of the theatre. The gathering audience looked on with interest and approval.

School Blocks from some twenty schools attended performances – still not the volumes attended performances in the Park, though we have maintained ticket prices for learners the same as for the Park. It was an memorable production.

Rocky Mann



PROGRAMME NOTES

I HAVE CHOSEN TO DO THE PRODUCTION SYMBOLICALLY IN BLACK AND WHITE; THOSE WHOSE ALLEGIANCE IS STILL WITH HAMLET IN MOURNING HIS FATHER'S PASSING ARE IN BLACK AND THE SUBSERVIENT COURT AND OTHERS WHO ARE IN WHITE, IN CELEBRATION OF THE WEDDING OF GERTRUDE TO CLAUDIUS. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARRIVE IN BLACK, HAVING BEEN CALLED TO SUPPORT THEIR CHILDHOOD FRIEND. THEY ARE IN SYMPATHY WITH HAMLET AND STILL MOURN WITH HIM, THE PASSING OF HIS FATHER. GRADUALLY AS THEY ARE 'BOUGHT OVER' BY CLADIUS, THEY, TOO, CHANGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE WHITE. AS GERTRUDE BECOMES IN THE CHESS GAME, HER ALLEGIANCE BECOMES TORN BETWEEN SON AND HUSBAND. LAERTES RETURNS IN BLACK, MOURNING THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, BUT CLAUDIUS ONCE AGAIN WINS HIM OVER AND IN THE FINAL SCENE HE BOUTS IN BLACK, IN VENGEANCE FOR HIS FATHER AND WHITE, IN SUPPORT OF THE KING'S DEADLY PLOT. ONLY THE PLAYERS WITHIN THE PLAY BASICALLY USE 'WHATEVER THEY COULD FIND IN THE COSTUME SKIP' – YE OLD WORLDE SHAKESPEAREAN COSTUMES. THE TOUCH OF RED IN THE FINAL SCENE IS SYMBOLIC OF THE MASS BLOOD SHED AND TRUE TRAGEDY THAT IS THE STORY OF HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

THESE ARE A FEW REFERENCES AND JUSTIFICATIONS FOR MY DECISION TO PLAY OPHELIA AS PREGNANT:

In our first accord of Ophelia, her brother, Laertes, is lecturing her, with affection.

"For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,

Hold it a fashion" He continues to intimate that she may well be just a passing fancy for Hamlet.

Both Laertes and Polonius are concerned with her virtue and her relationship with Hamlet.

"... you, yourself have of your audience been most free and bounteous";

"... or you will tender me a fool" – here Polonius refers to a child.

Hamlet himself toys with Polonius in Act 2, Scene 2: "... conception is a blessing, but as your daughter may conceive, friend – look to't"

In Act 3, Scene 1, when Hamlet sees Ophelia after his suicidal "To be, or not to be ..." soliloquy, he says, "Nymph, in thy orisons (prayers), be all my sins remembered", indicative of the fact that they have sinned together. In his reference to Polonius about conception, there is the hint that Hamlet may have suspected that she was pregnant. When he tells her to get to a nunnery, he may feel that it is her only chance of survival without disgrace or he may be referring to the popular interpretation of "nunnery" as being whorehouse – inferring that she has lost her chastity.

But for me, the most obvious indications given by Shakespeare are in the words of her songs in the mad scenes.

We are all aware that the different flowers and herbs have underlying references and the Rue herb is an abortifacient herb. "... there's some for me..." In this instance, so as not to disgrace her family and having been rejected by Hamlet, Ophelia's only solutions would have been to either abort or to commit suicide. She obviously chose the latter.

"By Gis and by Saint Charity

Alack and fie for shame

Young men will do 't, if they come to 't

By Cock, they are to blame

Quoth she "Before you tumbled me,

You promised me to wed."

"So would I 'a done, by yonder sun (son),

An thou had'st not come to my bed"

These words literally describe her dilemma and she leaves with her rue and her knowledge that she is alone in this world with her terrible secret, which would go to the grave with her.

The other touch that I have added to this particular production is the slight hint that Horatio may have been gay.

Hamlet and Horatio's friendship is based on sincere trust, respect, honesty and love. Here is a man who devotes his life to his friend and is prepared to take his own life with the remaining poison when Prince Hamlet is dying.

His poignant words "Good night, sweet Prince, and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest ..."

definitely hint at a relationship far deeper than just friendship. He goes on to keep his promise and tell the story of his great love, Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.

Errata: ('Programme Notes' jpeg above)

line 6. As Gertrude becomes **involved** ...

line 7. Claudius

line 9. **fences** to replace 'bouts'



Occasional Papers and Reviews (OPaR)

Dr Chris Thurman, has responded to our request for a preview of his work *South African Essays on 'Universal' Shakespeare*. The cover image has been created and the book will appear next year.

South African Essays on 'Universal' Shakespeare

Edited by Chris Thurman

(Forthcoming in 2014: Ashgate – ISBN 978-1-4724-1576-9)

Submitted by CHRIS THURMAN

This book addresses certain nuances of Shakespearean production and reception across time and space. It collects new scholarship and extant (but previously unpublished) material, reflecting the changing nature of Shakespeare studies across various generation 'gaps'. Each essay is inflected by a South African connection: in some cases, simply because of the author's nationality or birthplace or institutional affiliation; in others, there is a direct engagement with what Shakespeare means, or has meant, in South Africa. By investigating the universality of Shakespeare from both implicitly and explicitly 'southern' perspectives, the book presents new possibilities for considering (and reassessing) shifting manifestations of Shakespeare's work in major Shakespearean 'centres' such as Britain and the United States, as well as across the global North and South.

Contributors: Natasha Distiller, Pier Paolo Frassinelli, Sandra Young, Victor Houliston, Chris Thurman, Brian Pearce, Laurence Wright, Guy Butler.

The 'Wars of the Roses' Peace and Conflict in 15th century England

Author, John Gillingham: Phoenix Paperback – 1981, ISBN 89880 164 9

Reviewed by GUY YOUNG

The War of the Roses is illuminating as my own concepts of the history of the wars had been almost entirely moulded by the plays of Shakespeare whereas in reality there could hardly be a more unreliable guide to history than the Bard.

In the preface to the book the author makes the point that "the military history of the period is by no means an easy subject to approach." He goes on to write "*that* the contemporary evidence for what happened is astonishingly fragmentary. As a result what historians have written on the set-piece battles has all too often been composed of conjecture based on later (and hence unreliable) evidence." Gillingham's book focusses not on the irrecoverable minutiae of the battles but rather why there were so many battles in the period and it also tells us much of the political and social systems prevailing then.

The introduction sets the scene for the book and it quotes from Jean de Waurin a French commentator of the time who wrote, "it is a custom in England that the victors in battle kill nobody, especially the ordinary soldier, because everybody wants to please them.... Even King Edward IV told me that, in all the battles he had won, as soon as he could sense victory, he rode round ordering the saving of the common soldiers." This is of course very different to the victor's attitude to defeated nobles and leaders who would be fortunate if they were not summarily dispatched on the 'block'. It is further argued that 15th century England in stark contrast to continental Europe enjoyed unprecedented prosperity.

The book reveals much on the political infighting, intrigue, treachery and double dealing of the period. The author is emphatic that it is necessary to understand that the Wars of the Roses were not a single series of wars caused by a single problem. It is claimed that in fact there were three distinct wars. The first (1459-1461) was caused by Henry VI's manifold shortcomings, that is he was unable either to hold onto France or to govern England. The second war (1469-1471) resulted from Warwick's being side-lined by Edward IV. The third (1483-1487) was precipitated by Richard III's murderous ambition.

The concluding chapter re-emphasises the radical difference between English wars and those on mainland Europe. It also maintains that the wars were not a watershed between 'medieval' and 'modern' England as is often claimed but that there was really no significant change in the day to day life of the people of the realm at this time. This does not mean that progress stagnated as important educational, linguistic, technological, economic and social developments occurred and flowed-on unchecked by the political and military struggles. Away from the battlefields the nobility continued to build homes but these were now seldom inhospitable fortresses but increasingly more comfortable and elegant edifices than those of the past.

To conclude this work presents a somewhat different perspective on the period than is provided by the Tudor propaganda of Shakespeare's plays. It is a book that is enjoyable to read but equally importantly it is a book to retain and dip into when the mood demands it.

What's in a (title)?: Shakespeare's scattered flights of phrase

Submitted by LAURENCE WRIGHT

Just declaim a few lines from 'Othella'
And they'll think you're a helluva fella---

This familiar couplet, from Cole Porter's 1948 musical, *Kiss Me, Kate*, based on *The Taming of the Shrew*, hints at the power of Shakespeare to claim centre stage in matters of status-seeking and aspirations to 'High Culture'. Nowhere is this more evident than in the secluded redoubts of authorship itself, especially in the matter of titles. Give your work a title that, at least for those 'in the know', reflects the lustre of Shakespeare at second hand, and the hope seems to be that you're on the way to achieving cultural significance. That may be an unduly cynical way of putting the matter, but certainly it is the case that, whether out of undisguised affection, mere affectation, or genuine inspiration, many authors choose to ransack Shakespeare to find the appropriate title for their works.

John Gross, best known for his ground-breaking study, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters* (1969; 2nd ed. 1991), has compiled a list of titles garnered from Shakespeare, with their sources:

All Our Yesterdays (novel, H.M. Tomlinson; from *Macbeth*)
Ape and Essence (novel, Aldous Huxley; from *Measure for Measure*)
Benefits Forgot (memoir, John Masefield; from *As You Like It*)
Brave New World (novel, Aldous Huxley; from *The Tempest*)
Brief Candles (short stories, Aldous Huxley; from *Macbeth*)
Cakes and Ale (novel, Somerset Maugham; from *Twelfth Night*)
The Darling Buds of May (stories, H.E. Bates; from *Macbeth*)
Dear Brutus (play, J.M. Barrie; from *Julius Caesar*)
The Demi-Paradise (film, directed by Anthony Asquith; from *Richard III*)
'Down, Wanton, Down!' (poem, Robert Graves; from *King Lear*)
The Dyer's Hand (essays, W.H. Auden; from Sonnet cxi)
The Enchafed Flood (criticism, W.H. Auden; from *Othello*)
Following Darkness (novel, Forrest Reid; from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*)
A Giant's Strength (novel, Upton Sinclair; from *Measure for Measure*)
The Glimpses of the Moon (novel, Edith Wharton; from *Hamlet*)
A Hazard of New Fortunes (novel, William Dean Howells; from *King John*)
He Should have Died Hereafter (mystery story, Cyril Hare; from *Macbeth*)
Household Words (periodical, founded by Charles Dickens; from *Henry V*)
It Was The Nightingale (memoir, Ford Madox Ford; from *Romeo and Juliet*)
Let It Come Down (novel, Paul Bowles; from *Macbeth*)
The Long Divorce (mystery story, Edmund Crispin; from *Henry VIII*)
'Millions of Strange Shadows' (poem, Anthony Hecht; from Sonnet Iiii)
The Moon is Down (novel, John Steinbeck; from *Macbeth*)
Mortal Coils (stories, Aldous Huxley; from *Hamlet*)
Music Ho! (music criticism, Constant Lambert; from *Antony and Cleopatra*)
My Sad Captains (collection of poems, Thom Gunn; from *Antony and Cleopatra*)
O, How the Wheel Becomes It! (novella, Anthony Powell; from *Hamlet*)
Old Men Forget (memoir, Duff Cooper; from *Henry V*)
'Out, Out – ' (poem, Robert Frost; from *Macbeth*)
Pale Fire (novel, Vladimir Nabokov; from *Timon of Athens*)
Perchance to Dream (musical, Ivor Novello; from *Hamlet*)
Present Laughter (play, Noel Coward; from *Twelfth Night*)
Remembrance of Things Past (novel, Marcel Proust, tr. C.K. Scott Moncrief; from Sonnet xxx)
Sad Cypress (mystery story, Agatha Christie; from *Twelfth Night*)
Salad Days (musical, Julian Slade; from *Antony and Cleopatra*)
Sigh No More (revue, Noel Coward; from *Much Ado About Nothing*)
The Sound and the Fury (novel, William Faulkner; from *Macbeth*)
A Star Danced (memoir, Gertrude Lawrence; from *Much Ado About Nothing*)
The Strings Are False (memoir, Louis MacNiece; from *Julius Caesar*)
Taken at the Flood (mystery story, Agatha Christie; from *Julius Caesar*; title changed to *There is a Tide* in the USA)
A Thirsty Evil (stories, Gore Vidal; from *Measure for Measure*)
This Happy Breed (play, Noel Coward; From *Richard III*)
Time Must Have a Stop (novel, Aldous Huxley; from *Henry IV Part I*)
To Be or Not to Be (film, directed by Ernst Lubitsch; from *Hamlet*)
Told By an Idiot (novel, Rose Macaulay; from *Macbeth*)
Who Is Sylvia? (play, Terence Rattigan; from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*)

With a Bare Bodkin (mystery story, Cyril Hare; from *Hamlet*)

Without My Cloak (novel, Kate O'Brien; from Sonnet xxxiv)

Gross's list appeared in his collection, *After Shakespeare: Writing Inspired by The World's Greatest Author* (2002). It is by no means comprehensive, and lays no claim to being so. Readers may like to contribute later additions and extend the list, just for fun. Titles I missed – you can work out the sources for yourself – include Thomas Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree*, Ray Bradbury's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, Arthur Schnitzler's play *Undiscovered Country*, and Somerset Maugham's most celebrated story, *The Razor's Edge*. There must be countless others. So too, many Shakespeare-inspired titles have appeared in music: think of the English folk-rock group Mumford & Sons, whose debut album, *Sigh No More*, helped them towards two Grammy nominations in 2010 – but Shakespeare in music must wait for another occasion.

Given that the intention of literary and theatrical titles is largely to intrigue and attract, it seems likely that the frequency of Shakespearean borrowings reflects more than slack reliance on currency, familiarity or intellectual caché. In the titles of other writers, Shakespeare's choice phrases float free of their original contexts, still sounding their familiar echoes. Then, like birds released from an habitual cage, they alight in fresh and often utterly different surroundings, to begin a new song.



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* * * * *

Notice

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(Re: image 5. on page 3, Ernest Hemingway spotted by (Edward) Ernest Baart)

Important to Note

If you are affiliated to a Branch of SSoSA please effect payment to your Branch at your early convenience.

At the Triennial Congress (4 July 2009) it was decided that from January 2010 each branch will set an appropriate branch membership fee. Subscription to the *SiSA* journal will be divorced from membership of SSoSA. Members wishing to receive the *SiSA* journal will pay R100.00, and should notify the Secretary (Eddie Baart) of their intention. For **overseas members** there is a **charge of \$30 for the Journal, inclusive of FOREX and postage.**

For persons subscribing to the Journal, we would appreciate it if you did not send a cheque but made a payment via the internet. If you do not do

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Invitation

SSoSA invites your participation as contributor to the *Newsletter incorporating Occasional Papers and Reviews (NiOPaR)*.

SSoSA would be happy to consider the development of satellite groups. These could take the form of reading, discussion and/or drama groups. Youth groups are welcome.

Please contact our ISEA office <isea@ru.ac.za> Tel.: 0466038565 and let us have your ideas or requests.

