Digital Shakespeares

and the Performance of Relevance

by

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ABSTRACT

"Digital Shakespeares" is a study of the ways that Shakespearean theaters and festivals are incorporating digital media into their marketing and performance practices at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The project integrates Shakespeare studies, performance studies, and digital media and internet studies to explore how digital media are integral to the practices of four North American and British Shakespearean performance institutions: the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Stratford (Canada) Festival. Through an analysis of their performance and marketing practices, I argue that digital media present an opportunity to reevaluate concepts of performance and relevance, and explore the implications such reevaluations have on the future of Shakespearean performance. The project addresses institutions' digital media practices through the lens of four concepts—access, marketing, education, and performance—to conclude that theaters and festivals are finding it necessary to adopt practices from multiple media to stay viable in today's online attention economy. The first chapter considers the issue of access, exploring the influence of social media on audience-institution interactions as theaters and festivals establish online presences on sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. Chapter two argues that theaters and festivals incorporate digital media into their outreach through poaching the practices of other media and cultural institutions as they strive to become relevant to their online audiences by appealing through the newness of digital media. Chapter three focuses on two digital educational outreach programs, the Globe's Playing Shakespeare and the RSC's Young Shakespeare Nation, to understand how each institution seeks to employ digital media to make their educational audiences life-long

lovers of Shakespearean performance. Throughout the final chapter, I analyze potential models for incorporating digital media into Shakespearean performance, both in performances that bring digital media onto the stage and in performances that use social media as the platform for dramatic performance. Ultimately, I argue digital media have become an integral part of the practices Shakespearean performance institutions use to establish and sustain their cultural relevance with modern audiences, while raising questions regarding the implications of those practices in an increasingly globalized world.

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents, to my family, and most of all, to my wife Hannah

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Chapter One: Introduction: Paying Attention to Relevance

In their 2008 report on the Shakespeare in American Communities program, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) wrote that over the course of the 20th century, "The once universally accessible dramatist [Shakespeare] had become our most sacred dramatist—to whom most audiences were not able to relate" (2008b, 4). The goal of the NEA's Shakespeare in American Communities program, started in 2003, was to address this issue by supporting theater companies touring around the country and performing Shakespeare in schools and communities, particularly in "small and mid-sized towns with limited access to the performing arts" (2008b, 4). The following year, the NEA created the Shakespeare for a New Generation program, designed to support non-profit Shakespearean theaters and festivals around the U.S. The two programs emphasize bringing Shakespeare to new audiences, but it is not as if students are not encountering Shakespeare in the classroom, considering he is the only author required as part of the U.S. Common Core Standards for English Language Arts (Common Core State Standards Initiative 2010, 38).[1] Nor are Shakespearean theaters and festivals non-existent, as the NEA's programs had the participation of 77 theaters companies by 2008. However, what the NEA's programs were ultimately hoping to address was the larger problem that non-musical American theater continues to face, steadily decreasing audiences (National Endowment for the Arts 2008a, 1). Since the NEA's two reports in 2008, audiences for non-musical theater in America, Canada, and the United Kingdom have continued to get smaller, and Shakespearean theaters and festivals have fallen victim to this trend as well.

[1] Students in the United Kingdom are also exposed to Shakespeare as part of their national educational curriculum. Key Stage 3 students (ages 11-14) are required to read two Shakespeare plays, and Key Stage 4 students (ages 14-16) are required to read at least one (Department of Education 2014, 15-18).

So given continually shrinking audiences and anxiety over Shakespeare's relevance with those audiences, on the eve of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016, is Shakespearean performance still relevant?

It is this question that I address throughout this project. "Digital Shakespeares and the Performance of Relevance" considers how Shakespearean theaters and festivals are working to maintain their relevance with current audiences, while also establishing their relevance with new ones. Specifically, I analyze how four British and North American Shakespearean performance institutions—the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Stratford Festival—are using digital media to interact with and engage new, often younger, audiences in their work with Shakespearean performance. I argue that these institutions are turning to digital media as a means of cultivating new audiences by borrowing, as Kate Rumbold puts it, "the positive qualities, associated with new media, of immediacy, reach, and relevance—ideal for engaging a young demographic for whom Shakespeare may seem remote, complex, or painfully compulsory" (2010, 318-319). The qualities outlined by Rumbold—immediacy, reach, and relevance—are what many Shakespearean institutions hope to take advantage of as they have established themselves in numerous online spaces ranging from their own websites to social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. Each of the institutions I discuss in this study has incorporated digital technologies into their marketing and performance practices in a variety of ways, some successful, others less so.

Through incorporating digital media into their marketing and performance practices, Shakespearean theaters and festivals are exploring various strategies for

establishing and maintaining their relevance with audiences. As they use digital technologies for such ends, these institutions are inverting Douglas Lanier's argument that "regardless of how popular culture uses Shakespeare, the fact that it habitually attends to Shakespeare at all contributes to Shakespeare's status as a widely shared touchstone and thus sustains his cultural life and power" (2002, 19). Theaters and festivals are now finding it necessary to turn to popular platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in order to ensure the continued relevance of their institutional work with Shakespeare. Rather than being able to rely on the cultural value of their work with Shakespearean performance, theaters and festivals must compete against other theaters and festivals, other cultural institutions, and other media, all in the same online spaces. The four institutions I focus on in this study are now finding themselves in a cultural moment quite different from the widespread bardolatry of the 1980s and early 1990s described by Graham Holderness:

> Shakespeare's face is one of the most insistently reproduced icons in the world. It adorns countless book covers, hotel and restaurant signs, beer mats, tea caddies, confectionery packets, cigarette and playing cards, ceramics, theatre and museum foyers, advertisements, and banknotes. Its currency is based in large measure on the cachet of high culture (Shakespeare metaphorically authorises those products he vicariously and posthumously endorses), combined with its instant recognisability. (2001, 143)

In the past, Shakespearean theaters and festivals were able to rely heavily on Shakespeare's value and familiarity as an icon of high culture to ensure that they always had audiences for their work, but more recently Shakespeare's cultural value alone has

not been enough to keep audiences invested in Shakespearean performance. A prime example of this was the Stratford Festival's choice to add Shakespeare to their name in 2008, only to remove it from the Festival's name again in 2012 in order to appeal to a broader audience.[2]

While some of the audience losses can be attributed to the effects of the economic recession and the consistent increase in travel prices, the decreasing audience sizes of Shakespearean performance institutions are also due to the fact that their traditional audiences are getting older, but not being replaced by younger ones. The audience profile of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) reported in 2009 indicates such concern:

> Regular surveys tell us that our audience tends to be fairly affluent and well educated, with more than 80% having college degrees. The median age is 56 years and the average family income exceeds $95,000 per year. The vast majority attend theatre regularly in their home towns…The biggest audience demographic change in recent years is the drop in attendance from people in the 18-44 year age group, down to 15% in 2004 from 38% in 1990. (2009, 6)

The OSF audience profile reveals both a predominantly older theatergoing audience with a median age of 56, which has been accompanied by a significant 23% drop in festival

[2] In my interview with her, Anita Gaffney, Executive Director of the Stratford Festival, discussed the name change: "From 2008 to 2012 we were the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, and the reason for that was we were kind of reacting to some criticism we were getting in the 2000s about mandate drift…it was really a reaction to say Shakespeare is absolutely at the core of what we do, and Festival is still in our name because we do lots of other things other than Shakespeare, but Shakespeare's absolutely what we're about and that's how we differentiate ourselves and it's what we excel at. But what we found over that four or five year period was for those people that were great Shakespeare aficionados, they felt that saying Stratford Shakespeare Festival was false advertising because we did do more than Shakespeare. And for people that might be a little intimidated by Shakespeare, it was a turnoff because they thought 'Oh, that's all that happens there. I don't need to know anything more about it.' So we went back to the name that served us very well for over forty years, which was Stratford Festival, which really speaks more to the variety of Stratford" (2013).

attendance among the 18-44 demographic. This drop in attendance occurred between 1990 and 2004, and is consistent with the NEA's findings that "the percentage of the U.S. adult population attending non-musical theater has declined from 13.5 percent to 9.4 percent" (2008a, 1). Anita Gaffney, Executive Director of the Stratford Festival, indicated in an interview in 2013 that Stratford has also experienced a similar decrease in their audience attendance over the past decade. As they seek to entice new audiences to their work, one of the strategies that institutions have adopted in the hopes of increasing audience attendance and engagement is incorporating digital media into a variety of their marketing and performance practices.

The turn to digital media is in part out of a necessity for theaters and festivals to remain competitive against other cultural institutions and other media. When discussing the Stratford Festival's digital outreach, Antoni Cimolino, the Festival's Artistic Director, noted that much of what they were doing online with YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter was "fairly standard: we're doing what most organizations do nowadays" (2010, 9). If Shakespearean theaters and festivals want to keep up with one another and other cultural institutions and media, establishing digital outreach on multiple platforms is part of the game. For institutions that desire to build new audiences through these platforms, they must approach such outreach as an extension of their existing marketing and performance practices. Bill Rauch, now artistic director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, acknowledged the need to balance the use of digital media in a 2006 interview, noting the Festival has "to continue to attract audiences of all ages, but especially focus on those between 18 and 44…OSF has state-of-the-art technology, but we must use it judiciously so that the technology supports rather than dominates the spoken word" (2006).

Underlying Rauch's comments is the need to stay relevant with younger audiences, a relevance that comes at least partially through the integration of modern technology into their practices, on and off the stage. What it means to be relevant with those younger audiences though is less clear: is it cultural value, or something else?

When talking about what it is the Stratford Festival has to do to engage younger audiences, Cimolino argued that "As theatre artists in the twenty-first century, we must do what we have always sought to do since the days of the ancient Greeks: grab your attention in those crucial first ten minutes when everyone's fighting for the armrest, and hold it long enough to transport you into a whole new world of awareness" (2010, 14). Cimolino's comments indicate what may be a major part of Shakespearean theaters and festivals remaining relevant in the twenty-first century: attention. Richard Lanham has argued that we are now in an attention economy, where it is the audience's attention that institutions must compete for (2006, xi). Shakespearean performance institutions that want to either maintain their relevance with current audiences or establish it with new ones have to compete in this attention economy where remaining relevant is intertwined with the ability to successful attract and sustain the attention of your audiences.[3] By creating accounts on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube, Shakespearean theaters and festivals are entering into spaces where they are vying with numerous other institutions and media for their audiences' attention. Not only are they competing for attention in these digital spaces, but also they have to do so by adopting models that in some cases are very different from their traditional marketing or

[3] I will return to the attention economy in greater detail in chapters 1 and 2.

performance strategies. For Shakespearean performance institutions, the result of competing in the attention economy is that maintaining their status as high culture has become secondary to attracting the attention of audiences and keeping them invested in and engaged with Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance.

Throughout this project, my approach focuses on a variety of digital platforms used by the OSF, RSC, Globe, and Stratford, considering how they use such platforms to court the attention of their audiences online. In particular, I address how they utilize institutional websites, social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest), and media-sharing technologies such as streaming media to provide their audiences with access to their institutional work. Though I discuss the audience at points, this dissertation deals more with the issue of projection, specifically how Shakespearean theaters and festivals are using digital media to perform their relevance for their audiences online. To accomplish this goal, I build on Susan Bennett's method of considering the theater's place within cultural systems and the audience's relationship to theater (both the concept of theater and specific performances) in order to better understand the methods of theatrical production and audience interaction and participation by extending Bennett's framework to include cultural institutions, objects, and works that exist digitally, not just physically (2003, 100). Much of the project looks at content and practices that shape the audience's experience of what Bennett calls the outer frame of performance to address the "elements that create and inform the theatrical event" (2003, 139). Of particular interest to my study of the outer frame is how institutions are using digital technologies to market themselves, and the ways that utilizing digital technologies requires institutions to develop new strategies to court their audiences' attention online.

However, the project also considers the impact digital technologies have on the inner frame of performance, and how digital media have been brought onto the stage, or even in some cases used as the stage for Shakespearean performance. Yong Li Lan has discussed how the internet and digital media have affected what audiences experience as the performance event: "Even as we recognize that a performance cannot 'actually' be watched out of the theatre, the information which transmits that performance as a virtual event on the worldwide web not only changes the public it reaches and its relation to that public, but thereby alters its constitution as an event" (2003, 48). As digital media have constantly evolved, so too have they continued to redefine what we might consider as the theatrical event. Whereas when Yong was writing in 2003, it may have seemed that a performance could not be viewed outside of the theater, performances streamed live to audiences and performances that take place entirely on social media continue to challenge our preconceived notions of what a performance can be. These types of performances push against our definitions of concepts such as liveness and the theatrical event, and one of the threads that runs throughout this project is how Shakespearean performance can be reimagined through the use of digital media. This does not mean though that theaters and festivals work on live Shakespearean performance should be threatened. Much as digital media can offer new approaches to performing Shakespeare, so too can we use Shakespeare to explore how these media are influential in our everyday lives.

There are two specific aspects of digital media that are shaping institution-audience interactions in both the outer and inner frames of performance: presence and persistence. The first term, presence, is derived from Marvin Minsky's notion of telepresence; when referring to digital media, presence is the idea that technologies can

facilitate experiences with users from a remote setting.[4] For example, an audience member for a streaming performance can (at least metaphorically) be in two places at the same time, and thus physical presence is no longer always necessary for viewing a live theatrical performance. Though audiences that stream performance online or engage with an institution from their living room clearly do not have the ability to experience the performance in the same way that a physical one does, the concept of presence represents a way for institutions to build and expand their audiences, both in terms of numbers and geographical reach. The other aspect of digital media that Shakespearean performance institutions can take advantage of to compete for their audiences' attention is the concept of persistence. Persistence, a term often used interchangeably with preservation or long-term access, refers to the nature of digital media that are always active and accessible, even if no user is seeking access at a given moment. A concept often applied to digital archives, persistence in digital media is what provides users with the ability to access information at their convenience.[5] Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter are prime examples of online persistent spaces, allowing theaters and festivals to be able to post content that users will have access to at their leisure once they log on to the sites.

Through their websites, social media presences, and use of media-sharing sites, Shakespearean theaters and festivals are now in the age of what W. B. Worthen calls "Shakespeare 3.0," as Shakespeare "is released from a single platform of production and

[4] Writing in 1980, Minsky's notion of telepresence is based on his ideas that future robotic technologies and remote control tools can "feel and work so much like our own hands that we won't notice any significant difference." For more, see Minsky (1980).

[5] Abby Smith discusses persistence in detail in her argument for developing stronger digital preservation methods and archives. For more, see Smith (2004, 576-591).

from a single site of consumption. Shakespeare 3.0 is mobile, portable—play the DVD on your TV or computer or portable DVD player, download it to your video iPod" (2008, 60). Worthen's Shakespeare 3.0 has only continued to expand, and with the widespread prominence of smartphones and tablets, audiences can access institutions' content from any number of platforms or apps. It is the prominence and ubiquity of digital technologies that have led to the need for institutions to compete for their audiences' attention across a variety of media. Even as they see the need to do so, theaters and festivals are still determining how to best incorporate digital media into their marketing and performance practices. Mallory Pierce, Director of Marketing and Communications for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival notes that the OSF does not "have a strategic plan for digital media right now. We're working on one, but we don't have one" (2013). Anita Gaffney, in discussing Stratford's social media marketing, identified a broad strategy: "we have lots of different audiences and a lot of different digital media activities and we pitch them to the ones that are the best fit, that are going to meet our objective of revealing Stratford in a different way" (2013). Both Pierce's and Gaffney's comments reveal that while their institutions recognize the need for a social media presence, they are still experimenting with how those presences are best used to gain their audiences' attention.

It is this experimentation with digital technologies that I focus on throughout "Digital Shakespeares." Though in some instances theaters and festivals' experiments or strategies utilizing digital media have not found success, others provide fruitful models that could be of much use to institutions in the future. All four of the theaters and festivals that are part of this study seek to use digital media to provide broader audiences

with access to Shakespearean performance, and the strategies they design to do so represent a move to encourage audiences to turn their attention to the work of these institutions. In doing so, their use of digital media demonstrates the next step of Richard Burt's claim that "Whereas in the twentieth century, adaptations of the plays helped legitimate new media such as film at its very inception, radio in the 1930s, and television in the 1950s, it now appears that electronic publishing may confer legitimacy on Shakespeare rather than the reverse" (2002, 2-3). For Shakespearean performance institutions, it is not just electronic publishing, but digital media at large that are being used to establish institutions such as the OSF, RSC, Globe, and Stratford as sites of legitimate work with Shakespearean performance worthy of their audiences' attention. Though up to this point I have referred to them broadly under the umbrella of digital media, in the chapters that follow I analyze not just general trends, but specific strategies and platforms that are integral to the practices of these four institutions. Throughout this project, I take a medium-specific approach attentive to the practices and perceptions of individual media or technologies, as well as to broader trends in digital media usage.[6] Ultimately, by looking at how institutions' are using specific types of digital media in both the outer and inner frames of performance, we can gain a greater understanding of how theaters and festivals are shaping their institutional brands for audiences online.

This project seeks to fill a gap in existing scholarship by interrogating the role marketing plays for Shakespearean theaters and festivals as they strive to establish and

[6] This approach builds on Katherine Rowe's argument regarding medium-specificity: "[Medium-specificity] requires us to be alert, however, to the history of specificity arguments about different media—and to the ways our local readings, grand narratives about adaptation, and institutional practices are all slanted by critical scripts based on such arguments." For more, see Rowe (2008).

maintain their relevance. As I will expand on in the first two chapters, becoming or remaining relevant online today means being able to court and sustain the attention of audiences. This reflects the shift discussed earlier in this introduction, as theaters and festivals are no longer able to rely on the inherent value of their identities as Shakespearean performance institutions. Instead, that value becomes part of their institutional identities, identities that are continually reshaped by their practices with both Shakespearean performance and digital media. Throughout the project, I address the relationship between institutional value, that is the value of the particular brand of performance offered by each theater or festival, and cultural value, or the larger conversations, practices, and trends influencing the value of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance with today's audiences. As a result, this dissertation speaks to two audiences, Shakespearean performance institutions and Shakespearean scholars. For theaters and festivals, the strategies addressed throughout this project offer potential models for engaging new audiences and remaining competitive in the attention economy of digital media. For scholars, this project provides insight into how Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance are being marketed to old and new audiences alike, and how Shakespearean performance institutions participate in the greater Shakespeare economy.

"Digital Shakespeares" consists of four chapters which discuss the digital marketing or performance practices of Shakespearean theaters and festivals, with each chapter focusing on one of four specific issues: access, marketing, education, and performance. The first chapter, "Peeking Behind the Digital Curtains: Shakespearean Performance Institutions, Social Media, and Access," considers the issue of access, exploring the influence of digital media on audience-institution interactions. In recent

years, theaters and festivals have incorporated social media into their marketing and performance practices to attract online audiences to their institutional missions and work. As they move onto sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, institutions have to navigate the affordances and limitations of these platforms, and determine to what ends they hope to utilize social media. While theaters and festivals often claim that adopting digital media has led to a new era of open access, the reality is that discussions and claims regarding access online are more complex. Rather than thinking of access as simply open or closed, I contend that access operates as a spectrum. Though Shakespearean performance institutions have provided audiences with more access to their institutional content in recent years, I argue that theaters and festivals, concerned with both remaining relevant with audiences and maintaining control over their digital content, must account for the nature of social media, their influence on the process of access, and the active nature of audiences in these online spaces as they design new forms of digital outreach.

Chapter two, "Now and Then: Marketing Shakespearean Performance through Social Media," addresses how theaters and festivals are integrating digital media, specifically social media, into their marketing practices. I argue that theaters and festivals incorporate digital media into their outreach through poaching the practices of other media and cultural institutions. In the process, they strive to become relevant to their online audiences by appealing to them through the newness of the digital media they use, often by appropriating common user practices such as the use of hashtags in the process. As they integrate digital media into their marketing practices, newness serve as what Michel de Certeau refers to as a tactic. While they use newness to court the attention of

their audiences and keep them engaged online, a closer analysis of the content shared by institutions through social media reveals a heavy reliance on both audiences' and institutions' nostalgia to establish these theaters and festivals as sites for authentic Shakespearean performance. This results in a tension between newness and nostalgia in the social media marketing of theaters and festivals, a tension that raises questions of authenticity and presents risks for institutions that choose to use social media to interact with their audiences. However, embracing these risks can be beneficial for Shakespearean performance institutions, creating new forms of engagement between the institutions and their audiences in the process.

Chapter three, "Building New Audiences: Digital Media in Educational Outreach," focuses on two educational outreach programs that utilize digital media, the Globe's Playing Shakespeare and the Royal Shakespeare Company's Young Shakespeare Nation. Since young audiences do not generally feel nostalgic for Shakespeare in the way that older or more traditional audiences would, each institution employs digital media to facilitate young audiences' ownership of and investment in Shakespearean performance. Both institutions hope to make their educational audiences life-long lovers of Shakespearean performance, and incorporate aspects of digital media into their outreach programs to achieve this goal. Playing Shakespeare uses the models of social media to have students learn about a play before seeing it performed live, but ultimately the program seeks to direct young audiences back to the physical stage of the Globe, a common educational model for theaters and festivals. On the other hand, Young Shakespeare Nation streams live stage performances to secondary schools around the United Kingdom, and allows students in the audience to interact with the cast and crew

live upon the conclusion of these performances. I argue that Young Shakespeare Nation offers a potential new model for digital educational outreach, one that has students engage with Shakespearean performance while maintaining the liveness of the theatrical event, all without ever having their audiences physically present at the RSC stage in the process.

The final chapter, "The Digital On/As Stage: Models for the Future of Shakespearean Performance," turns to performance, and how digital media are being incorporated into the theatrical event. Throughout this chapter, I analyze both stage performances that bring digital media into the world of Shakespeare's plays and Shakespearean performances that use social media partially or entirely as the stage for performance. The first part of the chapter considers the models provided by productions at the OSF, RSC, and Stratford that incorporate digital media into stage performances of Shakespeare's play. Though some of these productions only use these media as window dressing, a few of the productions offer promising models for using Shakespeare's plays to explore issues relevant to modern audiences. In the second part of the chapter, I consider two RSC productions that took place completely or partially online, *Such Tweet Sorrow* and *Midsummer Night's Dreaming*. Though these are the only two performances to date by any of the institutions discussed in this project that make social media the platform for dramatic performance, I believe they represent a potential new model for approaching the performance of Shakespeare's plays in the future. Ultimately, in both this chapter and throughout the project, I contend that Shakespearean theaters and festival should continue to experiment with and employ digital media in meaningful ways to

establish and maintain the relevance of both Shakespeare and the theater with new generations of audiences.

Chapter Two: Peeking Behind the Digital Curtains: Shakespearean Performance Institutions, Social Media, and Access

> Access, however, means not only the opportunity to enter, approach, or make use of an existing collection or service, but something far more complex and subtle. It demands, in the first place, discriminating selections of resources in light of particular user interests and needs. It requires a more profound understanding than is presently held in the search strategies of those who seek knowledge and information in libraries and other information centers.
> —Robert A. Colby and Morris A. Gelfand

Shakespearean theaters and festivals are by nature concerned with their audience outreach, as these institutions rely on their audiences for both cultural and economic relevance. The ubiquity of digital media in today's world has led to these theaters and festivals adopting a common set of digital technologies as methods for audience outreach; often, these technologies have been made commonplace due to their audiences' expectations. Take for example the institutional website. For Shakespearean performance institutions, maintaining and updating an active website for their audiences has become a given. There is a clear set of expectations that institutions or businesses of any import will have established an online presence through a website, and that website generally acts as a portal to information and materials regarding the institution or business. Though their creation is often a result of audience expectations, institutions obviously benefit from operating these websites as well. For Shakespearean theaters and festivals, websites offer a means of crafting a guided user experience, allowing them to provide information to audiences on individual performances and entire seasons, theater or festival history and context, visitor information, and purchasing tickets online.

More recently, one of the most prominent examples of exponential growth in theaters and festivals' digital media usage has come in the form of social media. While social media continue to expand and proliferate, certain sites—Facebook, Twitter, and

Pinterest—have become media platforms for businesses and institutions to engage in digital outreach and interact with their online audiences. It is not surprising then that Shakespearean theaters and festivals have also cultivated online presences in these spaces. While in some ways the institution-audience interactions that occur on social media sites may resemble those that occur on institutional websites, social media are sites of user convergence that destabilize institutional control over materials. However, there is a tradeoff that comes with that loss of control: social media offer the means for engaging with audiences in ways that do not often occur on institutional websites. Thus, as Shakespearean theaters and festivals create and maintain active institutional accounts and pages on social media sites, they give up a sense of full control over content in exchange for audience engagement on a greater scale than occurs on their own websites.

I do not want to suggest that by juxtaposing institution websites and social media against one another that they represent binary sets of interactions for Shakespearean theaters and festivals and their audiences. Indeed, the four institutions that I address in this chapter—the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Stratford Festival—all have expansive institutional websites as well as social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. Instead, I want to argue that we can learn from the types of interaction facilitated by each type of digital technology. The idea of institutional control over content in online spaces is rooted in a larger conversation regarding digital media and their ability to provide audiences access to institutional content. As Kate Rumbold has argued, digital media allow Shakespeare institutions to efface their walls for audiences and provide access to their content and materials (2010, 315). While this effacement allows institutions that house

physical materials (such as the Folger Shakespeare Library) to generate interest in their holdings while simultaneously reifying their status as institutional holders and safekeepers of cultural knowledge and value, the same cannot be said for Shakespearean theaters and festivals. For while libraries and museums court their audiences' investment through physical and digital collections, theaters and festivals face a different challenge as their missions and products are distinctly ephemeral. So what exactly do Shakespearean institutions that specialize in performance provide access to, and what role do new technologies play for those institutions as they strive to establish and maintain relevance with digital audiences? The answers to these questions are defined by issues of access, and throughout this chapter I will establish a theoretical framework for understanding the ways digital media, and in particular social media, influence the process of access and shape audience-institution interactions.

Shaping Institutional Identities

Access, commonly associated with specific cultural institutions such as archives, libraries, and museums, has also long shaped the practices of Shakespearean theaters and festivals. These institutions cultivate many of the same practices and values common to these other types of cultural institutions, and they are able to do so through their official websites. Institutional websites provide Shakespearean theaters and festivals the means to craft their online identities for audiences; they are able to choose the site design and

content, building a certain type of experience for users who go to the site.[7] Institutions can then use this control over design and content to fashion their digital presences in deliberate ways. These institutions have established and continually updated websites available for their online audiences, and while each site hosts content unique to the institution, all four sites utilize similar conventions to achieve their goals. The sites for these four theaters and festivals contain a number of common components: prominent sections on current productions and seasons, links to purchase tickets, information on planning a visit, images and videos on performance and theater or festival history, educational links, and content about the current institutional mission and leadership. While it is difficult to trace the specific changes of a certain website over time or establish which theater or festival was the first to adopt a certain element or practice, most of these elements have been part of theaters and festivals' websites in some way for well over a decade.[8]

One of the most common practices for institutional websites over the past 10-15 years is to have a page on the site devoted to the mission of the theater or festival, which is an interesting inclusion given that audiences' primary reason for visiting these sites is usually not to learn more about institutional missions. Yet each institution provides a clear statement defining its relationship to Shakespeare and their approaches to performance on its site, establishing Shakespeare as an inspiration, or the inspiration, for

[7] Throughout this paper I refer to users and audiences separately. Though parts of the discussion will overlap the two groups, users refers to individual participants on a specific site, while audience refers to the groups of users that each institution is targeting on a site.

[8] For more on the elements of theater and festival websites in the early 2000s, see Westfall (2001), Ailles (2002), and Bennett (2002).

their work. By doing so, these institutions present their cultural value to the audience through their performance practices, which are tailored to reaffirm the value of Shakespeare and his plays while making them relevant for current audiences. Take for example the Stratford Festival's Mandate:

> With William Shakespeare as its foundation, the Stratford Festival aims to set the standard for classical theatre in North America. Embracing our heritage of tradition and innovation, we seek to bring classical and contemporary theatre alive for an increasingly diverse audience.
>
> For more than half a century, our mission has evolved to address the ever-changing, ever-challenging Canadian cultural landscape. What has remained constant, however, is our determination to create stimulating, thought-provoking productions of Shakespeare's plays, to examine other plays from the classical repertoire, and to foster and support the development of Canadian theatre practitioners.
>
> By searching Canada and the world for the finest talent, and by providing the conditions and training that enable those artists to achieve their most courageous work, we will immerse our audiences in a theatregoing experience that is not only innovative, entertaining and unsurpassed anywhere in the world, but also deeply relevant to, and reflective of, their lives and communities. (2014)

Through their mandate, the Stratford Festival announces an investment in Shakespeare, citing him as the foundation of the festival, while also declaring a commitment to performances by Canadians for Canadians. While Stratford's performers and audiences

are not solely Canadian, their mandate helps to position the Festival as an institution of cultural value to its home nation.

A similar type of positioning can be seen in the mission statement for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. While much shorter than Stratford's mandate, the OSF's mission statement nonetheless displays a similar commitment: "Inspired by Shakespeare's work and the cultural richness of the United States, we reveal our collective humanity through illuminating interpretations of new and classic plays, deepened by the kaleidoscope of rotating repertory" (2009, 3). Again, there is a clear commitment to Shakespeare and to a national identity, in this case that of the United States. Both Stratford and the OSF are committed to performing the works of Shakespeare and to doing so for their respective national audiences. As destination theaters that rely on audiences traveling to either Stratford or Ashland to visit the festivals and see performances, positioning themselves as institutions devoted to preserving a national identity through the performance of Shakespeare's plays is a major part of their institutional identities. These institutions use the reaffirmation of Shakespeare's cultural value as a means of establishing and maintaining the importance of their service, but it is through their approaches to performance that they work to remain relevant with those same audiences.

While each institution cites Shakespeare as their inspiration, making the reaffirmation of his cultural value with audiences the reason behind their work, both Stratford and the OSF must also continue to attract new audiences to their institutional missions in order to remain relevant. Thus, in their mission statements, both institutions also convey certain approaches to performing Shakespeare's works, framing their performance practices as specifically relevant to their target audiences. This drive for

relevance with audiences is clear in their devotion to their national identities, but it can also be seen in the selection of plays they choose to perform and in their descriptions of their performance practices. Though both institutions are inspired by Shakespeare, they also mention a commitment to performing plays beyond Shakespeare's canon, whether it's "classic and contemporary theatre" or "new and classic plays." While Shakespeare is an important part of their institutional identities, both recognize that they have to court their audiences through a variety of plays and performances, Shakespearean and otherwise. Along those lines, both festivals also realize that their performance practices need to be relevant for their target audiences, and so Stratford shows a commitment to "creating stimulating, thought-provoking productions" while the OSF is dedicated to revealing the audience's "collective humanity through illuminating interpretations" of the plays they perform. For both institutions, reaffirming the legacy of Shakespeare and his plays is the touchstone that establishes their cultural importance and value, but it is through their performance approaches that they maintain their relevance with audiences.

These twin impulses of reaffirmation and tailored performance practices are also found in the mission statements of other theaters and festivals, though how they frame their relationship to Shakespeare can change based on the identity of the institution and its target audience. The Royal Shakespeare Company's statement entitled "Our Work" is indicative of how the reputation and reach of an institution can reshape these elements in specific ways:

> Our job is to connect and help others connect with Shakespeare and produce bold, ambitious work with living writers, actors and artists … We believe in taking risks and pushing creative boundaries—finding new ways of doing things and

> learning through action. Our audiences are at the heart of all we do and we want to challenge, inspire and involve them. Our home is in Stratford-upon-Avon and in 2010 we reopened the Royal Shakespeare and Swan theatres after a £112.8m transformation to bring actors and audiences closer together. We play regularly in London, Newcastle upon Tyne and on tour across the UK and the world. As well as the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, we produce new work from living artists and develop creative links with theatre-makers from around the world. We work with teachers to inspire a life-long love of Shakespeare in young people and run events for everyone to explore and participate in our work. (2014)

The RSC, much like Stratford and the OSF, affirms their commitment to Shakespeare ("Our job is to connect and to help others connect with Shakespeare") and their approaches for performance ("We believe in taking risks and pushing creative boundaries"). However, the RSC positions itself differently as both a destination theater and a company that tours nationally and globally. The RSC is also able to cite not only Shakespeare as the inspiration for their work, but also the historical significance of Stratford-upon-Avon, and so the reaffirmation of the cultural value of Shakespeare's plays becomes intertwined with the cultural heritage of the Bard's hometown. There is a commitment to creating an engaging experience for the RSC's audience in their statement as well, indicated by both the financial cost of their recent transformation and their dedication to connecting with their audience to "challenge, inspire, and involve them" in performances.

Shakespeare's Globe also uses historical significance as part of the inspiration for its institutional mission, which is available on the "Our Purpose" page of the Globe

website: “The Shakespeare Globe Trust is dedicated to the experience and international understanding of Shakespeare in performance. Uniquely its work celebrates the fact that the greatest dramatic poet in the English language lived and worked in London and that the cradle of English theatre was on Bankside by the River Thames” (2014).[9] This mission statement intertwines the uniqueness of the physical location and its historical significance to the Globe. Whereas the RSC implicitly uses the historical significance of Stratford-upon-Avon in its mission statement, the Globe makes the significance of its location explicit for its audience. Both the RSC and the Globe use the link between their physical locations and Shakespeare’s history as a means of establishing relevance with their audiences, and they are able to do so in a way that the Stratford Festival and the OSF are unable to. All four institutions are inspired by Shakespeare and his work, and thus invested in reaffirming Shakespeare’s cultural value with audiences through specific approaches to performance, but the RSC and Globe use their physical locations as major selling points for their relevance with audiences. The Globe in particular focuses on establishing its relevance with audiences through the historical value of its location rather than its performance approaches, which are covered under the umbrella of the Globe’s focus on original performance practices.

The mission statements of these four theaters and festivals provide insight into how each institution positions itself as a purveyor of cultural value through an emphasis on reaffirmation, performance, and history. On their individual websites, each institution

[9] On the Globe's page, they provide both this short statement and a longer one that that defines their "purpose through three central and inter-dependent activities," exhibitions focusing on Shakespeare and theater historically, international performance excellence, and operating as a research hub for all interested in Shakespeare and performance.

is able to shape a specific institutional identity for its online audience, and even though the audiences differ from institution to institution, they are united through their common identity as theaters and festivals inspired by Shakespeare and therefore concerned first and foremost with live Shakespearean performance. It is their institutional identities as theaters and festivals that sets them apart from libraries, museums, archives, and other cultural institutions, as they provide their audiences with access to the ephemeral product of Shakespearean performance, as opposed to physical artifacts or objects safeguarded behind institutional walls.[10] Here I would return to the epigraph from Colby and Gelfand: while we traditionally conceive of libraries, museums, and archives as information centers, Shakespearean performance institutions also operate as information centers, especially as they generate greater online presences. This is not to say that the missions of theaters and festivals are synonymous with those of more traditional information centers, but that Shakespearean performance institutions also have a vested interest in negotiating the avenues of access to a variety of content that is of interest for their digital audiences. Much of this content is structured around establishing and maintaining the value of live Shakespearean performance with audiences, whether that comes through mission statements and historical information, performance images and video clips, or even video games.

The mission statements of these four institutions also reveal that Shakespeare has seemingly become a performance product for a niche audience in recent years. Christie

[10] This is not to say that these theaters and festivals do not have a commitment to preserving and safeguarding their performance artifacts and materials, as each has a more traditional information center under its banner devoted to the preservation of both physical and ephemeral performance materials, but that this objective is usually secondary to the main goal of promoting live performance.

Carson has discussed how "the increasing influence of the digital work in both performance and in the critical reception of live theatre" have led to theaters and festivals "trying to cater to two kinds of audiences simultaneously: first a local specialized audience, and second a general international audience" (2008, 280). Though each institution may broadly work to target a global audience, the audiences that they engage with on a regular basis will usually be more localized. Targeting a niche audience brings with it many challenges for these institutions, and chief among them is the challenge of competing in what Richard Lanham calls the economy of attention. Lanham argues that we have shifted away from an information economy given the massive amounts of information available through digital technologies, and that we are now in a moment where human attention has become the scarce resource being competed over (2006, xi). Thus, each theater or festival is tasked with attracting and maintaining their audiences' attention in order to remain relevant, a significant task when each institution is bound to a physical location that is not always within traveling distance for their online audiences. As a result, these challenges have presented an opportunity for digital media, and in particular social media, to fill an important need for these institutions by establishing new avenues of access for audiences and helping Shakespearean performance institutions competing in a more global and ever-growing attention economy. However, as these institutions incorporate these media into their practices, they have to renegotiate issues of access, both in terms of content and extent. Adopting digital media into their outreach practices brings with it numerous questions: what should audiences have access to, what access will entice audiences to invest in institutions and their missions, and what should remain under institutional control? These questions are all rooted in the concept of

access, and therefore it is imperative to establish a framework for thinking about access and its function for Shakespearean theaters and festivals before exploring the role that social media play within that framework.

Defining Access

While the term access has been employed in numerous fields and contexts, many of which are not associated with the recent proliferation of digital media, I am specifically interested in the ways that access is applied to digital media and the internet. Access has been discussed often and at length with regards to libraries, museums, archives, and other traditional information centers, yet it has not been addressed in detail within discussions of Shakespearean performance institutions.[11] Theaters and festivals tend to be left outside the purview of discussions regarding cultural institutions and access, as these discussions often focus on how access to information and cultural artifacts is restricted. These discussions tend to link access to issues of gatekeeping, as they theorize the role cultural institutions play in granting audiences access to cultural materials and artifacts.[12] However, traditional gatekeeping theories usually adopt a model similar to Horkheimer and Adorno's "hypodermic" model of culture, focusing on a one-way model of access where information is delivered from media outlets to audiences

[11] For more on how audiences use access as a means of appropriating the digital content of cultural institutions, see Feinberg (2011); on the benefits of open access models of scholarly publication, see Fitzpatrick (2012); for a look at the present and near future of access, see Hosek (2008); and for discussions of access for cultural institutions (particularly libraries) in an attention economy, see Lanham (2008).

[12] For a brief history of gatekeeping and discussions of its current usage in journalism, see Shoemaker and Vos (2009). For an in-depth study of the history and use of the term 'gatekeeping' among different disciplines, see Barzilai-Nahon (2009).

([1987] 2002). These gatekeeping models do not account for other important factors that influence the process of access, such as the technologies actually used to provide that access. In order to account for technologies and other factors that shape access, we have to move beyond traditional notions of gatekeeping.

Informatics scholar Karine Barzilai-Nahon's theory of "network gatekeeping" offers a model for such an approach, as she redefines gatekeeping as "a dynamic and contextual interpretation of gatekeeping referring to gatekeepers as stakeholders who change their gatekeeping roles depending on the stakeholder with whom they interact and/or the context in which they are situated" (2008, 1494). Barzilai-Nahon's theory recognizes that any study of access and gatekeeping must acknowledge that the role gatekeepers play is dynamic in nature, with various stakeholders negotiating access for different audiences. Network gatekeeping offers a model for understanding the fluid nature of access, accounting for the changing roles and expectations for audiences and institutions that seek to gain access and provide it. As we begin to think of access as a two-way street between audiences and institutions, we can see that the institution's role in facilitating access is not fixed, and that audiences can be influential in the process as well. The role of gatekeeper is never stable, and as institutions continue to adopt digital media into their outreach practices, the fluidity of gatekeeping roles becomes more apparent. Network gatekeeping theory takes an important step forward by recognizing gatekeeping as a dynamic process influenced by several parties and factors. However, as a theory it focuses more on the influence that networks between institutions and audiences have on the process of access than it does the digital media used to create and maintain those networks.

Barzilai-Nahon's theory begins to intertwine the concepts of gatekeeping and access, and in doing so it accounts for the active roles audiences and institutions play in defining access, yet with the proliferation of digital media in all facets of our lives, network gatekeeping theory does not account for the role that those media play in shaping access in any sort of depth. For as technological access has become a given for many audiences, we now see access appear in conjunction with words and phrases such as 'open,' 'universal,' and 'behind-the-scenes.' Access is often paired with other concepts such as participation and creativity as Rumbold has discussed, and these pairings emphasize the positive aspects of digital media and what they can offer for digital audiences, particularly for the audiences of the four Shakespearean performance institutions I discuss in this project (2010, 324).[13] These reappropriations of access and associations with the positive rhetoric regarding the potential of digital media have in essence shifted the connotation of access from gatekeeping to gate-opening. While this shift represents what many institutions and audiences see as the perceived potential of digital media and their ability to change the contexts and expectations through which access occurs, this shift either relies on the notion that access is still a binary—access is either opened or closed—or that digital media do nothing but provide gateways through which access occurs. Such approaches to digital media and access usually assume *a priori* that new technologies passively offer open access, and that this access is always beneficial for all involved.

[13] Other examples of this are Pierre Lévy's (1997) concept of collective intelligence, which has led to much of the current thinking on concepts like 'crowdsourcing,' and to a lesser extent Henry Jenkins's (2007) definition of participatory culture.

These approaches to access are often held by the content-driven notions of access I mentioned above, and therefore they fail to recognize the need to understand access as a spectrum influenced by several factors, especially the technologies used to provide such access. These approaches also do not address the fact that a proliferation of content is not synonymous with an increase in access. As Richard Burt has argued, we need to recognize "that Shakespeare's reproduction in mass culture is not identical with greater public access, whether or not the form Shakespeare takes in a given medium or subgenre is thought to be intelligent or stupid" (2002, 5). We cannot focus solely on the amount of Shakespearean content available for online audiences at the expense of understanding and theorizing how that content is accessed by audiences. For example, we may have more filmed versions of Shakespearean stage performances available now than we have had access to at any time in the past, but if those performances are accessible only through technologies that mimic traditional notions of access (e.g. expensive paywalls or programs and websites with specific technological requirements) then no significant shift in access has occurred. Since these models of access are common practices for numerous businesses and institutions online (Shakespearean and otherwise), we cannot simply assume that digital media provide access that is automatically free, open, or universal. To account for how digital media influence the process of access, we have to move beyond traditional conceptions of access and gatekeeping while addressing the influence digital media have on that process.

Bruno Latour's actor-network-theory offers a model for considering the effects digital technologies have on the dynamic nature of access (2005, 9). Instead of focusing solely on human actants (in the context of this chapter audiences and institutions), actor-

network-theory also accounts for the influence of non-human actants, such as technology and media. This is not necessarily to say that technologies, media, or objects have their own agency within the scope of actor-network-theory, but that they do exert influence on the interactions and relationships of the actants within those networks. Latour's theory shifts us away from a focus on one-directional relationships and towards a consideration of the complex and ever-evolving negotiations between audiences, institutions, and the technologies and media they use. Using actor-network-theory, we can theorize how digital media operate as mediators, shaping the interactions between audiences and institutions in different ways. In the remainder of this chapter, I will focus on how three specific social media sites—Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest—serve as mediators between these four Shakespearean performance institutions and their audiences to highlight the influence of digital media on the process of access.

Social Media and Access

As I discussed above, the institutional website offers a space of control for the institution, allowing them to post the content they want to share and frame their identities in specific ways. However, though Shakespearean theaters and festivals may want their websites, or at least certain aspects of their sites, to become spaces of deep institution-audience engagement, the specter of institutional control may very well deter their audiences from engaging with the institutions in these online space. For instance, on the RSC's Whispers from the Wings blog, cast and crew from current productions write posts about their experiences during the rehearsal and performance process. Each post on the blog has the option for users to provide responses to the post, though the posts have

generated little response from users on the site. For the posts from 2013, the most comments on a post was 6 (which only happened once), while the majority of the posts had no user comments at all. One reason for this might be the process for commenting on a blog. A user is asked to provide their name with their comment (including their email address is optional), complete a Captcha to confirm they are personally writing the post, and also agree to the following statement: "We reserve the right not to publish your comments, and please note that any contribution you make is subject to our website terms of use."[14] While this language is in place to deter users from flaming, spamming, or posting inappropriate or negative comments, it can also make users feel that their comments are being monitored in such a way that their responses to blog posts must be positive in nature. Looking through the responses reveals that this may be the case, as most are short and overwhelmingly positive in nature, whether indicating excitement about a performance, wishing luck to the cast and crew, or commenting on the experience of seeing a live performance at the RSC.

Though I do think this institutional control over the user activity on theater and festival websites is a factor in the low amount of comments and interaction in these spaces, the fact is that these websites are not designed around creating an interactive user experience and engaging online audiences. So while portions of these sites may be designed with the intent of fostering institution-audience interaction, the fact is that their audiences do not see these websites as places designed primarily for such engagement.

[14] This statement can be found on the bottom of every blog post on the Whispers from the Wings blog. Similar language can be found accompanying individual posts on the Globe's Adopt an Actor section of their site. While the OSF's blog and Stratford's Wordpress site do not explicitly include such language, the same set of guidelines seem to be implicitly guiding user activity on these sites.

Institutional websites are competing for their audiences' attention, and while they attract audiences interested in theaters and festivals to their sites, these websites are not conducive to deeper levels of engagement. This does not mean that these institutions are unable to generate these types of engagement or interaction with their audiences, but it does mean that to do so, they have to enter into online spaces where such engagement already occurs. Hence, Shakespearean theaters and festivals are finding it necessary to establish presences on certain social media sites, particularly Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. For these institutions, it makes sense to enter into these spaces, as they are already sites of heavy user activity among their audiences. So by creating and establishing various presences on these different sites, theaters and festivals gain a foothold with their online audiences in these spaces that their own websites do not seem to generate.

Table 1: Size of Shakespearean Performance Institutions' Digital Audiences as of May 29th, 2013

Institution	Facebook	Twitter	Pinterest
Oregon Shakespeare Festival	30,850	5,699	436
Royal Shakespeare Company	41,337	89,974	434
Shakespeare's Globe	59,734	49,091	601
Stratford Festival	42,128	12,903	330

Table 2: Size of Shakespearean Performance Institutions' Digital Audiences as of February 18th, 2014

Institution	Facebook	Twitter	Pinterest
Oregon Shakespeare Festival	34,301	6,987	539
Royal Shakespeare Company	51,823	136, 978	716
Shakespeare's Globe	92,929	72,780	1,140
Stratford Festival	48,921	14,930	453

Table 3: Size of Shakespearean Performance Institutions' Digital Audiences as of December 29th, 2015

Institution	Facebook	Twitter	Pinterest
Oregon Shakespeare Festival	47,705	12,057	1,070
Royal Shakespeare Company	96,032	314,534	798
Shakespeare's Globe	147,893	134,818	2,196
Stratford Festival	90,934	20,235	594

These institutions are gaining a foothold in the attention economy by establishing presences on social media and going to where their audiences are already active. Instead of attempting to attract their audiences' attention to their individual sites, theaters and festivals utilize the fact that their audiences are already in these spaces. As institutions move onto social media sites, they have to renegotiate their expectations and come to terms with the fact that they are not able to exert the same type of control on social media sites that they are able to on their institutional websites. As Shakespearean theaters and festivals enter into these spaces, they exchange some of their control over content in order to tap into a larger online audience base and engage with their audiences to more

effectively compete in the attention economy. In exchange for doing so, theaters and festivals gain access to an audience base that is dynamic and continually growing, as is evidenced by the three tables above. Though social media provide institutions with the means to engage with their online audiences, the size of those audiences can fluctuate and are not necessarily consistent across different sites. For example, between May 2013 and December 2015, the audiences for each institution grew on each site, but the two largest jumps occurred for the Globe on Facebook (with over 88,000 new followers) and the RSC on Twitter (with over 224,500 new followers). Both institutions experienced more modest growth on other sites, and while the audiences for both the OSF and Stratford grew as well—at a comparatively smaller rate—that smaller growth may be due to the fact that their target audiences are more localized than the Globe's or the RSC's. For all four theaters and festivals though, social media sites provide a means of tapping into significant online audiences.

However, to compete for their audiences' attention in these spaces requires more than just creating an account on a site or posting content. Institutions looking to grant their audiences access to content in these spaces must do so effectively, and this means that they must be aware of the affordances and limitations not only of the general technology they are using (e.g. social media) but also of the individual platforms they provide access through (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest) (Norman 2002, 9). For while there are elements that link these social media together under a common banner, acceptable and effective interactions on each site are defined by a different set of technological affordances. If theaters and festivals want to engage with their audiences through social media, it is imperative they understand how to effectively interact with

them in these online spaces. It is the affordances and limitations of these technologies that shape how access occurs on these sites in varying ways, and by understanding the affordances of these social media and their effects on the process of access, we can see just how social media operate as mediators between institutions and their online audiences.

A quick look at Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest reveals some elements common among the three sites. As examples of what danah boyd and Nicole Ellison call social network sites, all three allow users to establish their own personal networks, of which they are the center (2007, 211). All three sites rely on a type of feed on the main page of the site that present users with content and posts from other members of their networks. Content updates come in the form of text, images, videos, and hyperlinks to external content, and each site makes it simple for users to share content and posts with others. Those who do not look closely at each site may assume that they are simply three versions of the same thing, but in doing so they fail to understand the distinct differences between how the sites work. Though each site is an example of social media, they use separate sets of technological constraints that shape how users create their own social networks on the site. Facebook requires users to friend others they want in their network, and then other users must accept the friend request to be added to the network. On Twitter, users can follow other users without needing permission, and they can also be followed by others without reciprocation. Pinterest operates under a logic similar to that of Twitter, though users are also able to follow an individual board of a user, without having to follow the actual user on the site. The differences between the three sites are not limited to how users create their networks on each site. All three sites have content

feeds for their users, but Facebook organizes that content based on an algorithm, while Twitter and Pinterest present posts chronologically.[15]

My goal here is not to chart an exhaustive list of the differences between these three social media sites, but instead to highlight that each site operates under its own logic for creating networks and delivering content among those networks based on its particular affordances and limitations. As Shakespearean theaters and festivals have established their presences on these different sites, they have had to negotiate with the technological affordances of each one. On Facebook, each institution is able to make a public page that users can choose to receive updates from, while on Twitter and Pinterest the institutions are able to establish public accounts that users can follow in their feeds. However, once they become part of users' networks, institutions still have to utilize the technology effectively to stay engaged with their online followers. Since users have content delivered chronologically on Twitter and Pinterest, institutions that post frequently are more likely to gain greater exposure with their online audiences. However, the Edgerank algorithm on Facebook presents posts to users based in part on their popularity, so in a sense on Facebook quality outweighs quantity when posting for exposure with users on the site. As theaters and festivals choose what content they want to share on each site, they have to take into account how the media they use delivers that content to their online audiences in order to effectively facilitate access to content on

[15] Edgerank is an algorithm that uses three different aspects—affinity, weight, and time decay—to determine what posts a user sees and in what order. Though Edgerank provides institutions with insight on how their audience interact with their content, the audiences themselves are often less aware of the algorithms that determine what updates they see and in what order. For a more detailed breakdown of the Edgerank algorithm, see Applum (2014). For more on the news feed, see Taylor (2012).

these sites.

Social media also influence how institutions structure access to their content in another important way: the ease and speed of spreading content online. Unlike institutional websites where content is embedded in the site, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest all facilitate easy and straightforward methods for users to share content from other users among their own individual networks. This ease of sharing means that institutional content can quickly move away from the institution's site and therefore the institution's control, and so each institution has to be aware of how content spreads on these sites and adjust their interactions accordingly. Pinterest is actually designed as a social media site that emphasizes sharing content as its primary function. To pin any sort of content to the site, there must be an image to feature in the post, and the users' Pinterest feed itself emphasizes the images over the text. While each pin is usually

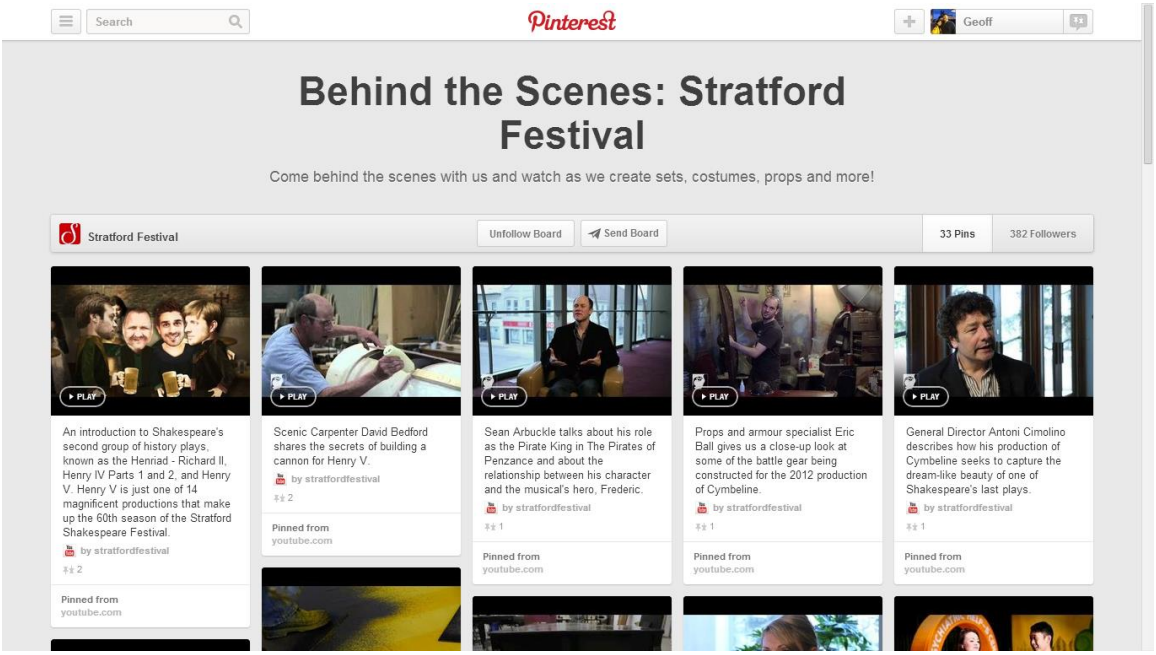

Figure 1. Screenshot of the Stratford Festival's Pinterest page

accompanied by some written text as well, the text is often secondary to the image. Pins can be spread very quickly between users and through Pinterest's recommend pins, which are provided to users based on their pins' content. A user may pin many things about Shakespeare to their own accounts that can come from any number of users on the site, so institutions have to account for this and craft posts that include important information with the pin. For example, a recent Stratford Festival pin from their upcoming 2014 season production of *Antony and Cleopatra* features a picture of the two actors playing Antony and Cleopatra in costume. Embedded at the bottom of the image is the names of the two actors. In the text accompanying the image, users are provided numerous pieces of information: the name of the play, the director, the dates and theater for the production, and a summary of the play. By including all this information in the pin, Stratford crafts their content in a way that highlights the image and information they hope will be spread by users throughout the site.

Compared to the image heavy focus of Pinterest, Facebook provides more of a balance between text and images in their posts. The site also facilitates simple methods of sharing content among users' networks, though unlike on Pinterest, the posts shared by Facebook users must be posted by someone in their own network before they may share it with others. However, the content of a post also influences whether the audience may respond to a post, and how that post may then be received and shared by other users. While Facebook is more conducive to users responding directly to content shared on the site, given the sheer amount of information that comes through a user's news feed on Facebook, if theaters and festivals want to attract their audiences' attention and have them engage with institutional content, their posts must be able to stand out. The most

popular method for doing so is to include an image or video with every update. For example, during the month of February 2014 (which marked the start of their 2014 season), of the over 50 status updates shared by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival on their Facebook page, four did not have an image or video embedded in the post. While the individual posts varied in terms of the responses they received on the site, some receiving numerous likes and comments while others less so, the inclusion of images and videos make these posts more likely to stand out among the numerous other posts individual users will see in their personal feeds and facilitate the audience's engagement with their content. Much like Stratford did with their post on Pinterest, the OSF structures the content shared with audiences on the site to grab their attention in hopes of having them engage with it.

Figure 2. Facebook posts from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival

Twitter presents a different type of challenge for Shakespearean theaters and festivals than either Pinterest or Facebook, and creating effective content on the site requires both knowledge of Twitter's technological affordances and its common user

practices. While Twitter posts can and do include images and videos in their posts, this content was, until recently, not featured as prominently in posts.[16] Twitter posts that included images or videos appeared in the user's feed with cropped images, video thumbnails, or hyperlinks to other pages containing the content. While this content may have caught a user's eye while scrolling through their feed, institutions had to rely more on the text of their posts to grasp the user's attention. However, a successful post on Twitter did not just fit in the site's limitation of 140 characters. While the limitations of the site circumscribe how Twitter enables content to be disseminated to users, it is the audience of users that regulates what the accepted guidelines and practices are for participating within the community of Twitter. As Communications scholar Nancy Baym states, "Community norms of practice are displayed, reinforced, negotiated, and taught through member's shared behaviors," and so while institutions can share content with their audiences on the site, to do so effectively means that they have to participate in a way that the user community finds meaningful (2010, 80). When institutions are aware of the common user practices on social media sites like Twitter (and Pinterest and Facebook), they are able to engage their audiences in these online spaces and not simply deliver content to them. Examples of these practices are evident in posts shared through the Stratford Festival's Twitter account. Stratford is able to participate on the site by adopting common practices such as following their own followers on the site, replying to posts from their followers publicly, retweeting what those followers have posted about

[16] Twitter has continued to make changes to how images and videos are presented in tweets to better feature such content in users' feeds. For more, see Cooper (2013), Elahi (2013), and Maher (2013).

Stratford for a larger audience, and crafting engaging updates for their followers using 140 characters or less.

It is important to note here that the specific affordances and limitations of Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest and the common user practices that I have discussed above are by no means fixed. Users of any of these or the numerous other social media sites available online know that change is the only constant. The technological constraints of these sites are continually undergoing change, and the user community then responds by incorporating these new changes into the common user practices of each site. Shakespearean theaters and festivals using social media to facilitate access for their audiences have to be able to adjust to the ways the technologies they use will continue to change, and how those changes will mediate their interactions in new ways. Whereas institutions may currently operate using a specific set of practices to provide audiences access by sharing institutional materials on these sites, future changes made to any of these sites can drastically alter the methods for sharing and distributing content. Also,

Figure 3. Tweets from the Stratford Festival's Twitter feed

though there may be overlap in the institutions' audiences on these three sites, they cannot assume a singular notion of the audience-as-users; they must be able to interact with the individual audiences on each site, while also being aware of the fact that newer sites for engagement may appear and take the place of older ones (van Dijck 2009, 54). I have chosen to focus on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, but these are only three of a number of popular social media sites active and available for different audiences with their own sets of interests. Thus, to actively engage and maintain audience interest through social media, Shakespearean theaters and festivals must continually adapt to the new ways that social media influence the process of access, while also being aware of and ready to work with newer social media and user trends.

As social media sites offer institutions new avenues to provide access to and engage their online audiences, they also shift the role audiences play in shaping access. As is evident above, users exert considerable influence by establishing and maintaining the common practices of a given site, as well as determining the sites for offering such access. Shakespearean theaters and festivals are finding it necessary to engage their audiences online, and so they are going to the sites on which their audiences are already active, instead of hoping that their audiences will always come to their institutional websites. This change emphasizes the role audiences can and do play in determining sites of access, as they are able to directly influence the sites through which access occurs. Because these theaters and festivals are looking to remain relevant with their online audiences, they have to account for the fact that audiences do not simply want a content delivery system, but a more engaged and interactive experience with institutions and their online content. Digital media, and social media in particular, have helped "to shift

audience expectations creating a demand for information and experiences that extend beyond the theatre building and the moment of performance" (Carson 2008, 274). It is the audience's expectations that determine where institutions place their time and effort in using digital media to generate content; the fact that these theaters and festivals have established active presences on these social media sites indicates a shift away from the idea that audiences are only passive entities waiting to receive content. Social media and other digital media do not operate only as mediators for shaping content in the process of access; they are also allowing audiences to exert influence on the process by determining the sites and defining the practices institutions have to use when engaging with their audiences on these sites.

Performing Relevance

In the final section of this chapter, I want to return the questions I introduced earlier: what exactly is it that Shakespearean performance institutions provide access to, and how do social media help them to establish and maintain their relevance with digital audiences? For while social media may represent a middle ground between institutions and audiences where institutions lose some control over their content, the fact is that these institutions gain quite a bit more by entering into these spaces. Through the practices outlined above, we can see that Shakespearean theaters and festivals show how, as Rumbold states, "Embracing the positive discourse of the Internet—interactivity, participation, creativity—can alter a cultural organization's relationship to its own value" (2010, 314). As they compete in an attention economy to maintain their relevance with their online audiences, these four institutions are not able to rely on audiences coming to

their own websites, and so they have had to fundamentally reconsider their methods for audience outreach. However, since these are institutions that specialize in live Shakespearean performance and rely on audiences physically attending those performances, they have to find a balance between providing audiences access to engaging performance materials online and enticing audiences to visit the theater or festival and attend those live performances. If institutions offer too little content online, they risk losing the audiences' attention and engagement with the institution and possibly becoming irrelevant in these online spaces; if they offer access too much content, their audiences may not see the need to actually visit the theater or festival and see the performance live. This tightrope is one that Shakespearean theaters and festivals must negotiate more and more as they position themselves to remain relevant with online audiences in an attention economy.

One move that Shakespearean theaters and festivals have made to engage their online audiences is to open up the rehearsal process and grant more behind-the-scenes access. The rehearsal process has traditionally been closed off to audiences, particularly in western theater, and to share images and video clips from the rehearsal process with audiences represents a break from tradition (Holland 2009, 258). So when the Globe shares an interview with Gemma Arterton on her performance in the Globe's 2014 run of *The Duchess of Malfi*, or the OSF posts images of the actors rehearsing on set for their 2014 production of *Comedy of Errors*, they offer the audience the chance to access the rehearsal process by peeking behind the curtains during the weeks leading up to the

performances.[17] In providing this access, they are simultaneously keeping their online audiences engaged while generating interest in these and other upcoming performances. Both institutions still maintain control over what they provide access to and to what extent, but they, as well as the RSC and Stratford, recognize the benefits of opening up access to keep their audiences interested and invested in their current and upcoming productions throughout a theatrical season, as well as their overall institutional missions. While the move to open up behind-the-scenes access to the rehearsal process is a recent development for Shakespearean theaters and festivals, it also represents a moment where these institutions are adopting long standing marketing practices used by film and television to engage their audiences. Film and television have long understood the effectiveness of sharing behind-the-scenes content throughout the rehearsal process leading up to the release of a film or show to build the audience's interest and keep them engaged until the actual release. In recent years, these practices common to film and television have become more prominent in the practices of theaters and festivals to the point where it has become standard practice to create film trailers for both individual productions and entire theatrical seasons. Though in some ways theaters are catching up to film and television by adopting practices to engage their audiences throughout the rehearsal process, they are also participating in a longer trend of remediating the practices of other media into their own (Bolter and Grusin 2000, 55).

However, even as they remediate these practices from other media, theaters and festivals are also changing the nature of the live performance event itself. In *Theatre*

[17] The Arterton interviews can be found on the Globe's Adopt an Actor site. The OSF images have been shared through their public Facebook page.

Audiences, Susan Bennett establishes the two frames that define the theatrical audience as the outer frame, containing the "cultural elements which create and inform the theatrical event," and the inner frame, containing "the dramatic production in a particular playing space" (2003, 139). Bennett argues that it is at the intersection of these two frames—the meeting between these cultural elements and the live dramatic production—that a particular theatrical experience occurs for the audience. Social media offer the potential to extend the outer frame of the theatrical event, providing audiences access to behind-the-scenes content, marketing materials, and personal and professional reviews, so that while the audience may come together in a physical space for a live performance, their engagement with the performance can long precede them stepping through the theater doors, and continue long after they leave the theater at the end of the performance. Institutions must also be aware that while social media and other digital media can extend the outer frame of a theatrical event, the reach of that extension is not infinite or global. As theaters and festivals utilize social media to create new avenues for audience access, they "expand the territory of a production, rather than de-territorialize it" (Li Lan 2003, 52).[18] So even as these institutions work to target both a local and global audience, social media are more likely to help them expand the territory of both a particular production and the institution's audience, though that territory will still have boundaries. By expanding more and more into social media and other online spaces, these institutions

[18] Li Lan also asks, "Yet as photographs, illustrations, reviews, interviews, cast lists, and even in some cases video clips are mounted on the web, can we continue to think of a performance event as (only) occupying a local geographical and cultural space, when its audience community (that defines it as a performance) is not 'naturally' confined to its theatre audience, but artificially extended to everywhere else (and no specific place) as well, 'globalized', as we call it?" (2003, 48).

and their audiences also generate a wealth of content that can help institutions and performance scholars alike to reconstruct what Margaret Jane Kidnie refers to as the "bombsite" of performance (2008, 108).

For Shakespearean theaters and festivals, social media are a means of facilitating audience engagement with the institutions, their performances, and their overall missions to establish and maintain their relevance with online audiences. Though using social media to provide audiences access to institutional content means that theaters and festival may have to relinquish some of the control over their content and materials, by moving into these online spaces they gain the ability to engage with audiences more directly and on a larger scale than they have been able to in the past. As institutions continue to expand their presence in these and other online spaces throughout the use of digital media, they need to account for how audiences are able to influence the sites of access, and address what their institutional goals actually are when it comes to digital access. If theaters and festivals hope to engage their online audiences through social media in meaningful ways, they cannot rely on traditional notions of access when structuring their methods for digital outreach. When studying these and other online interactions between audience and institutions, we as scholars must also be able to understand the factors that influence access, and the ways that the media themselves can become mediators in the interactions between Shakespearean performance institutions and their audiences. We must also continue to be aware that the affordances and limitations of these technologies are continually changing, and that while the Globe, the OSF, the RSC, and Stratford are cultivating their presences on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, newer technologies and social media may supplant the popularity or usefulness of these

sites in the future. Above all, institutions and scholars both need to be aware that access is a complex process continually shaped and influenced by technologies, institutions, and audiences alike, and not simply a one-way street for mass media institutions to deliver content to passive audiences.

Chapter Three: Now and Then: Marketing Shakespearean Performance Through Social Media

Once viewed as a secondary, and often optional, form of outreach, Shakespearean performance institutions are now finding digital media essential to their marketing strategies. As Anita Gaffney, Executive Director for the Stratford Festival states, maintaining a digital presence is "table stakes. It's what you do to survive. It's not what you do to exponentially grow your business. If we didn't have a social media presence, or if we didn't have a website, we'd be extinct" (2013). Mallory Pierce, Director of Marketing and Communications for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, shares a similar sentiment, stating that "If you don't have a website, you don't really exist in a marketing sense" (2013). Both Gaffney and Pierce's comments reveal an anxiety regarding the need to market through digital media, framing this need in terms of survival and extinction. It has become a necessity for theaters and festivals to adapt to this new world of marketing by establishing and cultivating presences among numerous digital media. Among these various platforms, social media have the potential to become more than just the means for these institutions to stay afloat competitively; they offer the chance for theaters and festivals to build their relevance with new audiences. To do so, they must compete within the attention economy of social media, where relevance is gained not just through attracting the audience's attention, but through sustaining it. If institutions cannot sustain their audiences' attention on their work, they will find themselves failing to compete in the attention economy, and facing the chance of going extinct for their audiences on social media.

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Stratford Festival all strive to target different geographical audiences through social media, but rely on similar platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest) and strategies for doing so. In building their social media outreach, they tend to imagine the composition of their target audiences in similar ways: the OSF targets audiences in the 25-45 age range, Stratford targets a slightly older age range of 35-50, whereas the Globe broadly targets everyone.[19] Considering that in 2014, 71% of all online adults used Facebook, 23% used Twitter, and 28% used Pinterest, these three social media sites offer access to the target audiences each institution hopes to engage with online.[20] Even as they designate what audiences they target through these sites, to some extent theaters and festivals must work with the fact that even though social media provide "the opportunity to interact with large and diverse audiences—dozens, hundreds, thousands, and sometimes even millions of people," there is no guarantee as to the actual size or composition of their audiences, nor is there a sure way to engage all their online audiences in meaningful interactions (Litt 2012, 332). Also, as Katherine Rowe has discussed, using digital media to engage audiences involves trade-offs between extensibility and audience fragmentation (2010, 66). The more an institution fragments its online outreach, the less effective it may become, as with the RSC's Tumblr account designed to market the new Other Place theatre. The space has failed to generate much, if

[19] Ridenour (2013), Gaffney (2013), and Petty (2013) interviews. I assume that the RSC follows a similar approach, but attempts to interview the RSC and learn more about their digital marketing strategies were refused. I would note that all four institutions also seek to target younger audiences online as well, though this will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.

[20] For more, see Duggan et al. (2014).

any, interest or attention among the RSC's online audience, and as of July 2015, no new content or updates have been posted in over a year. Though social media can connect theaters and festivals with new audiences, institutions must seek to balance the quantity of their online presences with quality forms of outreach to engage online audiences.

In order to achieve their goals by reaching as much of their online audiences as possible across Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, Shakespearean theaters and festivals have turned to two specific strategies: newness and nostalgia. By using social media as platforms for engaging their audiences, theaters and festivals hope to take advantage of their intrinsic newness, particularly the spreadable, real-time nature of these technologies, as part of their marketing strategies. To do so, they use social media to share content that is often nostalgic in nature to attract their audiences' attention to their work, from images and videos from or about old productions to posts that highlight the history and tradition of both the individual institutions and Shakespeare. As they attempt to utilize the newness of social media as a means for sharing nostalgic content, there is a tension that arises, one that results from how and where cultural value becomes located within the digital outreach of theaters and festivals. Given their identities as institutions that provide access to Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance, should they rely on the lure of the past to keep their audiences' attention? Or has the rise of digital technologies led to the newness of social media becoming the means of attracting and maintaining audiences' attention on their institutional work? Throughout this chapter I will explore how Shakespearean performance institutions attempt to use newness and nostalgia in their social media outreach, the tension that arises from those attempts, and what that tension

reveals regarding how these institutions perform their cultural value through social media.

Newness as Tactic

For Shakespearean theaters and festivals, establishing presences on social media means first recognizing their niche status on these sites. While they have sizeable audiences following their accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, these audiences often pale in comparison to some of the larger audiences that other organizations and media command on these sites. The audience of over 130,000 that the Globe has on Facebook, for example, seems miniscule in comparison to Disneyland's audience of over 17 million on the site, or the over 3.47 million Twitter followers of AMC's *The Walking Dead*, or even Marvel's Pinterest audience of over 765,000.[21] The relatively smaller audiences that Shakespearean performance institutions have on social media may seem at first to be a disadvantage compared to the massive audiences of other media or organizations, but actually smaller audiences can allow institutions to craft their digital outreach in more focused ways, something that is not always possible when trying to reach over 17 million people through Facebook. However, their niche status on social media sites means that they are not in a position that necessarily allows them to establish and implement new digital marketing strategies of their own. In many ways, theaters and festivals are playing catch-up with their social media marketing as they work to adapt their traditional marketing strategies developed on older media or models to social media.

[21] See audience growth charts in chapter 1 for more information on the size of each institution's online audience on different social media sites.

As they do so, these institutions also adapt successful social media practices into these marketing strategies, whether they are practices used by other institutions, by other media, or by their audiences of users.

From their subordinate position on social media sites, theaters and festivals have to determine the best methods for engaging their audiences online. Since they are working to develop ways to strengthen their audience outreach, these institutions look to popular or successful techniques and approaches that other institutions and media have implemented. As a result, Shakespearean theaters and festivals have had to rely on what Michel de Certeau refers to as tactics to compete in these spaces: "The space of the tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power" (1984, 37). In this case, theaters and festivals are appropriating strategies employed by other institutions and media into their digital marketing. They follow in the vein of de Certeau's readers-as-poachers, appropriating or reappropriating by "'making something similar' to what one is, making it one's own" (1984, 166).[22] Theaters and festivals are appropriating these newer strategies and fitting them into older marketing techniques they have found to be successful in the past. Such approaches aim to take advantage of the newness of social media to add value to the content they share online with their audiences. Specifically, institutions hope that the spreadability of social media, as well as their nature to operate in real-time, will serve to

[22] Sujata Iyengar and Christy Desmet have recently discussed the proliferation of definitions and approaches for the study of both adaptation and appropriation, and throughout this project I seek to move the discussion of Shakespearean appropriation beyond considerations of textual relationships to address users and practices. For more on the debates over the terms adaptation and appropriation in Shakespeare studies, see Iyengar and Desmet (2015).

attract and sustain their audiences' attention in their work.[23] These aspects help institutions to move content to new audiences and feature it in the real-time newsfeeds or timelines of their audiences on these sites, which are critical approaches to sustaining attention through their social media presences. The spreadability of content is the *modus operandi* of social media, and as Scott Lash and Celia Lury have argued, within the context of a global culture industry, it is through the movement of content that value is added.[24] The mobility of content is one of the key benefits for Shakespearean theaters and festivals to use social media to attract audiences' attention to their content online. The more content is circulated by their audiences among different social networks, the more audiences are exposed to institutions' work, which also aids in that content featuring more prominently on users' timelines and newsfeeds among the different sites.

To rely on the newness of social media alone though presents a challenge, especially as theaters and festivals rely on older marketing strategies in these online spaces. Spreadability and real-time can help to attract audiences' attention to content, but these aspects alone will not serve to sustain the audiences' attention on institutions and their work. The nature of the content institutions share with their audiences through social media is just as important as how they share that content if they desire to remain

[23] For more on spreadable media, see Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2013). For more on real-time, see Lovink (2011).

[24] Lash and Lury argue that "Products no longer circulate as identical objects, already fixed, static and discrete, determined by the intentions of their producers. Instead, cultural entities spin out of the control of their makers: in their circulation they move and change through transposition and translation, transformation and transmogrification. In this culture of circulation (Lee and LiPuma 2002), cultural entities take on a dynamic of their own; *in this movement*, value is added. In global culture industry, products move as much through accident as through design, as much by virtue of their unintended consequences as through planned design or intention" (2007, 4-5).

competitive in the attention economy. As they strive to utilize the newness of social media in their marketing strategies, theaters and festivals continue to rely on their more traditional marketing strategies as well, strategies that rely heavily on the use of nostalgia to generate value in their work. In particular, they pull on nostalgia as defined by Susan Bennett: "nostalgia is constituted as a longing for certain qualities and attributes in lived experience that we have apparently lost, at the same time as it indicates our inability to produce parallel qualities and attributes which would satisfy the particularities of the lived experience in the present" (1996, 5). The past work of theaters and festivals offers fertile ground for nostalgia, and so it is common to see content on the social media accounts of institutions that features their past productions and events. Sometimes the use of nostalgia fits with the tactic that theaters and festivals are adapting into their marketing techniques, such as with their usage of the hashtag #ThrowbackThursday. #ThrowbackThursday is a common user practice on Twitter (and to a lesser extent on Facebook) where users share an older image or update with their personal networks to draw attention to it. The practice is itself nostalgic in nature, but for theaters and festivals it provides a synergistic opportunity to showcase content regarding their past work as a means of drawing attention to current productions. The Stratford Festival often participates in #ThrowbackThursday, sharing images of their current actors in previous performances to highlight their current productions or juxtaposing scenes from past and current performances to highlight their history and traditions of performance.

Figure 4. A Stratford Festival tweet using the #ThrowbackThursday hashtag

Figure 5. A Stratford Festival tweet juxtaposing past and current production images

Other times nostalgia is focused less on the institutions' work and more on their audiences' experiences. An example of this approach occurred in a Facebook update the RSC posted on their account in June 2014. The update asked a simple question: "What

are your favourite Stratford summertime memories?" The question was accompanied by the hashtag #RSCSummer, and received 483 likes, 116 user comments, and 52 shares. Though it is not uncommon for a post to receive over 100 likes, the number of likes, comments, and shares this post received was a rare occurrence on the RSC's Facebook account. Like the #ThrowbackThursday posts, the #RSCSummer post drew the audience's attention to the past in order to generate a dialogue regarding the audience's shared value of Stratford-upon-Avon and the RSC. The success that this post created in terms of audience feedback came from the open-ended question it asked, as well as the numerous ways the question could be interpreted by the RSC's online audience, rather than focusing on a particular performance or event. Even though the post generated an

Figure 6. The RSC's #RSCSummer post

unusual amount of user feedback, the attention it attracted was only momentary, and as the post moved farther into the past on the RSC's timeline, the less attention and

interaction it generated. Both #ThrowbackThursday and the #RSCSummer post utilize a similar logic, locating the value of this content for the audiences in the past, whether that past is the institutions' previous work or the audiences' own experiences. However, in each case, these approaches become examples of tactics adopted by the institutions working to gain their audiences' attention as they coopt common user practices to facilitate their marketing goals. Even though they may succeed in briefly attracting that attention, they do not end up maintaining it. Hashtags generate content in posts or updates that will appear within users' newsfeeds or timelines for a short time, but then they will fall farther down those newsfeeds or timelines and users' attention will be attracted to something else. When theaters and festivals adopt such tactics, they hope to take advantage of the newness of social media in the form of common user practices, but such forms of outreach tend to operate mainly as digital analogues of traditional print marketing strategies that rely on images from past and upcoming productions to draw the attention of potential audiences to the current season's offerings.

The use of such tactics gives rise to the tension between newness and nostalgia within the social media outreach of Shakespearean performance institutions. Their subordinate position within the attention economy of social media leads to the appropriation of tactics that have proven successful for engaging audiences on social media, whether that comes in the form of common user practices or institution-audience dialogue. Theaters and festivals try to work older marketing practices to fit within those social media practices, and the result is a clash between the newness of social media and the nostalgia inherent in the more traditional marketing strategies of these institutions. Some of the tension arises from how these institutions try to mold these older strategies

onto media that operate quite differently from print and broadcast media. As W. B. Worthen argues, "While new technologies create the possibility for new kinds of performance, they are, initially at least, imagined within a set of performative behaviors that define…what emerging technologies can mean in performance" (2003, 197). Though Worthen's argument focuses on dramatic performance, his thinking can be applied to the social media marketing strategies used by theaters and festivals. All four institutions have established presences on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest because they want to tap into the potential these new technologies have to engage audiences online. Social media offer these institutions persistent spaces that allow them to craft digital presences that reflect their institutional identities and work. Yet when they enter into these spaces, they often rely on those older strategies that were successful in other media, but do not always translate to digital media, and social media in particular. One reason for this is the real-time nature of digital media; as Geert Lovink notes "Real-time signifies a fundamental shift from the static archive toward 'flow' and the 'river'" (2011, 11). The flow that Lovink discusses shapes how social media maintain users' attention through a continual focus on the present. On Facebook, the Edgerank algorithm discussed in chapter 1 determines what content is featured on a user's newsfeed. On Twitter and Pinterest, users are presented with the most recent posts at the top of their newsfeeds, and so there is always a continual emphasis on these sites for their users' attention to be focused on the present and the now.

Practices that heavily utilize nostalgia in their approach, such as sharing content regarding past work or courting audiences' attention through past experiences, may attract audiences to the social media accounts of an institution, but may not bring

audiences back to them after the initial viewing. Sustaining the audience's attention comes back to theaters and festivals remediating both the marketing practices of other media such as film and television and the affordances of social media into their own marketing practices. As I touched on briefly in chapter 1, it has become a common practice for theaters and festivals to craft theatrical trailers that advertise upcoming productions or seasons, pulling on a long-standing film and television marketing practice. However, unlike film and television, a lot of the digital marketing on social media points audiences to the past of theaters or festivals rather than the present. Film and television take advantage of the real-time nature of social media to keep their audiences' attention focused on the present in order to build interest and hype in what is to come. While theaters and festivals sometimes follow these practices, whether in sharing trailers, behind-the-scenes images for upcoming productions, or interviews with cast or crew, such posts or updates tend to only gain the audiences' attention briefly. Film and television have adapted to the real-time nature of social media, using these spaces to constantly post content in order to keep their audiences' attention. They have tapped into the potential of social media to serve as what James Paul Gee calls affinity spaces, where "people 'bond' first and foremost to an endeavor or interest and secondarily, if at all, to each other" (2007, 98). Affinity spaces are often employed by businesses seeking to engage their audiences with their product or brand in a more sustained way, but they also place the product or brand at the center of audience interactions in the process. Though they can be viewed as places that reward audience loyalty and establish connections over a common interest, they also can be places where the participation of audiences is exploited for businesses' gain. Theaters and festivals are using social media to create

such spaces around their work, though they must be attentive to the expectations and participation of their audiences in the process.

As all four institutions strive to engage their audiences through social media, their reliance on older marketing strategies that utilize nostalgia are not as successful as strategies that focus on the present. Digital media have led to a shift online, and "debating culture clusters around a few sites, often in response to particular authors, issues, and longer-running threads. The more news and faster the turnover of postings, the more users are inclined to leave comments" (Lovink 2011, 51). For theaters and festivals to remain relevant in the attention economy of social media, they have to adapt to these newer models, ones that focus on sharing greater amounts of news and content to keep audiences engaged. Such an approach may seem antithetical to the traditional marketing practices of these institutions, especially because they are location-based and rely on audiences physically visiting the sites to partake of their product: live dramatic performance. While the goal of immediacy, one of the twin logics of remediation outlined by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, is to erase the presence of the medium in order to facilitate the appearance of unmediated access to whatever is being represented, for theaters and festivals this logic serves as a deterrent for sharing access to live performance through social media (2000, 25). These institutions want physical audiences to visit their locations and experience those live performances first-hand.[25] However, theaters and festivals can also embrace the other twin logic of remediation, hypermediacy, which "multiplies the signs of mediation and in this way tries to reproduce

[25] The exception of this has been the rise of the streaming model, which I will discuss in more detail in chapters 3 and 4.

the rich sensorium of human experience" (Bolter and Grusin 2000, 34). They may not provide access to the performances themselves on social media, but sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest allow theaters and festivals to share different types of content that could provide rich user experiences, ones that could serve to not only attract but also sustain their audiences' attention in their current and upcoming work.

To do so would mean relaxing some of the restrictions theaters and festivals have placed on what audiences have access to regarding their work online. As I discussed in chapter 1, one of the ways in which this access could be opened is by allowing audiences behind the scenes of the rehearsal process. Currently, such practices are limited to brief video clips of a scene, photos of the rehearsal process, or interviews with cast or crew about the process. This lack of access into the rehearsal process is often the result of directors who want to safeguard the rehearsal process, not wanting something the audience might see during a rehearsal to stand in for the final product. However, keeping this access largely closed results in it losing much of the power it could have to court and maintain the audience's attention in an upcoming performance or season. As Peter Holland argues regarding access to the rehearsal space facilitated by digital media, "The viewer has both passed through the rehearsal room and yet is ironically denied access both to what happens in rehearsal…and to what happens/will happen in performance itself" (2009, 259). Their current approaches may offer audiences a chance to glimpse the process, but they do not accomplish much to allow audiences access into that rehearsal space to see how performances are shaped over time. If these institutions were to provide more access to the rehearsal process, such moves could serve to highlight their work by showcasing the new rather than relying on images from past performances to stand in as

markers of value for their current and upcoming work. Some of the appeal for audiences in seeing Shakespearean performance comes in part from their nostalgia for the text, but they are also "attracted to the event for its innovation with and renovation of that text" (Bennett 1996, 20). By opening up such access, these institutions could use the lure of their audiences' nostalgia to sustain their attention on upcoming productions by highlighting the new on social media, and not just the old.

Shifting their approaches to access in such ways could lead to new methods for not only gaining but also maintaining their audiences' attention in their current work. These new methods may resemble more closely models that have been successful for film and television, as these media have understood how the real-time of social media can be used to sustain audience attention and interest in their current and upcoming work. These institutions do face risk in changing their approaches, moving away from their strategies that have been successful in the past, particularly their reliance on using nostalgia related to their past work or to Shakespeare. As Bennett has argued, theater is "a conservative art form, and the devotion to Shakespeare a manifestation of that inherent conservatism" and by performing Shakespeare these new productions are bound to the nostalgic tradition invested in those works (1996, 12). This conservatism is not only evident in their use of nostalgic content to market upcoming productions. Indeed, the tension between newness and nostalgia does not just manifest from the use of past content on social media platforms that operate in real-time and the now. Underlying this tension is a deeper one more concerned with the cultural value of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance in an increasingly digital world. This tension originates not from theaters and festivals using older content to market new productions and work, but

from these institutions relying on marketing approaches that continue to target their traditional audiences of the past.

New Audiences, Old Values

Douglas Lanier has argued that "late twentieth-century Shakespearian theatre, festival or not, exists in the shadow of cinema" and to distinguish itself from film, theater "has turned to promote actively its qualities of liveness and theatricality, that is, *presence*" (2002, 157). I would argue that now in the early 21st century theater finds itself as much if not more in the shadow of digital media, and seeks ways to distinguish itself from these newer media. Though they hope to harness presence in the form of liveness and theatricality as aspects of their cultural value, the real-time nature of social media presents a challenge for theaters and festivals, as real-time emphasizes specific aspects of liveness in its continual focus on the new and the present. Therefore, theaters are turning to revaluing the physical aspects of liveness as central to their identities, and using social media to direct their audiences' attention back to the work and experiences that occur at the physical sites. These strategies place the social media outreach of these institutions as a secondary experience meant to complement the audiences' physical experiences at the site, but not to overtake or devalue that experience. However, such an approach serves to devalue an online audience's engagement with an institution, instead privileging audiences that physically visit these sites. It establishes the physical, on-site experience as authentic for audiences, positioning online outreach as secondary to the physical experience. Presence becomes linked to the physical site of performance, and a marker of authenticity that distinguishes the physical from the digital.

By asserting the secondary nature of their social media outreach, theaters and festivals also reveal a tension between the highbrow perception of Shakespeare that has served as the cornerstone of cultural value for their work and the lowbrow perception of the digital media that these institutions are using to reach out to audiences and court their attention. While tension between the perceived highbrow nature of Shakespeare and the lowbrow nature of various media is by no means a new development, what is different is how the media and user practices that theaters and festivals want to assert as secondary to Shakespeare are the very media and practices they use to make such assertions. In some instances, this tension manifests in these institutions' digital outreach subtly or unconsciously. On the Globe's webpage for their Exhibition and Theatre Tours, there is a short YouTube video embedded on the page advertising the tour.[26] The video begins with a young woman dressed in modern clothing listening to an audio tour on an iPod as she sneaks into the Globe Theatre. As she moves into the middle of the Theatre, she removes her headphones and, as music begins, she sees brief moments of carousing, fighting, romancing, and crowning royalty performed by Globe actors in costume. Towards the end of the video, the camera returns to the young woman as she turns around and finds herself in costume. She cracks a smile at this new development as the video cuts to a quick ad for the exhibition and tour, before ending on a screen displaying the Globe Exhibition's URL, Facebook URL, Twitter account, and a hashtag for the tour. Though the video does not make an overt claim regarding the value of Shakespeare and theater over digital media, the bulk of the video focuses on the young woman experiencing the

[26] The video can be found at http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/exhibition/about-the-exhibition-and-theatre-tours.

live, immersive nature of the Globe Theatre and its performers, before finding herself dressed as one of them at the end of the video. The digital technology represented by the iPod and audio tour are quickly replaced by the immersive experience of the theater, and throughout the remainder of the video it is scenes of Shakespearean performance at the Globe that win the young woman's, and the viewer's, attention. The video thus exhibits a desire to value theater over digital media, even as digital media serve as the means for distributing the video to an online audience and the video directs audiences to the Globe's social media accounts.

As the video asserts theater over digital media, it does so through emphasizing the experiences to be had within the physical space of the Globe Theatre. The social media accounts of all four institutions hold numerous examples of this approach, using these

Figure 7. The RSC's *The Roaring Girl* Facebook post

sites to court the attention of those audiences able to visit the physical sites and attend performances first-hand. They will ask their audiences for feedback on performances, as the RSC did when asking audiences for their 2014 production of *The Roaring Girl*, "Did you see the show? Tell us your favourite Moll moment?" They showcase images from audience members who have physically visited the site, such as Stratford did to advertise their Play On Program for their 2014 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the Globe did when building their Pinterest board for the Bankside Bottoms event that

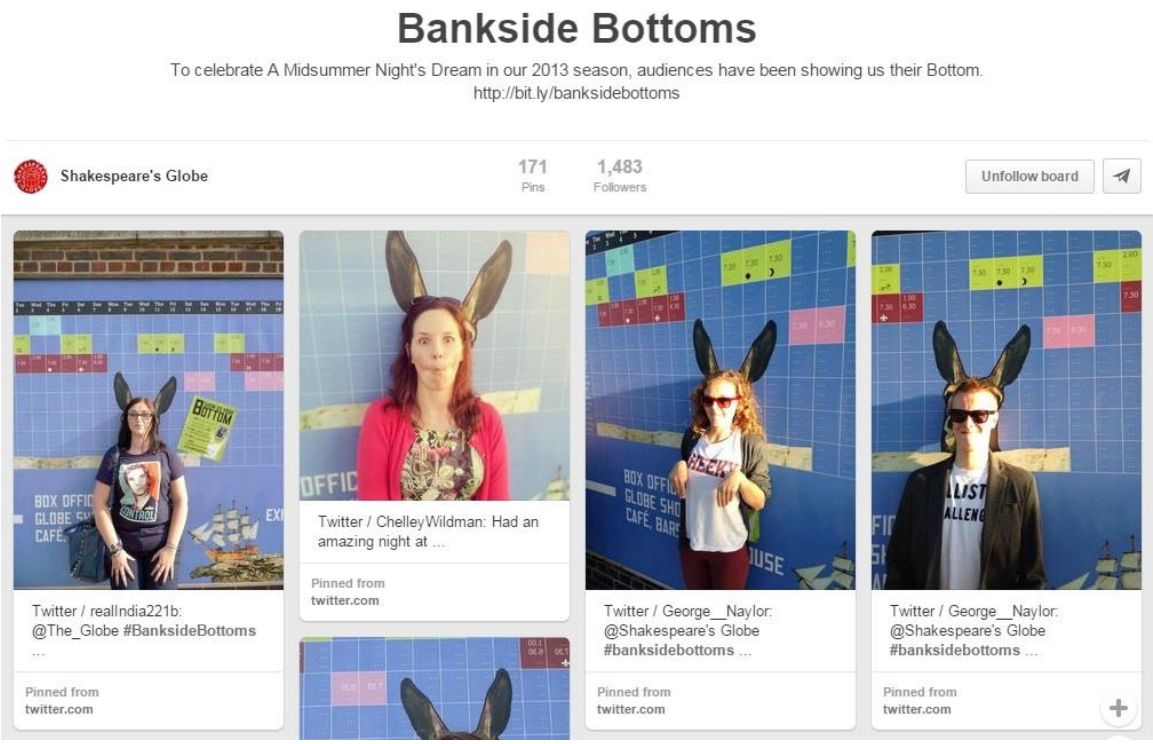

Figure 8. The Pinterest Board for the Globe's Bankside Bottoms in 2013

accompanied their 2013 production of *Midsummer*.[27] These types of posts or events prioritize the value of audiences who are able to visit the physical sites and attend

[27] Stratford's Play On Program offers performance tickets to audience members between the ages of 16-29, opening up 10 stage-side seats that allowed them to participate as guests in the wedding at the end of the play. The Globe's Bankside Bottom event had audience members take images in front of a picture of Bottom's ears on Bankside and tweet it to the Globe with the hashtag #BanksideBottoms. The Globe would

performances, and in the process they exclude the members of their online audiences unable to visit those sites or attend those performances live. Even as they utilize social media that provide them access to larger audiences than they have had in the past, theaters and festivals still tend to target and value their more traditional audiences who can afford to travel to their physical sites and attend productions. Embracing the potential of social media to open up access for audiences offers new opportunities for theaters and festivals to build the cultural value of their work with online audiences, and yet they still exhibit a desire to restrict that access and cater to traditional audiences that may buy tickets while ignoring or excluding their actual online audiences.

Though such approaches to outreach tend to target a specific part of the audiences for theaters and festivals, I would argue that the exclusion of certain audiences in these strategies is not always a conscious decision on the part of these institutions. Instead, these approaches are influenced by the nostalgia inherent in their work and traditional marketing strategies. Particularly, these institutions have operated (and often continue to operate) within a mode where their work, Shakespearean performance, is considered a valued commodity. As John Guillory has argued, "as cultural works recede into the past, they simultaneously gravitate into the realm of 'restricted production'" (1993, 330). The more these works locate themselves in the realm of restricted production, the more audiences value them for their status, as with the highbrow perception of Shakespearean performance. One of the results of theaters and festivals operating under this notion is

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then post these images to their Pinterest board. For more on the Play On Program, see Stratford's website at http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/BoxOffice/save.aspx?id=1121. The Bankside Bottoms Pinterest board can be viewed at http://www.pinterest.com/theglobe/bankside-bottoms.

that it tends to privilege certain audiences while excluding others. Those privileged audiences represent what could be considered traditional theatergoing audiences for each institution: older, educated, affluent, and often white.[28] For those audiences, the value of Shakespearean performance is in its identity as art, and therefore it has to be accessed through "a distinct mode of consumption appropriate to" its status (Guillory 1993, 329). This mentality is apparent in their digital marketing through the examples discussed above, where the cultural value of Shakespearean performance is still located in the audiences' ability to partake of that work at the sites of its production.

The cultural value that all four institutions have invested in their on-site work also comes from the fact that they are cultural tourism sites to be visited by audiences, and their identity as such sites establishes another aspect of their cultural value. The journeys to these sites have long been thought of as pilgrimages in a sense for travelers, and so the value associated with those pilgrimages has led to the need for audiences to have some reason to visit these sites.[29] Again, the cultural value of institutions is linked to their identities as physical sites for audiences to visit, and so all four institutions exhibit some anxiety over the real-time nature of social media, and their ability to serve as persistent online spaces that audiences can access at any time with an internet connection. The institutional identities of the theaters and festivals, as well as who they envision their

[28] For example, the OSF's Long Range Plan (2009-2013) notes that the composition of their audiences has been consistent for the past twenty years: affluent, with 80% holding college degrees, a median age of 56, and an average income of $95,000/year. As for audience diversity, "People of color represent…about 7% of [their] single ticket audience" (2009, 6-7).

[29] Mark Thornton Burnett (2011), Diane Henderson (2002), Dennis Kennedy (2009), and Douglas Lanier (2002) have all discussed how theaters, festivals, and other cultural tourism sites cultivate a sense of pilgrimage for their visitors.

target audiences to be, become sources for much of the tension between newness and nostalgia that is played out over their social media accounts. Even as social media provide them with the ability to attract the attention of new and different audiences to their work through sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, they often use these platforms to direct their audiences "to identifiable, palpable sites of the real" (Huang and Ross 2009, 9). If the real-time nature of social media presents a challenge to the value associated with the liveness of their work, then theaters and festivals find themselves turning to their physicality as a means for configuring their cultural value with their audiences. Thus they hope that their audiences' nostalgia for their past work will cultivate in a desire to revisit their physical sites and experience the theatrical presence that these institutions view as the locus of their cultural value.

The anxiety Shakespearean performance institutions have regarding social media and the ways that they challenge or complicate notions of theatrical presence is not unexpected, given that these are institutions that provide access to live theatrical performance. Whereas collection-based institutions such as museums, libraries, and

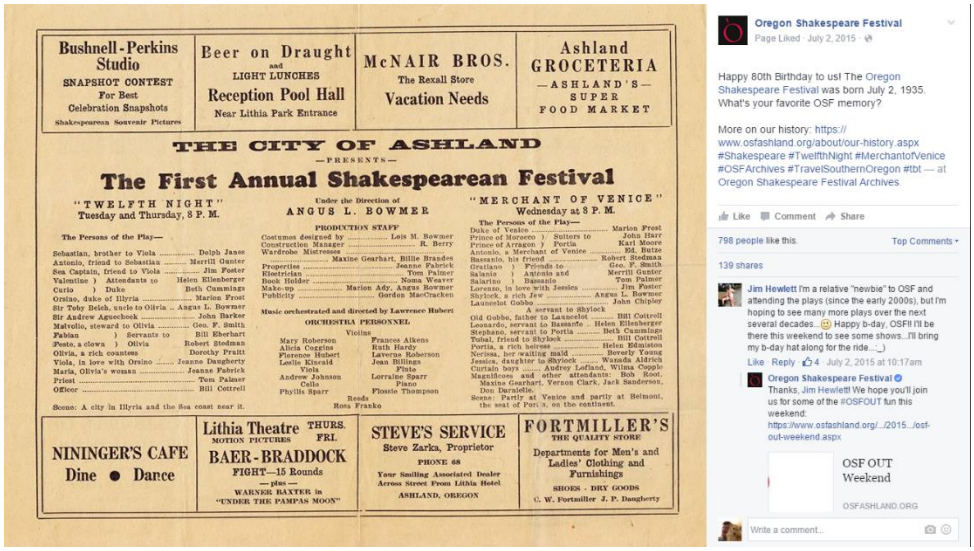

Figure 9. The OSF's Facebook photo post of their first playbill

archives may utilize the newness of digital media to provide greater online access to their holdings for their audiences, as Sylvia Morris notes, "organisations that get their cultural value from providing real experiences may question the wisdom of providing digital surrogates of their assets" (2014). They may not open up access to the live performance experience for their social media audiences, but the content theaters and festivals share on social media continually work to shape the value of each institution and its work with online audiences. Much like W. B. Worthen argues performance operates as surrogation, "recall[ing] and transform[ing] the past in the form of the present," content shared via social media enable a similar process with the cultural value of theaters and festivals (1998, 1101). The OSF shared a recent post recognizing its 80th birthday, accompanied by a playbill from the Festival's inaugural season and asking users to share their favorite memories of the OSF, similar to the #RSCSummer update. While it is doubtful that many, if any, of the Festival's online audience were at the first set of performances in 1935, the post uses the Festival's history and past to encourage audiences to share their own experiences and create a narrative regarding the Festival's value. The post does not assert the Festival's value in its historical origin, but instead uses the origin as an occasion to explore the Festival's value among its online audiences. The nostalgia of users' past experiences becomes the lens through which they conceive and articulate their valuation of the Festival and its work in the present; the playbill, rather than serving to confirm the OSF's authenticity through its history, becomes the means of establishing that authenticity in the present.

Theaters and festivals can share historical content via social media to use the past to establish their cultural value in the present, but they also use their current work to

direct audiences' attention to the history and traditions that shape their institutional work and missions. When they adopt newness as a tactic though, they need to be careful that their anxiety regarding social media does not undercut the appeal of their digital outreach, as the OSF did in another Facebook post regarding an upcoming educational program. In the image, a student's notebook has on its front the phrase "Shakespeare never tweeted a sonnet," and over the entire image the word "Perfection" is superimposed. The image models newness by adopting the common style of internet memes, and the OSF models a common user practice in sharing a meme with their audience. At the same time, the image uses nostalgia to value Shakespeare's language and work over social media platforms like Twitter, presenting a more antagonistic view of the tension between

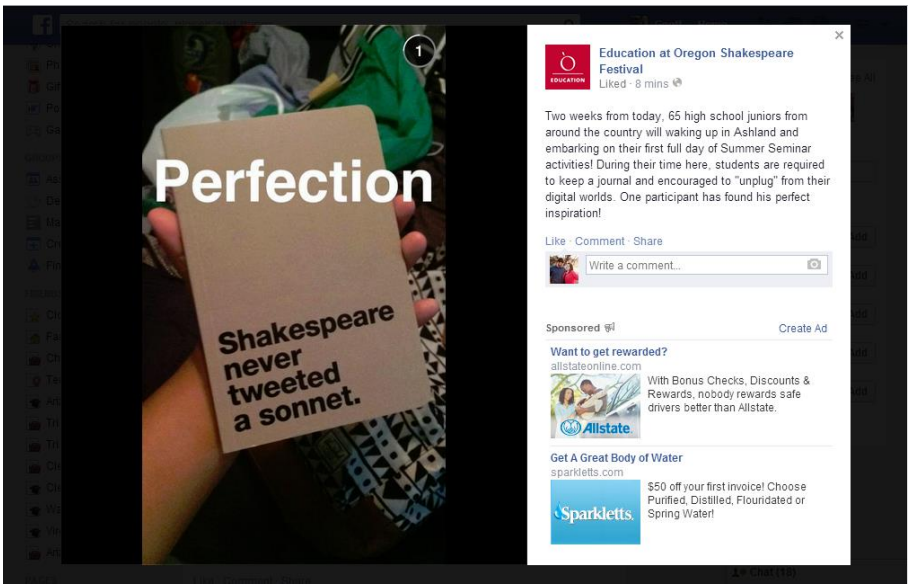

Figure 10. Education at Oregon Shakespeare Festival's "Perfection" post

newness and nostalgia, valuing the highbrow Shakespeare over the lowbrow Twitter. The nostalgia underlying this image reveals a desire for a recuperation of Shakespeare's value, pushing against what Lanier refers to as reciprocal legitimation

> whereby Shakespeare's association with a mass-cultural product, medium, or genre lends that item a moiety of highbrow depth, "universality," authority, continuity with tradition, or seriousness of purpose, while at the same time the association with mass culture lends Shakespeare street credibility, broad intelligibility, and celebrity. (2010, 104)

The image rejects this reciprocity rather than embracing it, displaying an anxiety in its separation of Shakespeare and Twitter, possibly because within the attention economy of social media, Twitter serves as a more powerful draw for audiences than does Shakespeare or his work. If they move past this anxiety, theaters and festivals can use social media to engage with large online audiences, and take advantage of this reciprocal legitimation, using these sites to attract and sustain their audiences' attention in Shakespeare and his work by taking advantage of that street credibility and broad intelligibility.

Using social media to those ends would seem to represent the next step forward from Richard Burt's claim that "it now appears that electronic publishing may confer legitimacy on Shakespeare rather than the reverse" (2002, 3). Though social media may be the next step forward, in the current digital marketing approaches of Shakespearean performance institutions, legitimacy is being configured in terms of authenticity and linked to the physical sites of performance. The result is a tension that develops in digital marketing between the newness represented by online audiences and the nostalgia inherent in traditional ones. For both sets of audiences, Shakespeare's cultural value seems to remain strong, but it is the cultural value of live Shakespearean performance that appears to be threatened by social media. To compete for their audiences' attention

and remain relevant in the attention economy of social media, theaters and festivals seek to use their past work as a means of reinforcing the authenticity of the experiences they offer for audiences in the present. In doing so, the nostalgia of their past work, established on social media through content that highlights past productions and the history and traditions of performance, becomes the basis for the cultural value of institutions' current work with audiences. This nostalgia serves to stabilize the value of that work by means of confirming its authenticity: the authentic performance experience occurs live at the physical site of its production, and everything else serves to reinforce that authenticity. Even as they use social media to this end, institutions have to contend with the fact that they do not completely control the activity and interactions with their content on social media. As they use nostalgia to support claims regarding authenticity, social media become sites where these claims can be destabilized and reconfigured. In the real-time present of social media, appealing to the past to ensure claims of authenticity is a risk. Turning to the past may help to generate value for institutions through their traditions of performance and institutional work, but on social media these approaches can lose the audiences' attention instead of attracting and sustaining it.

For their traditional audiences, these institutions use their performance traditions and histories as the basis for the authenticity of their work. Through their pasts, they locate the cultural value of their present work in continuing to build on these traditions. They use nostalgia as a means for securing the authentic nature of their work with their traditional audiences, and given the success of these approaches in the past, theaters and festivals have tried to utilize similar approaches through their social media outreach. In these online spaces, featuring content regarding their work and asserting Shakespeare's

cultural value over social media may continue to build on these previous traditions, but these are strategies ill-suited to gain the attention of online audiences, or to keep it. In fact, to fail to attract their online audiences' attention to their work through social media might actually lead to institutional claims regarding authenticity becoming unstable. Authenticity itself is not stable; it is "a matter of authentication, something bestowed, not inherent," and if audiences are not engaged and directing their attention towards these institutions and their work, then that work becomes less relevant and as a result could lose the attention of audiences that could ensure the work's continued status as authentic (Orgel 2002, 235). Rather than relying too heavily on the nostalgia of the past, theaters and festivals can highlight the newness of their work through social media to sustain their audiences' attention in their current work and use that attention to strengthen their claims of authenticity.

In their desire to cater to their traditional audiences, Shakespearean performance institutions reveal their own nostalgia to return to points in time where they could rely on traditional marketing strategies and the inherent value of Shakespeare to serve as the basis for maintaining their audiences' attention and ensuring the cultural value of their work. Modern audiences may even seem in some ways to pose a hurdle to the claims of authenticity these institutions hope to make about their work. As Paul Prescott notes when discussing the authenticity of performance at Shakespeare's Globe, "Clearly the most obvious obstacle to authenticity is the irredeemably contemporary audience, which…is a constant reminder of the impossibility of stepping back in time, of fully restoring the Shakespearean stage" (2005, 362). In this sense, every audience serves to highlight the work of Shakespearean theaters and festivals as inauthentic, but as Prescott

later argues, “The staging of authenticity is a social event” and therefore relies on audiences as an integral part of claims regarding what is or is not authentic (2005, 372). Online audiences may seem to pose a threat to claims of authenticity, because their values do not necessarily align with the values of theaters and festivals’ traditional audiences. Hence, as they fail to engage and sustain their online audiences’ attention in their work by rejecting newness, whether in terms of the media they use or their marketing techniques that rely on their work in the past, the ideas of authenticity these institutions cling to only serve to maintain the status quo. Nostalgia may serve as a means of ensuring notions of institutional authenticity with traditional audiences, but it carries the risk of failing to draw or maintain the attention of online ones.

By using the nostalgia inherent in their past work to justify their cultural value and relevance for audiences in the present, theaters and festivals rely on approaches that do not represent active risks. When the need to adopt social media and other digital media into marketing strategies stems from a desire to survive and remain relevant, to adopt tactics that allow those media to be used in line with preexisting marketing practices serves as the safe bet. Such tactics fall in line with the larger aims and goals of Shakespearean tourism, which offer “a brief, safe encounter with history repackaged as a canned, sanitized commodity-experience, heavy on atmosphere, nostalgia, and ‘heritage’, light on complexity, conflict, or challenging otherness” (Lanier 2002, 152). To rely too heavily on nostalgia as a draw for audience attention is to run the risk of complacency, which runs counter to the attention economy’s emphasis on newness for relevance. Anna M. Dempster notes that in creative industries, “There is an implicit celebration of risk and it can be generally associated with innovation and artistic excellence” (2014, 39). Much

like individual posts that use nostalgia to attract the audiences' attention on their social media pages, safe tactics may support claims of artistic excellence, but they also can fail to highlight the innovation of their work, resulting in the cultural value of these institutions and their work receding into the past and the realm of restricted production and thus limiting its appeal to online audiences. For theaters and festivals, embracing risk by highlighting newness, whether through the use of social media or through new approaches to performance, is critical to remaining competitive in the attention economy of social media.

However, I do not want to suggest that nostalgia has no role or purpose in the digital marketing strategies for Shakespearean performance institutions, but that to rely too heavily on nostalgia while ignoring newness, whether in medium or practice, fails to utilize the potential of social media to engage audiences in the attention economy. Though the current approaches utilized by these four institutions exhibit a tension between the nostalgia associated with their work and the newness of the social media they are using to interact with audiences, the OSF, the RSC, the Globe, and Stratford could exploit that tension in useful ways. Nostalgia can be used as a means of stabilizing narratives of cultural value, but it can also be a means for exploring how and why desires for the past operate within such narratives of value for audiences. In discussing the use of nostalgia in storytelling at the Riverside Museum in Glasgow, Kirsty Devine concludes:

> We need to question what and why we are being told something and equally what has been missed out. In this way, we avoid selective editing out of negative or unpalatable subject matter. That said, the role of nostalgia does not mean a complete fabrication of previous events or indeed the smoothing out of the rough

> edges of history. Combined with other primary source material, it helps us to understand how people make sense of both their individual and collective pasts and what they judge as important to them. (2013, 7)

Used strategically within the real-time of social media, nostalgia can be a tool for theaters and festivals to engage their audiences not by solely turning to the past, but by using the past as a means to discuss and interrogate the cultural value of their work in the present. For institutions that adopt such approaches, there is a risk that the spreadable, real-time nature of social media could create disruptive opportunities where the cultural value of their work may not represent the stable narratives they work to craft and project through their performance traditions and work with Shakespeare. This was the case, as Ryan Nelson describes, with the Globe after including Habima Theatre as part of the Globe to Globe Festival, which lead to a "call to boycott the Israeli company [that] was played out on social networks, particularly Facebook" (2014). Such risk is always present when using technologies that allow audiences to participate in a space, and represent the potential of activity to move beyond the control of the institution. However, these instances prove to be the exception, and the ability to showcase the innovation in their work through social media is worth the risk for theaters and festivals to attract and sustain their audiences' attention. In doing so, they can also gain a greater understanding of how their online audiences value Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance through the experiences and interactions of both individual users and online audiences as a whole.

Adopting such approaches can also serve as a means for these institutions to engage with their audiences and reshape how their work is seen as authentic. If theaters and festivals use social media as a means to highlight the newness of their work to remain

relevant in the attention economy, they can use the nostalgia of their past work both as a means of linking their work to traditions and highlighting how it moves in new directions. Margaret Jane Kidnie argues that "authenticity in the context of Shakespearean text and performance is continually redefined over time by the activity and debates at the work's constantly shifting edges," and emphasizing the newness of their work through the use of nostalgia could serve to make social media platforms spaces where such activity and debates occur (2009, 8). Pairing newness and nostalgia together can shift social media from being sites of tension to sites of fruitful institution-audience interactions where the cultural value of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance can represent the shared interests of institutions and their online audiences alike. To achieve such goals requires that theaters and festivals embrace the newness of the technologies they use to market their work, and it also requires that they conceive of their audiences in new ways that help them to compete within the attention economy of social media, and not against it. Otherwise, the social media marketing for these four institutions may continue to struggle with the tension between newness and nostalgia that plays out across these sites, and run the risk of becoming irrelevant to their online audiences.

Embracing the New

The social media outreach of these institutions also reveals their own nostalgia for their traditional audiences as they utilize nostalgia to establish the cultural value of their work while ignoring or rejecting the newness offered by social media. Though their current approaches may serve to maintain their cultural value with their traditional audiences, theaters and festivals are missing an opportunity to engage their online

audiences in the process. To remain relevant with their online audiences in the attention economy, Shakespearean performance institutions have to heed Nelson's call that "when an organisation's online presence may not just be an audience's first port of call, but their only point of contact, the very concept of the theatre audience needs to be reimagined" (2014). Currently, the use of social media in the marketing practices of the OSF, RSC, Globe, and Stratford serves to maintain a holding pattern for these institutions. Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, not to mention the plethora of other social media being used by their audiences, offer platforms for competing for their audiences' attention. As they continue to build their presences on these sites, these institutions hope to establish and maintain their relevance with their online audiences through sustaining those audiences' attention on their work through the use of social media. However, the result, as I have discussed throughout this chapter, has been a tension between newness and nostalgia that has manifested from these institutions adopting tactics that rely on nostalgia at the expense of the newness of social media that is crucial for competing in today's attention economy.

To be competitive in the attention economy, theaters and festivals have to embrace the newness of the technologies they use to reach out to audiences, and they have to embrace the identities of those new audiences as well. As Nelson points out, the fact that their digital outreach may be the only point of contact between institutions and members of their audiences means that old approaches that relied on audiences physically visiting their sites and attending live performances may find limited success. Theaters and festivals cannot rely on a single approach, especially one that excludes a portion of their online audiences; they need to recognize that audiences are diverse in not just their

expectations or their desires, but also in their social construction (Bennett 2005, 497). For online audiences, the newness of social media—its spreadable and real-time nature—is what attracts their participation and interaction on these sites, but online audiences, just as physical ones, are anything but singular. Institutions should look to take advantage of these aspects of social media if they desire to remain relevant with their online audiences, and not just rely on tactics that fit within the marketing practices they have had success with in the past. They also can continue to work on and develop strategies that target and engage new audiences, rather than focusing only on maintaining their current or traditional ones.

Shakespearean theaters and festivals that work on embracing the newness of social media also have to work on embracing new mindsets regarding the role of marketing. To remain relevant, these institutions need to work on sustaining their audiences' attention on social media, and one way of accomplishing this is to focus on the newness of their work. One approach as discussed above could be to provide greater access to the rehearsal and performance process through social media. Such moves may not be about completely opening up access to rehearsals or performances, but allowing more access to keep online audiences interested and engaged in the work in process. An approach like this speaks to Donald Hedrick's claim that Shakespeare's use as a marketing tool is more about his value as a consumption practice, rather than a commodity (2002, 42). Marketing Shakespeare as a consumption practice places a greater emphasis on the processes of creation and reception, and such an approach aligns more with marketing models used by film and television that work to attract and sustain audience attention and hype in a brand or product. Reframing Shakespeare's use as a

marketing tool could help to sustain audience attention on institutions and their work, placing less emphasis on the liveness of an event for online audiences unable to visit the physical sites and attend live performances.[30]

Adopting marketing strategies and approaches that utilize newness can serve to attract and sustain their audiences' attention, but they can also help Shakespearean performance institutions to facilitate greater institution-audience interactions. Social media serve as platforms for theaters and festivals to perform their institutional identities for their audiences online, but they also serve as ways for audiences to engage with the institutions as well. Users "want to have an effect" online, and the opportunity to interact with theaters and festivals through social media offer them a chance for engagement meaningful to those users (Lovink 2011, 53). These institutions also stand to benefit, as Kathleen McLuskie argues: the more an audience engages with an institution and its work, the more the audience become an asset to the institution, "even when [those engagements] do not always result in sales. Levels of engagement, that can be quantified, become the direct justification and product for funding and investment, giving a reality to the aspirations for democracy and access to the arts" (2011, 10). Given the changes in various government policies in the US, UK, and Canada that emphasize cultural impact

[30] Dennis Kennedy argues that "If in the West and other so-called first-world countries we have reached a state where communications, entertainments and other electronic interactions are so pervasive and incessant that we cannot avoid them, and do not wish to, then perhaps we have moved into a new phase of human life, one in which it does not matter whether an event occurs before us or distantly in some simulated, recorded or heavily mediated form" (2009, 7).

as a justification for funding, these types of approaches can serve as part of the evidence of each institution's cultural impact with its audience.[31]

Though each theater or festival uses social media to promote its own particular brand of performance, they all rely on a shared investment in the cultural value of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance as well. Each institution has its own history and approach to digital marketing that frames how it strives to gain its online audience's attention and remain relevant, but as it does so each institution also participates in a larger process of continuing to make Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance relevant. Thus, their work serves another purpose, to add to the overall "*impression* of a Shakespeare brand" (Rumbold 2011, 26). As they continue to navigate the tensions between newness and nostalgia in their social media outreach, these institutions also work to shape the value of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance for their audiences. By emphasizing newness as part of their social media marketing, they can work towards making Shakespearean performance relevant for their online audiences. These four institutions all clearly have a vested interest in reinforcing the cultural value of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance, since his work is central to the mission and identity of each institution. As they strive to use social media as a marketing tool for making Shakespearean performance relevant, they take part in the cyclical nature of Shakespeare and festivals as outlined by Mark Thornton Burnett: "A festival is a means of affirming the enduring nature of Shakespeare in the same way that Shakespeare

[31] Eleonora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett have discussed how the notion of cultural impact is rooted in the larger tradition of positive narratives regarding the cultural value of the arts. For more, see Belfiore and Bennett (2007).

operates as a necessary foundation for many forms of festival practice" (2011, 446). As I have discussed throughout the chapter, the newness of social media provides theaters and festivals with the potential to frame Shakespearean performance in ways that can allow them to stay relevant with their online audience by sustaining their audiences' attention in their work. If they rely too heavily on the nostalgia associated with their work though, they may lose an important opportunity to engage new and different audiences.

Social media continue to emerge as a prominent part of digital marketing for Shakespearean performance institutions, but they are only one part of these institutions' larger digital marketing campaigns. It behooves theaters and festivals to incorporate different forms of digital media into their marketing approaches, as the various types of digital media offer other potential forms of audience outreach beyond the ones discussed in this chapter. Social media provide institutions the opportunity to engage with online audiences, especially audiences unable to visit their physical sites on a regular basis. In doing so, they rely on nostalgia to gain their audiences' attention, even if nostalgia alone is not enough to keep that attention. That nostalgia pulls on the audiences' shared cultural value of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance, but it requires that audiences are invested in the cultural value of Shakespeare in the first place. For audiences that do not have any particular investment in Shakespeare or Shakespearean performance, such as the audiences targeted through institutions' educational outreach, theaters and festivals have to take different approaches to attract and sustain their audiences' attention, a challenge which I will discuss at more length in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Building New Audiences: Digital Media in Educational Outreach

Though Shakespearean performance institutions can rely on nostalgia to court the attention of audiences through their social media marketing, their educational outreach requires a fundamentally different approach. Theaters and festivals have to seek other methods to engage young audiences in Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance, crafting memorable experiences that will counter the prevailing perception in youth culture that Shakespeare is "boring" and "inaccessible" (Hulbert, Wetmore, and York 2006, 2). The educational outreach of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Stratford Festival serves as a crucial aspect of each institution's strategy to build new audiences for their work, but that outreach has traditionally been linked to one of two physical sites: the theater or festival, or the school. While the OSF and Stratford (to a lesser extent) still operate under this model, the RSC and the Globe are experimenting with digital technologies to expand the reach and approaches of their educational outreach. This experimentation has given rise to two programs designed to target Key Stage 3 students from ages 11 to 16 in the United Kingdom, the Globe's Playing Shakespeare and the RSC's Young Shakespeare Nation. Both programs employ digital media to attract young audiences to their institutional work with performance, ultimately with the hopes of converting those young audiences into life-long lovers of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance. Though both the Globe and the RSC use digital media to facilitate young audiences' engagement with their work, Playing Shakespeare and Young Shakespeare Nation represent two distinct approaches to incorporating digital media into educational outreach.

However, before turning to these two programs, I want to explore the methodological underpinnings of both institutions' approach to education. The Globe and RSC each cites Rex Gibson's *Teaching Shakespeare* as an inspiration for its approach to educational work.[32] In his book, Gibson argues for an active approach to teaching Shakespeare, one comprised of "a wide range of expressive, creative and physical activities" (1998, xii). Gibson's approach emphasizes student co-operation to create a Shakespeare that is of and by the students, and he sees the teacher's role in this process to facilitate "a genuine sense of ownership of the play" for students (1998, 9). By implementing the active methods to teaching Shakespeare outlined in Gibson's book, teachers can fulfill the challenge of making "'studying Shakespeare' equate with 'enjoying Shakespeare'" (1998, 25). Gibson's active methods use performance as the key to students finding Shakespeare exciting and accessible, positioning the plays as works to be explored and performed rather than texts to be deciphered and understood. It is not surprising that the Globe and the RSC would take to Gibson's approach that places performance at the forefront of students' experiences with Shakespeare, but as they do so both institutions build on the concept of young audiences owning the plays, and owning Shakespeare, in their educational outreach.

While I will discuss how each program incorporates active methods into their digital educational outreach below, both the Globe and the RSC use Gibson's approach to create performance-based outreach that seeks to engage young audiences. By doing so,

[32] For more on how the Globe incorporates Gibson's approach into their educational outreach, see Banks (2008). For more on the RSC's use of Gibson's approach in their educational work, see Neelands and O'Hanlon (2011).

each institution facilitates young audiences' experience with the plays through what Louise Rosenblatt calls the "transactional process" (1995, 27). With roots in reader-response theory, Rosenblatt's transactional process situates meaning making in the interactions that occur between the reader and the text. Rosenblatt notes that there are two types of reading central to the transactional process: efferent reading that focuses on extracting ideas and details, and aesthetic reading that focuses on the emotional or affective experiences of reading a text. Young audiences are asked to undertake efferent readings of texts within the context of the classroom, and such an approach is what often leads young audiences to the view that Shakespeare is boring or inaccessible. Aesthetic reading, on the other hand, looks at reading not as a means of acquiring information from a text, but as a means of experiencing it. Rosenblatt argues that readers should experience literature and connect it to their own experiences to understand it in greater depth. The Globe and the RSC both apply this model to Shakespearean performance and facilitate transactional experiences between their young audiences and the plays they perform through their educational outreach. Though efferent reading is obviously part of the process, both institutions craft experiences that employ Rosenblatt's aesthetic reading to help young audiences engage with the plays in ways that make them interesting and engaging. They do so in the hopes of young audiences building positive personal connections with their institutions through these experiences, and they strive to begin cultivating a relationship with those young audiences that will last beyond the context of their educational outreach programs.

The general methodology behind the educational outreach of the Globe and the RSC shape young audiences' experiences with Shakespeare's plays not as texts, but more

along the lines of Margaret Jane Kidnie's concept of the plays as works. For Kidnie, "the work, far from functioning as an objective yardstick against which to measure the supposed accuracy of editions and stagings, whether current or historical, continually takes shape as a *consequence* of production" (2009, 7). Since young audiences may have little to no experience with Shakespeare's plays or Shakespearean performance, the ways that they learn about and engage with the plays and with stage performance will be the experiences that shape their interest and feelings for years to come. Encouraging students to engage with the plays as works rather than texts can combat the boring or inaccessible Shakespeare by making experiences meaningful for the students. In a study conducted by Janine Certo and Wayne Brinda, they "concluded that anticipation of seeing a play was absolutely critical to [students'] engagement, enjoyment, and understanding of the text. Artistic and dramatic instruction married with live theater can support reluctant readers' efferent and aesthetic reading; it can help them comprehend and enjoy literature" (2011, 30).[33] Theater can serve as a powerful tool to have students engage with literature, and Shakespeare is no exception. As I will discuss in more detail below, both Playing Shakespeare and Young Shakespeare Nation place performance at the center of their young audiences' experiences with Shakespeare.

Through their emphasis on performance, the Globe and RSC want to instill a sense of ownership among their younger audiences. In one sense, ownership represents

[33] Certo and Brinda's study explored how theatrical adaptations could help students in "two sixth-grade classrooms of a high-poverty, urban, western Pennsylvania middle school" engage with and enjoy reading literature in the classroom. They emphasize the potential of theater to promote transactional experiences for these students by having students both read the books and then see adaptations of them performed by a local theater company. For more on the study, see Certo and Brinda (2011).

an investment in Shakespeare, which is what these institutions hope to create through the use of performance to establish transactional experiences for young audiences with their institutional work. Performance is the preferred method for crafting these experiences; RSC Director of Education Jacqui O'Hanlon expresses this view in a trailer for the Young Shakespeare Nation school broadcasts: "What we know happens when young people see this work in performance and participate in the live broadcasts is Shakespeare is brought to life in a way that it just can't be when we read it as words on the page."[34] O'Hanlon's comment stresses the value of performance in bringing young audiences to Shakespeare, and yet the subtext here is that it is not just the general value of performance, but the value of the RSC's performances, that will bring young audiences to Shakespeare. As Sarah Olive has argued, narratives of ownership from performance institutions operate as "a public statement that Shakespeare is theirs to give, that they hold the key with which to 'unlock' his works" (2011, 255). So while performance-based approaches may be the means to encouraging young audiences to engage with Shakespeare, the sense of ownership the RSC hopes to cultivate is heavily invested in their particular brand as well. The Globe expresses a similar sentiment in their educational philosophy as outlined by Fiona Banks, Senior Advisor of Creative Programmes at the Globe: "we seek to ensure that all students we work with regard the Globe today as 'theirs' and access to Shakespeare's plays as part of their cultural entitlement" (2008, 158). Much like the RSC, the Globe uses performance with the hopes

[34] The trailer is available online at http://onscreen.rsc.org.uk/education/broadcast-trailer.aspx.

of young audiences investing not just in Shakespeare, but in the Globe and its brand of performance.

With Playing Shakespeare and Young Shakespeare Nation, the Globe and the RSC use digital technologies as tools for bringing young audiences to Shakespeare. By doing so, both institutions seek to tap into the potential of those technologies to establish what Henry Jenkins et al. call a participatory culture: "a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to the novices" (2006, 3). Each program utilizes digital media in an attempt to create such a culture for their young audiences to engage with Shakespeare and performance to varying effect. As they do so, digital media becomes one of the lenses that shape the transactional experiences institutions hope young audiences will have with their work in performance. In part, the Globe and the RSC are incorporating digital media into their educational outreach because they believe these technologies will provide an automatic draw for young audiences, assuming them to be "digital natives," though as Alice Daer and Liza Potts have discussed the notion that young audiences are digital natives is largely a myth.[35] Daer and Potts consider the usefulness of digital technologies in teaching and learning, and argue that "social media [and other digital technologies] can be used, adopted, and implemented best when its champions are thinking strategically, not just tactically" (2014, 22). So as the Globe and

[35] For more, see Daer and Potts (2014).

the RSC incorporate digital technologies into their educational outreach, one of the questions regarding their outreach is whether they do this strategically or not.

However, the incorporation of digital technologies into the educational outreach of the Globe and the RSC also follow larger trends in art and cultural policies in the United Kingdom (and elsewhere) that shift from cultural institutions bringing art to audiences to providing experiences to audiences that promote creativity and engagement.[36] Digital technologies are often seen as the means for cultural institutions to craft such experiences, and Katya Johanson and Hilary Glow have considered three strategies that museums are using to engage children, interactivity, immersion, and interpretative dialogue (2012, 27). Playing Shakespeare and Young Shakespeare Nation are adopting digital media to utilize these strategies to engage the young audiences of the Globe and the RSC, and they do so with the end goal of creating experiences that will eventually bring those audiences back to their institutional work outside of an educational context. Johanson and Glow argue though that these strategies represent "a call to promote children not as passive audiences but as active, critical judges of quality" (2012, 30). Throughout the remainder of this chapter, I will turn to each program in greater detail to consider how the Globe and the RSC are incorporating digital technologies into their educational outreach, and what impact these programs and their digital technologies are having on how young audiences access and experience Shakespeare. Ultimately, I will argue that while the Globe's Playing Shakespeare effectively engages its young audiences through digital media, it is the RSC's Young Shakespeare Nation program that

[36] Kate Rumbold discusses this shift in policy and practice in detail in her article in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, "'From 'Access' to 'Creativity.'" For more on the trend, see Rumbold (2010).

offers a potential new model for bringing young audiences to Shakespeare through emphasizing aspects of liveness that do not rely on the audience's physical presence.

Playing Shakespeare

The Globe's Playing Shakespeare program is designed to target secondary students in the United Kingdom from ages 11-16 (Key Stage 3 and 4). The program is sponsored by Deutsche Bank, and given that the Globe does not receive government funding, the partnership helps to fund the program and bring young audiences to the Globe Theatre to experience live Shakespearean performance. The Playing Shakespeare program is focused on live performances specifically crafted for younger audiences each year. The program has been running since 2007, and for each production a microsite is built and hosted on the Globe website to guide students and teachers to engage with the play being produced before the program culminates in a visit the Globe to attend a live performance of the play.[37] The performances themselves tend to run around 100 minutes, both to make the plays accessible for these younger audiences and also to address the reality of schoolgroups travelling to and from the Globe in a single day. Through Deutsche Bank's sponsorship, the students that participate in Playing Shakespeare are able to attend the live performances at the Globe free of charge. Over its run, Playing Shakespeare has presented performances of numerous plays including *Much Ado About*

[37] Information on the upcoming Playing Shakespeare performance of *Twelfth Night*, as well as links for the microsites for previous Playing Shakespeare productions, can be found on the Globe's website at http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discovery-space/playing-shakespeare.

Nothing, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Othello*, and 2016's production will be of *Twelfth Night*.

While the final part of each Playing Shakespeare run culminates with students visiting the Globe to see a live production of the play they have studied, the microsite built to accompany each production is designed to help students and teachers learn about and engage with the play and issues of performance over 8 weeks before they actually visit the Globe. Each microsite has four sections—Week by Week, Language, Characters, and Teacher's Notes—that offer a wealth of content for students and teachers to interact with and learn from before their visit.[38] The microsites serve as more than just a source of information; they are designed as spaces to facilitate transactional experiences for students as they interact with the play, its themes, and its characters. Through these transactional experiences, the Globe hopes that students will feel a sense of connection to and ownership of the play before they visit the Theatre to see it performed live. The microsites are designed to be an integral part of the students' experiences with the productions, and as such they can heavily shape the students' experiences with the outer frame of the theatrical event (Bennett 2003, 139). Through their design and content, the Playing Shakespeare microsites work to, as Banks states, make "Shakespeare's plays cease to be 'high art', culturally unknowable and inaccessible and become inclusive; part of a student's everyday experience and a means by which they can develop 'core' skills and understand their own world" (2008, 158). Banks's description of the Globe's educational goals establishes a desire to have students engage with and relate to

[38] Though there is also a section of notes for teachers, my focus in this chapter is on the sections of the site designed specifically for students.

Shakespeare through their own experiences. The microsites are thus designed as spaces for students to explore the content through various transactional experiences to help students comprehend the plays being performed, and as they do so they seek to make students' experiences focus on aesthetic rather than efferent engagement with the plays.

The three sections designed for students all work to make Shakespeare accessible through different types of transactional experiences. The Week by Week section offers numerous activities that approach the plays through aesthetic engagement by focusing not only on the content of the plays, but also on the process of creating theater. Several of the weekly activities focus on aspects of the rehearsal and performance process, and it is through the process of making theater that the Globe has students approach their experiences with the Playing Shakespeare performances. Each week the activities are concentrated on a different aspect of the process, guiding students through the production's themes and designs, costumes, characters, set designs, and rehearsals. Every activity is accompanied by a creative brief that asks students to step into a different role in the rehearsal or performance process, whether it is creating a moodboard for the production, designing costumes or sets, or ultimately reviewing the play itself. These briefs use the microsites to establish interactive experiences for students to engage both with the plays and with the Globe and its brand of performance. Through providing access to different aspects of the rehearsal and performance process and using those aspects to have students learn about and interact with the Globe's work, the Globe begins to position itself as a site for authentic Shakespearean performance. For example, on the *Othello* microsite in Week 4, director Bill Buckhurst discussed the atmosphere of the

Globe in a YouTube embedded on the site for students to view.[39] Throughout the video, Buckhurst identified the Globe as an "utterly unique theatre space" and at several points throughout the three-and-a-half minute video juxtaposed the uniqueness of the Globe with "modern theatre practice." As they provide students access to the rehearsal and performance process through the microsite, the Globe also begins to assert its authenticity with young audiences by presenting it as a unique space distinguished by its claim to historical authenticity which differentiates it from other modern theater spaces and practices.

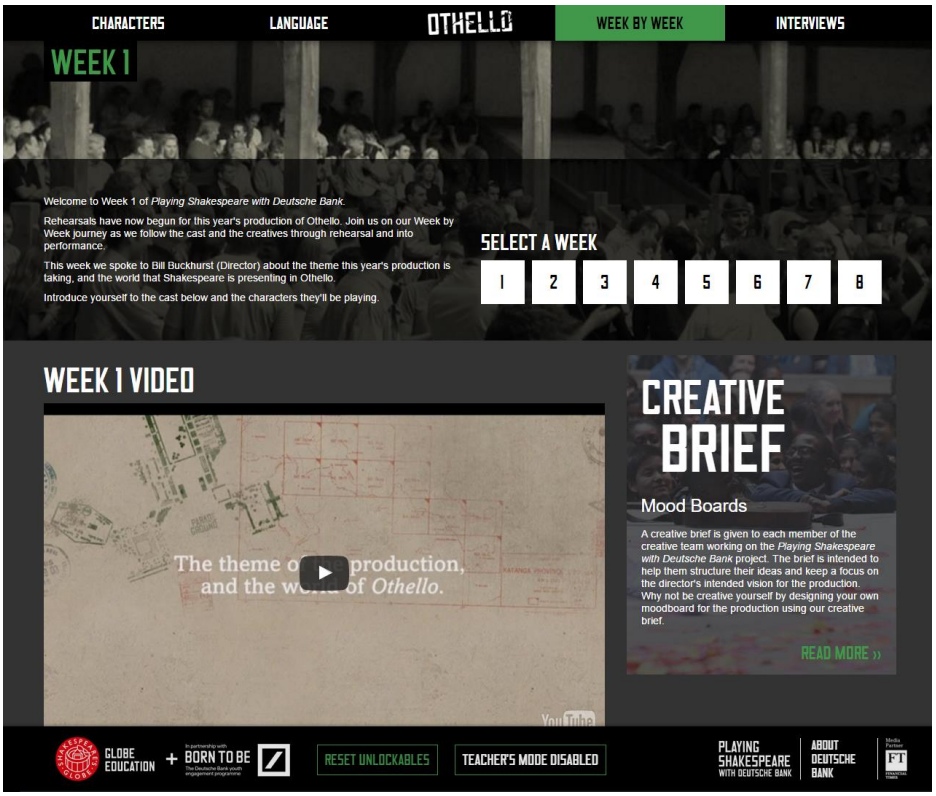

Figure 11. Week 1 of the *Othello* Playing Shakespeare microsite

The briefs that students are asked to complete each week extend these notions to the students' work, seeking to have students incorporate them into different activities, as

[39] The video can be view on the *Othello* microsite at http://2015.playingshakespeare.org/week-by-week/142.

with the *Othello* set brief. The activity asks students to not just design a set, but design one using the Globe stage as a template. Such activities seek to incorporate the Globe's identity into the transactional experiences students have in order to shape those experiences in specific ways. As a result, the content and activities on the microsite work to align Shakespeare's plays with Globe performance, linking them together for students working through the microsite. By completing the activities, students begin to interact with Shakespeare at the Globe through the process of creation. Students are able to submit their completed briefs to the Globe, and the Globe shares some of the briefs on the microsite the following week. This aspect of the Week by Week portion of the site looks to create a participatory culture where students are able to put their own spin on elements of the play, and then have that creative work validated when shared by the Globe on the microsite. However, the controlled space of the microsite does not fall under Jenkins et al.'s definition of a participatory culture, for while it allows students to create and share their work, the microsite lacks the opportunity for students to engage with and learn from the cast and crew of the Globe beyond the videos shared each week in any sustained way. However, such activities do help to make students more familiar with the staging and practices of the Globe in anticipation of their visit to the physical site; Helen Nicholson states that "one of the obstacles to young people's participation in theatre is that the architecture can be off-putting, particularly to those who feel that the theatre is outside their cultural experience" (2011, 209). Since the theatrical space of the Globe could be very different from students' notions of or previous experiences with theater (if they have any), the microsites play a critical part by introducing students to the space and

architecture of the Globe before they visit the physical site and attend the performance at the end of the program.

Where the Week by Week sections of the microsite place emphasis on the Globe stage and the rehearsal and performance process, the Language section focuses on making the play more accessible for students by exploring key scenes from the production students will attend. In this area of the microsite, users are able to navigate through the text of these scenes, and difficult or unfamiliar terms are highlighted and defined in a glossary. Students can also view a scene-by-scene synopsis of the play to help them understand the action that will occur on stage, as well as short essays that discuss themes from the plays relevant to younger audiences. The Language section of the site serves a fairly traditional role within the context of the microsite, making the playtext accessible for students. Even as it does so, the Language portion of the site presents the play as a performance text rather than a literary one, allowing students to explore the scenes and the language, while also being able to see what parts of the play have been cut for the performance. Since the Playing Shakespeare performances maintain Shakespeare's language, this portion of the site helps students to work through the language of the plays. For the actual performances, the settings are usually modernized to help students establish a connection between the action and themes of the plays and the students.[40] Abigail Rokison notes that "the themes selected are universal, equally applicable to the lives of young people in the twenty-first century as those in the sixteenth

[40] For example, the 2015 *Othello* was set in World War I, the 2014 *Merchant of Venice* was set in the contemporary fashion industry, and the 2013 *Romeo and Juliet* was set in a combination of the Elizabethan era and present day.

or seventeenth. This encourages users of the sites to empathize with the concerns of the characters and to recognize both the similarities and differences between the issues presented in the plays, and those in their own lives" (2013, 29). The resources found in the Language section work to make the plays more accessible and relatable for students, and shift the students' experience of the outer frame of the play from one that focuses on comprehension to one that connects them to the play and its themes.

Figure 12. A screenshot of the Language portion of the *Othello* microsite

Of the three sections for students on the microsites, the Character section is intentionally designed to have students participate and engage with the play on the site. The section hosts a page for each of the characters featured in the production, and the pages are loosely modelled after a Facebook profile page, poaching recognizable social media models to attract and sustain the attention of students.[41] The Character section uses social media as the frame to establish the social network of the play for students, showing the relationships between characters, and even providing links to follow from character to

[41] For more on how theaters and festivals poach digital media models and practices, see chapter 2.

character. Rather than presenting them as characters on the written page, the Character section visualizes the relationships, connecting them to students' personal experiences by placing them within a familiar framework. This section of the microsite hopes to appeal to young audiences by taking what is assumed to be their lived experiences, in this case the experiences of young audiences that use social media, and uses those experiences to shape how students visualize the narrative and relationships of the play. When considered in tandem with the other two sections, the Playing Shakespeare microsites seek to facilitate transactional experiences for students by approaching the plays as works to be performed, rather than texts to be read.

Figure 13. Othello's page on the Character section of the *Othello* microsite

Overall, the Playing Shakespeare microsites utilize common digital media models, in this case the models of social networking sites, streaming media, and hypertext, to engage students through transactional experiences with the plays before they see the performances live at the Globe. The microsites serve as a means of immersing the

students in the world of the play and the characters to encourage students to relate the play to their own lived experiences. By doing so, the Globe hopes students will immerse themselves in the microsite, and in the process feel that attending the actual performance is meant to be an active, engaging experience. The microsites are meant to operate in a vein similar to what Stephen Purcell defines as immersive productions that "typically allow their audiences to move around the performance site at their own pace, and often to interact with the contents" (2013, 128-129). While Purcell is discussing productions that immerse their audiences in performances conducted at a physical site, the Playing Shakespeare microsites operate as a digital form of immersion meant to have students engage with the play in an online space. As they engage with the content of the microsites in the weeks leading up to the stage performance, the Globe strives to shift the transactional experiences students have with the play in the outer frame of the production from content delivery to active participation. However, it should be noted that the immersive and participatory nature of the microsites only go so far. While students can submit their briefs to the Globe or write to or as the characters, the response from the Globe is limited, and the characters do not respond as users on social networking sites would. Even as the Globe appropriates common social media models into their microsites to attract and sustain the attention of students on the Playing Shakespeare performances, they fail to account for one of the main reasons that those models are successfully courting students' attention in the first place.[42]

[42] I have written elsewhere on the challenges of incorporating social media into the rehearsal and performance process. For more on this, see Way (2011).

Underlying the content of the Playing Shakespeare microsites and the performances themselves is the conscious decision on the part of the Globe to engage students through methods that will attract and sustain their attention. Bill Buckhurst, director of several of the Playing Shakespeare productions, describes his vision for creating plays that speak to his target audience: "Young people are used to edited film, video games, things happening very quickly. I try to be aware of this but not in any way to produce theatre that patronizes its audience" (qtd. in Banks 2013, 198). Both the microsites and the shortened productions are tools for the Globe to compete for the attention of students participating in Playing Shakespeare each year. Playing Shakespeare is designed to target student audiences who are used to multiple media constantly competing for their attention and providing short, quick experiences. It is not surprising then that the Globe has turned to digital media models such as social media and streaming video to compete for students' attention within the attention economy. The microsites are designed to be an integral part of the students' experience with live performance, shaping the outer frame of the theatrical event in order to prepare them for their experience with the inner frame. Ultimately though, the microsites do not seek to sustain the attention of young audiences; instead, they serve to direct the attention of those audiences back to the Globe and the physical stage of performance. The microsites operate as a digital analogue to W. B. Worthen's argument that the physical Globe building is "testimony to the desire to frame theatrical performativity as a field of historical recovery" (2003, 81). Even as the Globe designs the microsites and performances to engage young audiences, they do so to direct young audiences to the physical space of the Globe Theatre. As a result, the microsites serve as paratexts that

shapes students' experiences of the outer frame of the performance, but they are simultaneously established as secondary to the actual Playing Shakespeare performances.

Thus, the microsites serve to direct students' attention to the culminating aspect of the Playing Shakespeare program, the live productions of the plays performed at the Globe. The performances run throughout the last 3 weeks of the program, and they become the main event and focus of the students' attention. The live performances become a site of confirmation for young audiences, where students experience Shakespeare in performance and their engagement with it is either won or lost. For the students participating in Playing Shakespeare, the live performances complete the process started by the microsites and serve to either confirm or deny the Globe's claims to authenticity as a site for Shakespearean performance made throughout the content of the microsites. The process is akin to how live performance informs authenticity in rock music, as discussed by Philip Auslander: "live performance enables the determination of authenticity [in] that it is only in live performance when the listener can ascertain that a group which looks authentic in photographs, and sounds authentic on records, really is authentic in terms of rock ideology" (2008, 90). Though live Shakespearean performance is obviously not mediatized and distributed in the way rock music is, for students who have only experienced the Globe and its work through the lens of the Playing Shakespeare microsites, their visit to the Globe and experience as a member of the audience for the production becomes the moment in which the Globe's claim to its status as an authentic site for live Shakespearean performance is validated. As they work to establish the authenticity of the Globe and Globe performance, the microsites also exemplify how, as Robert Shaughnessy argues, performances at the Globe, "while

apparently eschewing both modern theatrical technology and modern media, are in actuality dependent on, condition and deeply informed by them" (2006, 308). This is especially the case for the young audiences that participate in the Playing Shakespeare program, as the microsites use a myriad of digital technologies to introduce students to the Globe and have those students engage with the Theatre's work.

Though the digital experiences offered by the microsites become the frame for students to engage with Shakespeare and the Globe, the microsites mainly serve to direct the attention of the students in the program to the physical site of the Globe. The prioritization of the performances over the microsite is clearly exhibited in a pair of Deutsche Bank videos discussing the success of the Playing Shakespeare program.[43] The videos provide a number of statistics, such as the fact that for the 2013 *Romeo and Juliet* "over 16,000 free tickets have been allocated to schools" or that from 2007 to 2015, over 117,000 students have attended a free Playing Shakespeare performance. In one of the videos, the Director of Globe Education Patrick Spottiswoode states emphatically that Playing Shakespeare allows students "to see Shakespeare as he intended, playfully, as a man who wrote plays for a theatre, not a classroom desk." Playing Shakespeare works to fulfill a rather traditional role for Globe Education, bringing new groups of students to the Globe each year, often for the first time. For those students that take part in Playing Shakespeare each year, whether the Globe will continue to compete for their attention and become relevant for a new generation of students relies heavily on its ability to deliver on the promises of performance made by the microsites. Another fact from the

[43] Both videos are accessible through the Deutsche Bank site at https://www.db.com/unitedkingdom/content/en/playing_shakespeare.html.

videos states that “9 out of 10 students say they want more Shakespeare” based on a 2013 survey conducted by the Globe, but the question remains whether the Playing Shakespeare program will have a deeper impact for students beyond their experiences of a single performance. The Playing Shakespeare program seeks throughout to establish the Globe as a site of interesting and engaging performance for young audiences, but it still privileges the physical site as the location of the theatrical experience. Though the Globe uses digital media throughout the microsites to engage young audiences with their work, these methods of outreach still rely heavily on the Globe’s claims to historical authenticity and experiences at the physical site to attract young audiences to their work, rather than seeking to utilize the potential of digital technologies to engage young audiences in new ways.

Young Shakespeare Nation

Where the Globe seeks to establish itself as an authentic site for Shakespearean performance with Key Stage 3 and 4 students by directing their attention to live performances at the physical site of the Globe Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company is taking quite a different approach to engage these students through its Young Shakespeare Nation program, co-sponsored by The Prince’s Foundation for Children and the Arts. Created to coincide with the RSC’s project to perform all of Shakespeare’s plays over a six year period, Young Shakespeare Nation is designed to train teachers across the United Kingdom to teach each of the plays in preparation for the performances being streamed into classrooms across the country. The program is introduced on the

RSC's website through a short animated trailer starring Billy Shakespeare, Francis the Pig, and David Tennant.[44] Midway through the video, an animated Tennant joins the other characters on screen and highlights the variety of themes and ideas to be found in Shakespeare's canon. Similar to Playing Shakespeare, the trailer displays how Young Shakespeare Nation seeks to engage young audiences by appealing to them through themes that relate to their interests and lived experiences. There is also a clear desire to establish why young audiences should be interested in Shakespeare and his plays, and the trailer highlights different and interesting aspects of the plays, such as when Tennant says (complete with an animated pie on his head) "If you're looking for original deaths, then there's *Titus Andronicus*. People get baked into a pie in that one." Later in the trailer, Shakespeare emphasizes the goal of the program: "We want to inspire a new generation. That's why we've called it Young Shakespeare Nation." The trailer clearly targets both teachers and students as its audience, and it emphasizes the ways that the Young Shakespeare Nation performances will make Shakespeare's plays interesting and accessible for students.

The program operates under a contrasting model to the Globe's Playing Shakespeare. Rather than being designed to direct students to the physical sites where live performance is created, Young Shakespeare Nation streams the live performances to students in their classrooms. One of the goals of The Prince's Foundation is to engage "with disadvantaged children nationwide who do not have access to high-quality arts activity because of either social or economic barriers," and Young Shakespeare Nation is

[44] The trailer can be found on the RSC's website at http://www.rsc.org.uk/education/young-shakespeare-nation/trailer.aspx.

designed to achieve this goal.[45] Participation in Young Shakespeare Nation is free for teachers and students, and brings Shakespearean performance to students in interactive and immersive ways. The performances occur at different points throughout the school year, and any class in the UK can participate in the performance if they have access to the appropriate technology. The liveness of the Young Shakespeare Nation performances are a defining aspect of the program, as classes can only view and participate in the performances on the scheduled date and time. Through the streaming format, the RSC utilizes both of the twin logics of Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's remediation (2000, 5). Young Shakespeare Nation performances draw attention to their hypermediated aspects, as students are clearly aware that they are viewing a performance

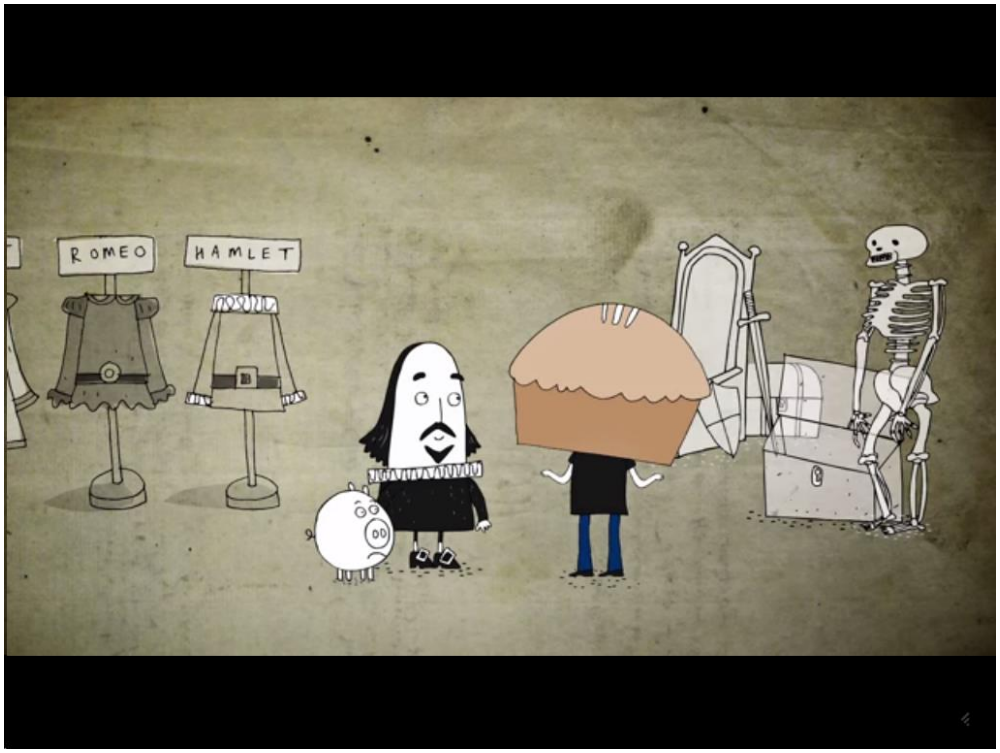

Figure 14. Screenshot from the Young Shakespeare Nation trailer

[45] For more on the Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts, see their website at http://www.childrenandarts.org.uk/about-us/.

on the screens in their classrooms, and so the performances highlight the media frames they are presented through. However, they also simultaneously attempt to erase the presence of those frames by facilitating the students' access to live Shakespearean performance. Doing so helps to emphasize the nature of the performances as a theatrical events, even if the students themselves are not physically in the theater.

Through its live streaming model, Young Shakespeare Nation distinguishes itself from other educational outreach programs such as Playing Shakespeare that seek to direct young audiences to the physical sites of the theater. Young Shakespeare Nation operates using a logic that bears some similarities to the National Theatre's NT Live project, which is designed "to broadcast the best of British theatre live from the London stage to cinemas across the UK and around the world."[46] In a report compiled by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) upon the completion of two NT Live pilot broadcasts in 2009, Hasan Bakhshi et al. posit that the success of the pilots "confirms the centrality of 'live' for the audience experience—both in the theatre and in cinema" (2010, 2). This conclusion relies in part on how the audiences' experience the event by either viewing it at the theater or in the cinema, spaces that have established codes of behavior and shape audience participation and expectations in certain ways. As Stephen Purcell notes in his discussion of the NT Live program and NESTA report, this success may rely in part on the fact that the NT Live performances may be more suitable

[46] For more on the NT Live program, see the National Theatre's website at http://ntlive.nationaltheatre.org.uk/about-us.

for viewing in the cinema than in the theater (2013, 60).[47] In this way, the NT Live performances fall under Daniel Fischlin's definition of intermedia: "co-productive forms of representation that are what they are as a result of the simultaneous commingling of discursive and technical fields that arise in given historical circumstances" (2014, 1-2). The NT Live program utilizes cinema as a medium for bringing live theatrical performances to a broader audience than could fit in the physical theater or attend a live production, but in utilizing the medium of cinema the performances must account for its conventions and affordances.

Though the classroom is quite a different context from the theater or cinema, aspects of the Young Shakespeare Nation performances also utilize an intermedial logic. The RSC recognized that the Young Shakespeare Nation performances have to compete for young audiences' attention against other content and media, so they sought to attract student audiences to Shakespearean performance through using what Marvin Carlson refers to as ghosting, which "presents the identical thing [audiences] have encountered before, although now in a somewhat different context" (2001, 7). Carlson's ghosting is focused on how the past "haunts" performance in the present, but as Jennifer Hulbert, Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., and Robert L. York argue "the use of electronic media means that one does not necessarily encounter the work of a performer (or writer) in the order in which they were created" (2006, 11). This appears to be what the RSC was hoping for when they chose *Richard II* starring David Tennant as the first performance to be

[47] Purcell uses Laurie Osborne's article "Speculations on Shakespearean Liveness" as the basis for this consideration, applying her argument regarding "an increasing awareness of 'to-be-filmedness' in live theatre" (2006, 54). For more, see Osborne (2006).

streamed in the Young Shakespeare Nation program. While *Richard II* is not a go-to play for secondary school audiences, the choice of a play with a star like David Tennant serves to draw the attention of students. Even though he has a history of performing with the RSC, it is more likely that students will know Tennant from his roles in *Doctor Who* and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*.[48] Tennant's roles familiar to students may have haunted students' experience with the performance, but they also served as an attractor for students to engage with a play they were less likely to be familiar with, while they provided the RSC with a strong audience for its (at the time) new outreach program.

As the program has continued, the performances rely on engaging young audiences through specific approaches, particularly the participatory aspects of the performances. Each performance is followed by a live question and answer session with the cast and crew that the students are able to participate in from their classrooms by submitting questions through Twitter. By doing so, the sessions establish a cultural learning process that "engages the learner through mentoring relationships and a set of expectations situated in an informal cultural context" (Frailey, Buck-Rodriguez, and Anders 2009, 3). This aligns with the RSC's "guiding academic principle for curriculum entitlement…that modes of learning should be an authentic re-creation of the real work done by actors, directors, audiences and critics" (Neelands and O'Hanlon 2011, 240). Similar to Playing Shakespeare, the Young Shakespeare Nation productions seek to provide students with access to the behind-the-scenes process of making theater.

[48] Some students (and teachers) may also have been familiar with Tennant from his performance in the RSC's 2008 production of *Hamlet* with Patrick Stewart, which was subsequently filmed and then broadcast on BBC Two and distributed on DVD in 2009. For more, see http://www.rsc.org.uk/explore/shakespeare/plays/hamlet/2008.aspx.

However, rather than providing this online over a period of weeks with little direct interaction between young audiences and the cast and crew, the RSC provides this access with the live event itself, offering a dynamic of participation the Playing Shakespeare microsites do not achieve. Even though the performances only occur for a few hours, they more successfully model a participatory culture, not only allowing students to participate in the process through asking questions, but also facilitating students' learning by having the cast and crew share their knowledge and experiences with students. In this way, the students that participate in the Young Shakespeare Nation performances are able to learn from the experienced cast and crew about both the specific productions and the larger process of making theater.

Though the Young Shakespeare Nation performances themselves occur on a given day and time, the RSC provides teachers with a wealth of resources to have their students engage with the play before watching the performance.[49] These activities offer numerous active methods for engaging with the play, and many of them are designed to offer specific perspectives from the cast and crew. For example, there are three teaching packs with activities available that teachers could have used to prepare for the viewing of *Richard II*. The first focused on Gregory Doran's directing process, the second on Nigel Lindsay's journey as an actor, and the third on Stephen Brimson Lewis's vision as the designer of the production. In each packet there are activities that seek to have students engage with the play through transactional experiences, whether having students consider what a king should be, justify the actions of characters in the play, or choose various

[49] The teaching resources can be found on the RSC's website at http://www.rsc.org.uk/education/online-resources/shakespeare-teachers-pack.aspx.

settings in which the play could be performed. This helps students to become familiar with the play, since unlike the Playing Shakespeare performances, the Young Shakespeare Nation performances are not shortened or condensed for student audiences.[50] Like the content of the Playing Shakespeare microsites, the teaching packets offer activities that facilitate students' engagement with the play and with the RSC's approaches to performance. Instead of using these materials to direct students back to the physical sites of performance, the activities created by the RSC are designed to engage students with the RSC's brand of performance in preparation for the live streaming event. The RSC even conceives of the event as a participatory learning event, rather than a passive viewing experience. In a trailer discussing the school broadcasts, Jacqui O'Hanlon draws attention to the fact that "What's unique about the schools broadcasts is that there are thousands of students all participating together at the same time online, and that makes it probably the biggest Shakespeare classroom in the world."[51] Rather than maintaining a distinction between digital media and live performance, Young Shakespeare Nation brings them together to engage young audiences in the RSC's specific brand of Shakespearean performance.

By emphasizing the streaming performances as live events, Young Shakespeare Nation reveals its biggest difference from Playing Shakespeare and other educational outreach programs that directs young audiences to live performances on the physical stage. The Young Shakespeare Nation productions show how the physical aspects of

[50] The RSC does have another program, the First Encounter program, which performs shortened versions of the plays for younger audiences.

[51] The broadcast trailer can be found at http://onscreen.rsc.org.uk/education/broadcast-trailer.aspx.

liveness are less connected to issues of authenticity for younger audiences than they have been in the past. Since the students can only participate in these performances through the broadcasts to their schools on a specific day and time, the liveness of the event still shapes their experiences of it, even if it is delivered in a mediatized format. If the student misses that day or the school does not participate in the broadcast, there is no way to return to the event after it has occurred. In this way, even as the program seeks to reach new audiences by expanding its geographical borders, it still presents the performance as a live event. The Young Shakespeare Nation performances incorporate aspects of live and mediatized performance together, and in doing so evidence Dennis Kennedy's argument that due to the pervasiveness of digital technologies in our lives, "perhaps we have moved into a new phase of human life, one in which it does not matter whether an event occurs before us or distantly in some simulated, recorded or heavily mediated form" (2009, 7). The program emphasizes the access it provides to live performance, but it also does not dwell on this fact or seek to assert that the mediatized streamed performances are secondary experiences to seeing the production live in the physical theater space. It strives to attract the attention and engagement of young audiences in just the opposite way, by positioning the streaming performances as access to the real, live product.

In the model provided by Young Shakespeare Nation, the RSC uses live streaming to create a theatrical event experienced synchronously by all the students participating in the program. Such a model challenges notions of liveness that are rooted in physical presence, and instead focuses the attention of young audiences on the event as experience. Mark Faust discusses the nature of experiences, noting that "certain events

stand out, become memorable in such a way that when we look back on them, we might be prompted to say, 'that *was* an experience.' Such experiences are marked by a sense of engagement and involvement" (2001, 40). The RSC hopes that the Young Shakespeare Nation performances will serve as such experiences to students, creating transactional experiences for young audience to shape their interests around not just Shakespeare, but Shakespeare as performed by the RSC. Like the Globe, the RSC wants their student audiences to feel a sense of ownership and engagement with Shakespeare and their work; as they do so, they prove Sarah Olive's argument regarding the concept of students "owning" Shakespeare. The RSC provides young audiences with access to Shakespeare through the Young Shakespeare Nation program, and by doing so they seek to have those young audiences invest in the RSC and its work in the long term. The RSC indeed wants to inspire a new generation and create a "Young Shakespeare Nation," one that sees the RSC as the source of exciting and engaging Shakespearean performance.

As they work to engage young audiences with the RSC's work and brand, the Young Shakespeare Nation performances employ a different method of establishing authenticity with young audiences than the Playing Shakespeare performances. Young Shakespeare Nation does not use claims of historical authenticity to direct students back to the physical sites of performance where that authenticity is then confirmed. Rather, the program relies on the audiences investing in the RSC's brand of performance as authentic and valuing the liveness of the event. Though the former relies on the RSC's history and traditions, the latter is focused on the experiences of young audiences in the present. The Young Shakespeare Nation performances exemplify how, as Auslander states, "Live performance now often incorporates mediatization to the degree that the live event itself

is a product of media technologies" (2008, 25). In the not too distant past, the RSC and other institutions would have balked at providing access to live performances through digital media, wanting to keep live performance located at the physical site of the theater. However, the popularity and ubiquity of digital media among today's audiences, particularly young audiences, presents an opportunity for theaters and festivals to engage those audiences in new ways, and reach out to a larger potential audience than they have been able to in the past. For the student audiences of Young Shakespeare Nation, the experiences they have through the program's live streaming events serve to establish the RSC's authenticity, and may be a determining factor in whether those young audiences continue to invest in the RSC's work or not.

Young Shakespeare Nation was created to bring a new generation of students to the plays of Shakespeare, and it attempts to do so by eliding the reliance on physicality inherent to educational programs that rely on site visits. The program utilizes the streaming model to provide students greater access to Shakespearean performance, both in terms of expanding the audience and facilitating student audiences' active participation in the event. As students participate in the Young Shakespeare Nation performances, the RSC's desire is that students will begin to take ownership of their brand of Shakespeare in the process. By doing so, Young Shakespeare Nation attempts to counter the boring and inaccessible perception of Shakespeare among students by having their experience of Shakespearean performance be an interactive and participatory event. The challenge of the Young Shakespeare Nation program, much like the Playing Shakespeare program, is to sustain the attention of young audiences in order to have them continue investing that attention in their institutional work beyond the context of these school-based programs.

Through creating experiences that utilize streaming media to engage students with their work and with Shakespearean performance, the RSC positions itself as an institution that offer new and exciting approaches to Shakespearean performance. Their uses of digital media discussed here represent a new model for facilitating young audiences' engagement with Shakespearean performance, one that relies on the liveness of the event but not the physical presence of its audience in a single space. The real question though remains to be answered given the newness of the program: will this be a successful model that creates a new generation of Shakespearean audiences, or will young audiences direct their attention to other opportunities and interests, Shakespearean or otherwise, beyond the context of the classroom?

The Future of Theater (Education)?

In her book *Theatre, Education and Performance*, Helen Nicholson states that "Theatre education is not, interestingly, primarily concerned with actor training or teaching students to work in theatre, but in encouraging young people to find points of connection between lived experience and theatrical representation" (2011, 5). While theater education is viewed by some as either elitist in reinforcing theater as high art or exploitative in attracting young audiences to the theater for commercial gain, Nicholson argues "there has also been a significant paradigm shift in the cultural sector in which participation and learning is taking a leading role" (2011, 208). Both Playing Shakespeare and Young Shakespeare Nation are programs that tap into the participatory aspects of digital media and use them to create transactional experiences for young audiences to have not only with Shakespeare's plays, but also with the different brands of performance

offered by the Globe and the RSC. These two programs reveal that each institution understands the potential of early experiences to engage young audiences with Shakespeare and theater; as Matthew Reason argues, "The perception is that early arts experience…is crucial to an individual's long term enjoyment of the arts and theatre" (2010, 23). The Globe and the RSC have each created a model to engage young audiences with their work and provide experiences that will potentially shape their relationships with the institutions and with Shakespeare in the future. By doing so, they are considering young audiences as the "active, critical judges of quality" discussed by Johanson and Glow in the introduction of the chapter. As these programs strive to obtain the attention of young audiences and sustain it on the institutions and their work beyond educational contexts, they attempt to create experiences that will bring students back once they have completed the programs.

It should be noted here that while the RSC and the Globe have sought to utilize digital technologies as the means to attract educational audiences to Shakespearean performance, the educational outreach for both Stratford and the OSF are conspicuously absent from this chapter.[52] The Stratford Festival is actually in the process of developing several digital educational approaches in cooperation with the University of Waterloo and the University of California, Davis, but these new programs have not yet been released publicly. On the other hand, the OSF has chosen for the time being to keep their educational outreach linked to the physical site of the Festival, as discussed by Mallory

[52] For more on Stratford's plans, see Jennifer Roberts-Smith, Shawn Desouza-Coelho, and Toby Malone's article "*Staging Shakespeare* in Social Games: Towards a Theory of Theatrical Game Design" in the forthcoming issue of *Borrowers and Lenders*. I would like to thank them for sharing this work with me ahead of its final publication.

Pierce: “Philosophically, our education programs are linked to the work here on stage. We prepare our materials and our workshops and our prologues. Everything that we do is to prepare an audience of kids, primarily, for this work on stage here” (2013). While Pierce cites the OSF’s educational philosophy as the reason for having their outreach remain on site, another possible factor is that smaller regional festivals such as the OSF may not have the funding available to develop the types of digital educational outreach programs along the lines of Playing Shakespeare or Young Shakespeare Nation. Though they are developing digital tools for their educational outreach, Stratford is only one of three entities working together to create these tools and use them to have young audiences engage with Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance. Whether festivals such as Stratford and the OSF are able to develop their own digital tools for their educational work and remain competitive with institutions such as the RSC and the Globe may ultimately rely on the funding they receive internally or externally to support the development of these new forms of educational outreach. However, the festivals themselves also have to be committed to supporting and developing new methods for engaging young audiences, which may be critical to their ability to attract new audiences and remain relevant with them in the future.

The two different models of Playing Shakespeare and Young Shakespeare Nation present potential directions for the future educational outreach of other theaters and festivals. Playing Shakespeare follows a more traditional model that uses digital media to direct young audiences through experiences that culminate at the physical site of the Globe Theatre. Young Shakespeare Nation, on the other hand, utilizes the potential of streaming media to “expand the territory of a production,” exposing a larger audience of

students to their work (Li Lan 2003, 52). By streaming performances into classrooms across the United Kingdom, the RSC challenges the idea that live theater takes place only in a shared physical space, and in the process gives credence to Fischlin's claim that "Given the new technologies available (and in the making), concepts of presence, virtuality, liveness, intermediation, and even performance need to be rethought" (2014, 7). While the success of both programs ultimately remains to be seen, they offer potential models for theaters and festivals that hope to engage young audiences in their work. Each program utilizes digital media to encourage students to participate in the theatrical experience by presenting Shakespeare's plays not as texts to be studied but performed. As they do so, Playing Shakespeare and Young Shakespeare Nation are both designed to expose students to a particular brand of performance representative of each institution and its approaches to Shakespearean performance.

Chapter Five: The Digital On/As Stage: Models for the Future of Shakespearean Performance

In the previous three chapters, I have consider the impact that digital media have had on the ways Shakespearean performance institutions attempt to engage their audiences online. Barring the example of Young Shakespeare Nation in the previous chapter, the practices and strategies I have discussed up to this point are all designed to shape online audiences' experiences of what Susan Bennett identifies as the outer frame of performance, comprised of the "cultural elements which create and inform the theatrical event" (2003, 139). The growing digital presences of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Stratford Festival have expanded the nature of the interactions that occur between these institutions and their audiences in the outer frame. While much of the work done in the outer frame is still focused on shaping how audiences experience specific performances or productions, a good portion of theaters and festivals' work in the outer frame is designed to attract and sustain the attention of audiences to maintain the cultural relevance of their overall brand. This relevance has become linked to issues of authenticity, as each institution works to assert itself as an authentic site for Shakespearean performance through its digital presences by emphasizing its own history and traditions. The outer frame has become the space where audiences are informed not just about a performance or production, but about the current approaches institutions are undertaking in a continual effort to keep audiences engaged with their work in Shakespearean performance.

Since audiences that engage with institutions through their digital presences are likely to encounter these presences more frequently than they would tend to visit the

physical theaters or festivals, the interactions that occur between institutions and audiences in the outer frame are where many of the negotiations over cultural value take place. But what role does the inner frame play in these processes of negotiation, and how are digital media changing what occurs in the inner frame of performance for audiences? One prominent example of shifting how the audience experiences the inner frame of the performance has been the rise of the streaming model discussed in chapter 3. While the RSC has recently begun streaming performances as part of the Young Shakespeare Nation program, the RSC has been using streaming in its Live from Stratford-upon-Avon performances since November 2013.[53] For several years the Globe has distributed encore screenings of its stage productions to international cinemas, and in late 2014 announced the Globe Player, which would allow individual users to rent or stream over 50 productions and view them on their own.[54] The Stratford Festival recently announced in 2015 their plans to film and distribute performances of each of Shakespeare's plays over the next ten years.[55] For Shakespearean theaters and festivals, the streaming model allows an entrance into the global culture economy, circulating their work in performance with audiences who may not be able to visit the physical sites where performance occurs.

Streamed performances place pressure on the relationship between the live aspects of a performance and the physical presence of the audience that are central to definitions of liveness such as Peggy Phelan's: "Performance's only life is in the present.

[53] The program streams live performances to the UK and select other countries, and then will continue to broadcast the screenings to other countries through encore screenings of the original live performance. For more on the program, see the website at https://onscreen.rsc.org.uk.

[54] Information on the Globe Player is available on its website at https://globeplayer.tv.

[55] See the Stratford Festival HD website for more information at http://www.stratfordfestivalhd.com.

Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations *of* representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance" (1996, 147). For Phelan, a live performance can only occur in a specific physical place and time, though digital technologies have continued to challenge such a rigid definition. Streaming is one example of this; live streamed events such as the NT Live broadcasts discussed by Stephen Purcell, the Young Shakespeare Nation performances, and the Live from Stratford-upon-Avon performances all show how physical presence is becoming less of a defining criteria for liveness than it has been for audiences in the past. However, this does not mean that theaters and festivals utilizing the streaming model take this for granted. As Purcell has noted, many of these performances "have sought to construct themselves as 'hyper-live' (a liveness, to paraphrase Baudrillard, 'without origin or reality'; 1994: 1)" (2014). Institutions offering these streaming programs or events overemphasize the liveness of the event and its real-time nature, and though streaming offers a new means for bringing stage performances (either live or recorded) to audiences, it is these claims to liveness and the newness of streaming that institutions use to set these events apart from the stage productions occurring at the theaters and festivals, rather than the performances themselves.

However, streamed performances are a means of attracting larger audiences to the product of Shakespearean performance institutions: live Shakespearean performance. This chapter will discuss the effects of incorporating digital media into Bennett's concept of the inner frame of performance, "the dramatic production in a particular playing space" (2003, 139). There have been some recent attempts by theaters and festivals both to incorporate digital media into Shakespearean performance on stage and to explore

digital media, and social media in particular, as sites for performance. The first approach, incorporating digital media onto the stage, seeks to bring such technologies into what Robert Weimann refers to as the *locus* of Shakespearean performance, the "specific imaginary locale or self-contained space in the world of the play" (2000, 181). The second approach seeks to use social media as the *platea* for Shakespearean performance, "an opening in *mise-en-scéne* through which the place and time of the stage-as-stage and the cultural occasion itself are made either to assist or resist the socially and verbally elevated, spatially and temporally remote representation" (Weimann 2000, 181). Both approaches offer potential models for theaters and festivals to engage today's audiences in new ways through incorporating technologies that are recognizable and relevant. Throughout the chapter I will consider the benefits each model holds for Shakespearean theaters and festivals as they continually seek to attract new audiences to their work in Shakespearean performance.

The Digital on Stage

As digital media become ubiquitous in our everyday lives, it does not seem surprising that such media would begin to be incorporated into the *locus* of various productions of Shakespeare's plays. What is surprising is how infrequently this actually occurs at the Shakespearean performance institutions that are the focus of this study. While the Globe does not integrate digital media into their performances given their emphasis on original practices, the OSF, the RSC, and Stratford do not follow the Globe's philosophy, and yet they seem to be reticent to bring representations of digital media into the *locus* of their performances as well. Though these three institutions often

perform Shakespeare traditionally—that is with costumes and sets that are vaguely Elizabethan—all three also feature several recent productions that adopt modern settings. Given the presence of cell phones, laptops, digital cameras, and other digital media in our everyday lives, it would make sense that productions using a modern setting would bring props or representations of these technologies into performances. However, when looking at the production histories of the OSF, the RSC, and Stratford from 2005 to the present, only a handful of productions that adopted a modern setting actually made digital technologies part of the performances. Looking through these productions, a few trends emerge from among the various approaches employed to include digital media within the *locus* of these performances.

The first trend is to include digital media as stage objects or props. The difference between the two, as discussed by Andrew Sofer, is that while stage objects can be anything on the stage, "a stage object must be 'triggered' by an actor in order to become a prop" (2003, 11-12). There are several recent productions that have included digital media as props, often meant to operate as shorthand representations for the experiences of today's digital world. In a review of Bill Rauch's 2007 OSF production of *Romeo and Juliet*, Michael Shurgot notes that the production emphasizes the difference between the older and younger generations in the play through their dress, and at one point a young woman "listening to an I-POD [sic], jogged past the gates…as Romeo gazed longingly at her" (2008, 117). Des McAnuff's 2008 production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Stratford Festival also brought digital media onto the stage. In this performance, the play opened "in 21st century Verona, in a public square, with motorized scooters, young women text-messaging on their cellphones, and two servants of the Capulets who are itching for a

fight with the Montagues" (Emsworth 2008). Like Shurgot and McAnuff, Rupert Goold's 2010 production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the RSC utilized digital technologies briefly in the form of a digital camera used by Romeo. Early in the production Romeo used the camera to take "a digital photo of (presumably) a girl sitting" in the front row and make "disparaging comments on her attractions when reviewing her image on the camera's screen" (Sokol 2011, 211). Though in each of these productions, the digital media serve as props according to Sofer's definition, they have little impact on the dramatic action of *Romeo and Juliet*. They signal the modern setting of each production, but fail to do much more beyond that.

Looking beyond *Romeo and Juliet*, some other productions by these three institutions have also incorporated digital media into the *locus* of Shakespeare's plays with the intent of doing more than just signaling modern settings. Cardboard Citizen's *Timon of Athens* production, part of the RSC's Complete Works Festival in 2006-2007, was set in the business world and used laptops and Powerpoint presentations to establish this setting for the audience (David 2006). Rauch's 2010 production of *Merchant of Venice* bridged past and present, with Nerissa having a laptop in the courtroom (Ridden 2011). Chris Abraham's 2014 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Stratford Festival included an on-stage DJ and had the mechanicals consult "an iPhone as to whether or not there would be moonshine on the night of their play" (Stephenson 2015, 171). Iqbal Khan's 2015 production of *Othello* at the RSC used laptops and satellites to reinforce the setting of modern warfare used for the production (McElhearn 2015). These four productions brought digital media as props onto the stage in more sustained manners than the *Romeo and Juliet* productions, but they still straddle the line Andrew Sofer

draws between stage objects and props. Each of these productions looks to emphasize the modern setting it uses, placing Shakespeare's plays into familiar frameworks for audiences, but each struggles with intertwining the modern media and settings with the dramatic action of the plays in a meaningful way.

However, some recent productions have succeeded in incorporating digital media into Shakespearean performance through more engaged or sustained strategies. Rather than simply setting a scene, such productions make digital media tools in establishing themes or issues that they look to address through performance. One such recent production that achieved this goal was the Theatre for a New Audience's *Merchant of Venice,* directed by Darko Tresnjak as part of the RSC Complete Works Festival in 2007. The production was set in "'the near future' and made clever use of computers and text-messaging cell phones to encourage [the audience] to discard [their] desire for a historically accurate representation" (Basile 2007, 112). In this case, a modern setting offered a method for exploring the action of the play and its meaning for a contemporary audience, one that relied less of the play's history of production.[56] In the process, the modernization of *Merchant* used the anachronistic setting "to help the audiences see themselves in the play" (Werner 2012, 174). As Sarah Werner notes, such anachronism might "give license to a politics in the audience that is not set free in other venues" or contexts (2012, 174). This does not necessarily mean that productions need to be political, but that by adopting a modern setting and integrating it with the dramatic action can open up such potential experiences for audiences.

[56] Michael Basile argues that this approach was successful in his review, though Peter Kirwan felt the production was not as successful in achieving this goal. For more, see Basile (2007) and Kirwan (2007).

Any dramatic production that desires to use modern settings and technologies to create some sort of commentary should consider how to approach modernizing Shakespearean performance with purpose. In their book *Post-Colonial Drama*, Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins discuss two productions of Euripides's *The Bacchae* that modernized their settings, arguing that their "updating of the plot overshadows any attempt to decentre imperial hegemonies" (1999, 18). Though modernizing the settings for performances can open up new ways of seeing and experiencing Shakespeare's plays, as Gilbert and Tompkins note, a balance has to be struck so that one aspect does not overshadow the other. Striking such a balance was a challenge that David Tse had to address in his production of *King Lear* with Yellow Earth Theatre, which was also performed at the RSC for its Complete Works Festival in 2006. The production was bilingual, and set in 2020 London and Shanghai. Alexa Huang detailed the importance of the two languages and settings in her review:

> The play opened with an ''updated'' division-of-the assets scene. Lear is a Shanghai-based business tycoon who solicits confession of love from his three daughters. The scene is set in the Shanghai penthouse office of his transnational corporation. Lear (Zhou Yemang, a Chinese film star), Regan (Xie Li), and Goneril (Zhang Lu) spoke fluent Mandarin Chinese, but the English educated Cordelia, a member of the Asian diaspora no longer proficient in her father's language, could only say nothing. (2007, 240-241)

To stress the separation between Cordelia and her father, in the scene she stood "behind a semi-transparent screen that represented a video link from London" (Huang 2007, 241). This choice, along with the setting and prop choices including cell phones, text

messaging, and other multimedia aspects, utilized digital media within the *locus* of the performance to "foreground the metaphor of translation" (Huang 2007, 241).

Tse's production provides a potential model for how Shakespearean performance could bring digital media into the *locus* of the plays in ways that emphasize or enhance issues and themes from the plays relevant to modern audiences. Tse's *Lear* brought digital media into the performance to highlight the differences between language and culture that were used to frame Tse's take on Shakespeare's play. The various digital technologies used in the production served as tools to frame London and Shanghai as distinct settings, and further emphasize the problems of translation and meaning between Lear and Cordelia. Productions that adopt a modern setting can look to performances like Tse's or Tresnjak's as models. Both productions utilized digital technologies to connect their audiences to the dramatic action and the worlds of Shakespeare's plays. As they did so, they exemplified Andrew Sofer's argument that "we must acknowledge the prop's intertextual resonance as one key to the uncanny pleasure—the shock of familiarity within the unfamiliar—that the prop provides in performance" (2003, viii). Through their incorporation of digital media into the *locus* of Shakespearean performance, both productions use the familiarity of the media to help the dramatic action of the plays better resonate with audiences. As future productions consider how to modernize their settings and incorporate digital media into the *locus* of Shakespeare's plays, they should account for the potential intertextual resonance that certain props or technologies may hold for particular audiences. Doing so can help theaters and festivals establish methods for making Shakespearean performance relevant to newer audiences through the audience's recognition of situations and props they may find familiar from their everyday lives. Not

only can approaching Shakespeare's plays through the use of modern settings and props potentially make the plays more accessible to audiences by placing them in such frameworks, but also it can help to establish connections for the audiences between the modernized settings and the dramatic action of Shakespeare's plays.

Thus, as institutions continue to experiment with integrating digital media into live Shakespearean performance, they should consider how themes or issues relevant to today's audiences can be explored through Shakespeare's plays. One example of this is Bill Rauch's 2010 *Hamlet* at the OSF, which used the play to explore the theme of surveillance. Rauch incorporated security cameras into the set to create "a world of surveillance, in which…Ophelia was given a hidden microphone, so that she could spy on Hamlet all the more effectively" (Ridden 2011). By bringing such devices into Hamlet's world, the production set "a tone of high alert resonant with our contemporary surveillance culture" (Kuftinec 2011, 102). Laird Williamson also explored modern themes and issues in his production of *Coriolanus* in 2008 by setting the play in the modern world, portraying a power struggle "between guerilla citizens, politicians in suits, and two uniformed armies" (Ridden 2008). Williamson's *Coriolanus* used a variety of digital media to situate the play's action within the context of recent wars. The politicians used cell phones and laptops throughout, and in Act I, Scene iii, "Young Martius played on a Gameboy" (Ridden 2008). At another point, "Reporters using laptops and cell phones, in the style of NPR, relayed Caius Martius Coriolanus's victory to the tribunes and citizens of Rome" (Shurgot 2009, 126). The integration of these media into the *locus* of *Coriolanus* allowed Williamson's production to not only make the action of the play more accessible for its audience, but also use the play's dramatic action to feel, as

Michael Shurgot put it in his review, "uncomfortable accurate" (2009, 127). As they were brought into the production throughout, the laptops, cell phones, and other media aided the production in creating a timely commentary on war in the modern world.

Productions such as the 2010 OSF *Hamlet* and 2008 OSF *Coriolanus* are models for how digital media can be incorporated into performances, whether subtly or overtly, to establish similarities between the dramatic action of Shakespeare's plays and themes and issues relevant to modern audiences. By doing so, such productions use those themes and issues as the means to make Shakespeare relevant to audiences, reestablishing the appeal of Shakespeare for new audiences in the process. Productions such as the OSF *Hamlet and Coriolanus* highlight the fact that, as Stephen Purcell discusses, "the discourses we make Shakespeare speak in performance are never universal but always, in fact, constructed from our own social, political, and cultural concerns" (2009, 24). As they seek to make Shakespearean performance relevant to new audiences by incorporating digital media into the *locus* of performance, institutions such as the OSF, RSC, and Stratford are simultaneously constructing performances that seek to tap into the social, political, or cultural concerns of their audiences. While digital media can serve to make Shakespearean performance accessible for audiences, they also give such performance the potential to engage audiences through current issues relevant to those audiences. As we continue to see concepts such as surveillance, privacy, and war being reworked and redefined in our own lives, Shakespearean performance can offer one avenue to explore and address such issues.

Another production that wholeheartedly embraced the use of digital media in Shakespearean performance to explore issues of surveillance, war, and the integration of

media into our everyday lives also utilized *Coriolanus* as part of its dramatic action: Toneelgroep Amsterdam's *Roman Tragedies*, directed by Ivo van Hove. The extremely ambitious performance was a "nearly six-hour long, intermission-free spectacle [that] cut together three of Shakespeare's Rome-set tragedies: *Coriolanus*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*" (Ball 2013, 164). The production utilized an expansive set that allowed audience members to navigate between the auditorium, the stage, and even the exterior of the theater as they all became spaces across which the performance occurred. As a result, the *locus* of the plays and the *platea* of the performance spaces overlapped for the audience, resulting in what Weimann refers to as the "double image" created for the audience (2000, 191). Up until this point, the productions I have discussed have contained the fictional world of the plays to the stage, using digital media to help the audiences draw connections between the world of the plays and their own experiences. Though not by the OSF, RSC, or Stratford, van Hove's production offers a model for actively bringing the world of the plays and the world of the stage together for the audience by blurring the boundaries between the two. Though the audience did not directly participate in the dramatic action of the play, they participated in the *locus* of the plays in various ways and molded aspects of the performance as it occurred.

Though most of the performance took place on stage, it was also streamed to televisions around the venue available for the audience to watch, and the audience during each performance was especially encouraged to tweet using the hashtag #RomanTragedies. The set also included "an LED ticker that broadcast curated selections to those seated in the house," bringing the audiences' tweets into the *locus* of the three

plays (Ball 2013, 164). In his review of the performance he attended at the Barbican Theatre in London in November 2009, Christian M. Billig noted that

> van Hove wanted to focus on a particularly modern inflection of what Shakespeare had to say about high-end politics and geopolitical power mechanisms and…he wanted to explore how technologically mediated channels of political representation…militate against meaningful dialogue between social groups in the modern world. (2010, 415)

Twitter became the platform throughout the performance that audiences could use to respond to or comment on the action, and in doing so they shaped the online discussion and reception of the performance. As James R. Ball III states, "The integration of Twitter in the *Roman Tragedies* not only brought contemporary historical and political events onto the stage to be incorporated into the meanings made, but charged the audience with the work of writing that history in the moment" (2013, 169). By having them participate via Twitter, van Hove's production had the audience play a specific part in the performance, one that would be quite familiar for any audience member who was already a user of the site.

As a model for incorporating digital media into the *locus* of Shakespearean performance, *Roman Tragedies* stands out from the other productions discussed thus far. Not only did *Roman Tragedies* bring digital media into the dramatic worlds of *Coriolanus, Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* in extensive ways, but also it used Twitter to bring the audience into them as well. While the tweets throughout the performance were accessible to anyone who searched the hashtag, it was the participation of the audiences at the live performances that crafted the responses to the dramatic action

and the meanings that were made. van Hove's performance experiment incorporated digital media, and social media in particular, into dramatic performance to shine a light on the connections between Shakespeare's plays and our contemporary moment. It accomplished this by integrating digital media into both the *locus* and *platea* of the performances and giving the audience a reason to be active on Twitter. However, as the audience was asked to participate in the performance via Twitter, the move "situated spectators not as participants in the drama, but as fractured consumers of it" (Werner 2012, 175). *Roman Tragedies* sought to incorporate the audience reactions into the performance while also keeping the audience outside of the action taking place in the *locus* of the performance. Sarah Werner notes that the approach of *Roman Tragedies* is "a novelty for Shakespearean theatre," and the performance "forged strong connections with the audience" (2012, 175-176). Through having the audience participate, if only limitedly, in the performance, and incorporating that participation into the *locus* of the performance, *Roman Tragedies* offers a potential model for enticing audience to engage with Shakespearean performance in new ways.

Even as productions such as *Roman Tragedies*, Tresnjak's *Merchant*, Tse's *Lear*, Rauch's *Hamlet*, and Williamson's *Coriolanus* have found interesting and diverse ways to incorporate digital media into the *locus* of Shakespearean performance, these are only a handful of productions that have sought to do so in any sustained manner. Though other productions by the OSF, Stratford, and the RSC have brought digital media into Shakespearean performance, if only in limited ways, there are few examples that incorporate those media into performances with real purpose. While they were both performed at the RSC, Tresnjak's and Tse's productions were the work of other theaters,

and *Roman Tragedies* offers a fascinating approach to building digital and social media into Shakespearean performance, but it is not the work of any of the festivals or theaters that have been the focus of this project. While the OSF, Stratford, and the RSC do not seek to modernize all of their productions, it is somewhat surprising how few have actually sought to engage with aspects of the increasingly digital world that their audiences are part of every day. As they continue to seek ways to maintain their relevance with their current audiences and establish it with new ones, the performances discussed in this section offer potential models for finding new methods to make or keep Shakespearean performance relevant for audiences. Bringing digital media into the *locus* of Shakespearean performance can help to make the plays more accessible and engaging for some audiences, but there are also other approaches Shakespearean theaters and festivals should consider, such as making digital media, and social media in particular, the *platea* for Shakespearean performance.

The Digital as Stage

Among the four institutions I have focused on throughout this study, only the RSC has experimented with using social media as the *platea* for Shakespearean performance. They have done so twice, first with *Such Tweet Sorrow*, which was performed in 2010, and again with *Midsummer Night's Dreaming*, performed in 2013. *Such Tweet Sorrow* was a collaboration between the RSC and the digital product agency Mudlark performed over five weeks in April and May 2010 by six actors and actresses via Twitter. As an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* designed to be performed entirely for an online audience, the cast of characters was trimmed down while the action was

updated to a modern setting so as to have the world of the play mesh with the world of Twitter. Even though it was hosted on Twitter, as Maurizio Calbi has discussed, the production utilized a number of Web 2.0 platforms to establish itself as part of "what Henry Jenkins may call 'convergence culture' (2)" (2013, 138). The production simultaneously embraced its identity as both Shakespearean and Twitter performance, seeking to engage the attention of audiences through its dual identity. It did so in part by bringing "the characters into the twenty-first century and makes them as real as any other person with a digital life" (Ailles 2014, 97). Rather than making them inaccessible characters closed off from the social network of users following the production via Twitter, the actors could and did engage with the audience at several points throughout the production by responding to their tweets, soliciting their feedback on certain questions, and even interacting with them on other platforms such as Xbox Live. However, even as the audience participated in the process, *Such Tweet Sorrow* still followed the dramatic precedent set in Shakespeare's play, ending with the deaths of Romeo and Juliet at the end of the performance.

As it looked to establish social media as a platform for dramatic performance, *Such Tweet Sorrow* found mixed success among its audiences. In his discussion of the online reception of *Such Tweet Sorrow*, Calbi identifies a debate that started on John Wyver's *Illuminations* blog a few days after the performance started. At the heart of this debate was the performance's claim to a Shakespearean identity, tied for many audience members to the language of *Such Tweet Sorrow*. What this debate highlighted, Calbi argues, is whether a production such as *Such Tweet Sorrow* should or should not be considered Shakespearean (2013, 143-144). Calbi situates this debate in the larger

context of debates over the appropriation of Shakespeare as framed by Douglas Lanier: "The question—and it is a contentious one—becomes how far we are willing to extend the name 'Shakespeare', and the answers often hinge on the assumptions about what constitutes the essential or authentic Shakespeare" (2002, 9). For many that participated in the debate on Wyver's blog, the language used in the performance, which was modernized and fit into the 140 character limit of Twitter, immediately disqualified *Such Tweet Sorrow* from being considered Shakespearean. Applying language as a criteria for defining performances as Shakespearean is nothing new, and heavily invested in what W. B. Worthen argues are literary notions of drama, in which the stage is "understood as a site of *re*production" of the text (2008, 56). Though the issue of language was clearly part of the problem for members of the audience, the choice of Twitter as the platform for their performance experiment complicated the issue.

While language may have been what some audience members used as their criteria, the question of Shakespearean identity of *Such Tweet Sorrow* may have been more because of its use of Twitter as a platform for dramatic performance. Though Twitter was established in 2006, in 2010 Twitter had approximately 50 million active users compared to the 314 million active users Twitter had as of July 2015. Twitter provided the RSC the opportunity to reach a large number of users, but at the time the community of users was comparatively small next to Facebook's 400 million active users in 2010.[57] As a social media platform, Twitter had become more popular and had a strong

[57] In 2010, Twitter reported adding over 100 million users, though there were questions about how many of these users were active on the site (for more, see van Grove (2010)). In June 2015, Twitter reported having a community of 316 million active users (for more, see https://about.twitter.com/company).

user base, though using it as a platform for Shakespearean performance may have resulted in *Such Tweet Sorrow* struggling to find the younger audience it targeted through both the choice of play and the social media platform. Roxana Silbert, director of *Such Tweet Sorrow*, in discussing the choice to adapt *Romeo and Juliet*, stated that they chose the play because they "wanted to talk to a young audience. It was a play that had young characters and basically people tend to follow their own age groups" (qtd. in Dibdin 2010). Siblert's comments reveal a clear intent to use Twitter to target young audiences for the performance experiment, though the audience that followed along was, if the debate that occurred on Wyver's blog was any indication, more diverse. The question of the *Such Tweet Sorrow*'s identity (and success) as Shakespearean is heavily rooted in its intermedial nature. Here it is useful to return to Fischlin's definition of intermediality introduced in the previous chapter: "co-productive forms of representation that are what they are as a result of the simultaneous commingling of discursive and technical fields that arise in given historical circumstances" (2014, 1-2). For *Such Tweet Sorrow*, one of the defining circumstances of its production was its use of Twitter as a stage for performance, resulting in the lack of a physical stage to frame the dramatic action for audiences.

As the performance took place over Twitter, it was immediately marked as distinctly different from stage performances. Whereas streamed performances are recognizable because they take place on the theatrical stage (even if viewed remotely), *Such Tweet Sorrow* made Twitter the *platea* for the performance. In this way, *Such Tweet Sorrow* operated as a site-specific performance, which Christopher B. Balme defines as "performances that take place outside pre-existing and pre-defined theatrical spaces," but

it approached the concept of site-specific performances in a new way by not relying on the physical space of a theater (2006, 122). It instead used a digital space, one where users regularly perform aspects of their personal or social identities online for their networks of followers. As Balme notes, "Site-specific performances utilize natural features or historical spaces and buildings to provide a spatially determined semantic frame for the actual performance" (2006, 122). In the case of *Such Tweet Sorrow*, the semantic frame was Twitter, and the result was an overlapping and entwining of the *platea* of Twitter and the *locus* of *Such Tweet Sorrow* in the same digital space, a space that is not necessarily conceived of by its users as designed for dramatic performance. In its choice to treat all of Twitter as the stage for performance, *Such Tweet Sorrow* may have appeared for many audience members to have moved too far away from their preconceived notions of Shakespearean performance.

Billed as a follow-up experiment to *Such Tweet Sorrow* and utilizing a different approach to performance, *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* operated as a performance that took place on both the physical and digital stage. The experiment was another joint project, this time between the RSC and Google, and took place over one weekend from June 21st-23rd, 2013. Leading up to the performance, many of the cast and crew participated in Google Hangouts with online audiences to discuss the upcoming performance, incorporating aspects of Henry Jenkins et al.'s concept of participatory culture, as users could participate in the Hangouts, ask questions, and learn from the cast and crew about the process of making the performance a reality. The Hangouts operated much like the Q and A sessions of Young Shakespeare Nation, as users with a webcam and a Google+ membership could participate and engage with the cast and crew. The live

performance itself occurred in Stratford-upon-Avon from the 21st to the 23rd, and simultaneously a digital performance of the play occurred on the Google+ platform. While *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* looked to use Google+ as a *platea* for its performance as *Such Tweet Sorrow* had used Twitter, as Christie Carson and Peter Kirwan have discussed, this experiment was less accessible for online audiences:

> Complaints about the project during the event mostly stemmed from a misunderstanding of the Google+ platform, as many had expected the website to offer a live stream of the actors in Stratford. Google+ was instead configured not as a broadcast platform but as a 'virtual stage' curating genuinely digital performances, played by actor-technicians rather than being avatars for live performers. (2014)

The result was two performances, one for the audiences in Stratford, the other for audiences on Google+, which presented *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from two distinctly different points of view: the performance of the actors on stage, and the performance of another set of actors on Google+.

Whether the choice to have the experiment built around a physical production was a direct response to the entirely digital performance of *Such Tweet Sorrow* or not, it nonetheless sought to engage audiences in a social media performance on Google+ by establishing a connection to the physical sites of performance throughout the three day experiment. As Carson and Kirwan noted above, some of the issues with the experiment came from the audiences' confusion over how the experiment would operate. While many were under the assumption that the live parts of the performance would be streamed online, the performance that took place on Google+ followed the model of *Such*

Tweet Sorrow's use of Twitter by having characters perform a separate but simultaneous performance online. The result though was that while there were two performances for audiences to follow, *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* ultimately fell back onto the older model of directing audiences "to identifiable, palpable sites of the real" (Huang and Ross 2009, 9). While it tried to establish the *locus* of the play both in Stratford-upon-Avon and on Google+, by using both sites as the *platea* for the performance as well it ultimately privileged those audience members that could visit the physical site of the performance. By incorporating a physical performance into the experiment to place it within a more recognizable theatrical frame for audiences, *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* unintentionally confirmed the secondary status of the digital to the physical in the experiment.

Both *Such Tweet Sorrow* and *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* sought to attract the attention of audiences to the RSC's experiments through the use of social media as a *platea* for performance. Though they both met with mixed success, the two productions offer potential models for future experimentation with performing Shakespeare for audiences via social media. One way that *Such Tweet Sorrow* and *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* did so was by approaching the concept of dramatic time in new ways to compete for the audiences' attention. Both productions took place in real-time, providing audiences with a look at how the events of *Romeo and Juliet* or *A Midsummer Night Dream* might actually occur when not constrained by the compressed dramatic time of a stage performance. Thus, the action of *Such Tweet Sorrow* was spread out over five weeks, while the action of *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* took place over three days. In arguing for aggressively cutting Shakespeare's texts for performance, Joe Falocco states

that “Most spectators in the new millennium, however, will benefit from shorter performance scripts,” noting the attention span of audiences that are either younger or busier (2012, 122). Falocco’s argument is focused on making stage performances shorter to keep audiences engaged, thinking about how live Shakespearean performance can compete for audiences’ attention within the attention economy. Both of the RSC’s social media performance experiments approached the attention economy in a different but not unrelated way. Rather than worrying about sustaining the attention of audiences over the period of a couple hours, each performance allowed the audience to access the dramatic action occurring on Twitter or Google+ on their own time. *Such Tweet Sorrow* even provided a timeline for audiences that allowed them to view or search through the tweets that had already occurred throughout the performance to catch up on the action. *Midsummer Night’s Dreaming* took place over a much smaller window that *Such Tweet Sorrow*, but there was a Google+ community established where posts were shared and those participating in the performance could continue to follow along over the three days of the experiment.

Given how distinctly different both experiments were from the RSC’s traditional stage productions, both performances marked themselves through utilizing and expanding what Willmar Sauter refers to as their “event-ness,” which comes from Sauter’s view that “theatre manifests itself as an event which includes both the presentation of actions and the reactions of the spectators, who are present at the very moment of the creation. Together the actions and reactions constitute the theatrical event” (2000, 11). The two experiments used the heavily mediatized spaces of social media to engage audiences in theatrical events that occurred over a much longer span of time than traditional stage

performances would be performed, but they still managed to operate as live events shaped by the dramatic action that occurred within the *locus* of each performance and the audiences' reactions to the events as they took place. In this sense, while audiences could go back through the action and revisit what has already occurred, there is still an emphasis placed on experiencing specific moments of the performances live as they took place in real time over Twitter or Google+. Thus, even while we may envision the tweets of *Such Tweet Sorrow* or the posts of *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* as synchronic, since they can all be simultaneous accessed and explored by users, the status of both experiments as theatrical events relied on the diachronic nature of the dramatic action as it took place over days or weeks. Both performances relied on the liveness of the productions as they occurred to mark them as theatrical events which could not be re-experienced after they had taken place.

Such Tweet Sorrow and *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* highlighted another potential draw for performing Shakespeare online: the ability to explore the plays from different perspectives or viewpoints. As Stephen Purcell argues:

> In the online world of Web 2.0, 'liveness' might be defined by interactivity, responsiveness and an apparent multiplicity of choices. Much of the Shakespearean performance work [conducted online] seems to emphasise the postmodern fragmentation of grand narratives into a multiplicity of equally legitimate 'perspectives' from which the viewer is free to choose. (2014)

Each experiment allowed audience members following the performance to explore the action in their own ways. In this way, both productions modelled what Purcell defines as immersive productions that allow audiences to explore the performances at their own

pace (2013, 128-129).[58] *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* had the dramatic action occur in two spaces, and those who followed the performance online over three days could approach the action in any number of ways. They could have chosen to participate in the Hangouts leading up to the performance to have a greater understanding of the production's context and what the cast and crew hoped to accomplish. They could have also just chosen to focus on the performance itself, and they had the choice whether to just follow the action online or participate in the process by creating and sharing content. Those able to be in Stratford for the live parts of the performance could choose how they navigated through the digital and physical aspects of the production. While *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* and *Such Tweet Sorrow* are by no means the first two performances to allow audiences to explore the dramatic action of Shakespeare's plays in their own ways, they highlight the potential of social media and other digital media as platforms for dramatic performance that could help audiences engage with the plays in new and interesting ways.

These two experiments also exhibit how social media performances can present the plays in ways that do not reduce the dramatic action to mere online reproduction. Christie Carson has suggested "that any move towards reducing the spontaneity of what takes place on stage and creating a more rigid experience seriously threatens the integrity, but also the point, of the live theatre experience" (1999, 131). *Such Tweet Sorrow* approached this by having the actors create their own tweets throughout the performance. While there were storyboards that provided the overarching plot of the performance, the

[58] For more on how Purcell's concept of immersion can be mapped onto digital aspects of performance, see chapter 3.

cast created their own tweets throughout, which also allowed them to engage with the online audience members that chose to participate in the performance by tweeting at the characters. As a result, even as the progression of the dramatic action was predetermined by the storyboards, the actual performance itself was a joint creation of the actors and audience together. Using social media to interact with the audiences also allowed the actors to work around one of the major challenges of performing live online, reacting to the audience's input (Dixon 2007, 508). *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* followed a similar model, as the audiences could share content and the actors behind the online characters could respond throughout the production, though the live production in Stratford-upon-Avon was kept separate. These interactions between actors and audiences are one of the methods social media performances can use to maintain the spontaneity of the live theater experience. Through engaging with the audience and incorporating them into the performance experience, *Such Tweet Sorrow* and *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* established their status as live dramatic performances, even if the performance took place partially or completely online.

Such Tweet Sorrow and *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* both approached the audience with the intention of performing Shakespeare with the audience, not at them. As *Roman Tragedies* did by asking the audience to tweet throughout the performance, both of these performance experiments encouraged the audiences' participation and incorporated it as part of the performance. Bill Blake notes that "Theatre has prized itself as an interactive artform, especially in opposition to the cinema and television as each technological upstart usurped the stage from which it sprang" (2014, ix). Both of the RSC's performance experiments highlighted how social media can create new methods

for audiences to interact with and participate in Shakespearean performance. In *Such Tweet Sorrow*, audience members with Twitter accounts could and did tweet at the accounts of the characters, and the characters would often respond back to the users in return.[59] For *Midsummer Night's Dreaming*, a community page was set up on Google+ where posts from the online actors and the audience were collected and shared, as well as links to the Hangouts from the week leading up to the performance and follow-up posts regarding the experiment upon its conclusion.[60] Instead of assuming a passive online audience that would just follow the posts of characters' accounts, both productions sought to encourage and value their audiences' participation in the performances. By doing so, they also directly challenged definitions of liveness such as Phelan's, showing how social media and other digital technologies can facilitate live performances without audiences that are physically or even temporally present. Philip Auslander has argued that "mediatization is now explicitly and implicitly embedded within the live experience" (2008, 35); by using social media as a platform for dramatic performance, the RSC showed how intertwined the live and the mediatized can be.

As such experiments can facilitate explorations of liveness and dramatic action, so too can these aspects provide new ways of seeing Shakespeare's plays. What if, for example, audiences could witness Hamlet's struggle with his conscience, descent into madness, and eventual turn to action over a period of a few weeks over a site like

[59] I have written elsewhere on how *Such Tweet Sorrow* created an interactive experience for audiences that followed the performance on Twitter. For more, see Way (2011).

[60] The Google+ community is still available online, and can be viewed at https://plus.google.com/communities/106127284016801847582.

Facebook rather than a few hours? Could such an approach shed new light onto how we understand and conceive of his character? Or what if we were able to envision Iago plotting against Othello through backchannels on Twitter? Using platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, or Google+ could facilitate interesting explorations of the plays in ways that could not conceivably occur on a physical stage. Thus, social media could play a significant role in how future audiences experience and engage with Shakespearean performance, using the frameworks of various social media platforms to have audiences approach the plays in different ways. Doing so would allow institutions to take advantage of Lanier's concept of "reciprocal legitimation" by using social media to bring "street credibility, broad intelligibility, and celebrity" to Shakespearean performance (2010, 104).[61] Though performing the plays through social media may seem at first ploys to attract the audiences' attention to an institution and its work, such performance experiments can open up the plays for audiences to experience in new ways and in the process attract the audience's attention not just to an institution's work, but to Shakespeare's work as well.

So why should Shakespearean theaters and festivals consider using social media as the *platea* for Shakespearean performance? Much like the productions discussed in the first part of this chapter, Shakespeare could serve as a means to interrogate themes and issues relevant to modern audiences that may feel Shakespeare is not for them. In his analysis of *Such Tweet Sorrow*, Calbi notes that the performance brings "Shakespeare's language into the gravitational orbit of drug culture, a culture that is supposedly closer to

[61] Doing so would help counter digital marketing strategies that seem to reject the reciprocal legitimation relationship between Shakespeare and social media. For more, see chapter 2.

the younger 'tweeple' who are the main target audience of *Such Tweet Sorrow*" (2013, 156). Placing the action of *Romeo and Juliet* within the context of drug culture allowed the performance to interrogate the issue of addiction, not just drug addiction, but as Calbi states, media addiction as well. Using social media as a platform for Shakespearean performance could be used to explore a number of issues relevant to digital audiences, such as communication, privacy, surveillance, and identity. For instance, witnessing the gulling of Malvolio as an act of cyberbullying or expanding the themes of surveillance established in Rauch's and Doran's *Hamlet* by witnessing Rosencrantz and Guildenstern cyberstalk Hamlet's online actions could help audiences explore relevant and timely issues through the lens of Shakespearean performance. Not only can performing Shakespeare on social media shine light on these issues, but also it can allow audiences to participate in the exploration of such themes. Such models can offer Shakespearean performance institutions the chance to engage audiences in ways that could create meaningful interactions through incorporating issues and themes relevant to them, while attracting new audiences to Shakespeare and his works.

Future Directions

Throughout this chapter I have discussed different ways that digital media have been incorporated into the *locus* of Shakespearean performance, and how some of those media have become the *platea* over which Shakespeare has been performed. Some of the productions I have addressed offer fruitful models for performing Shakespeare's play, and here I want to briefly make the case as to why theaters and festivals should continue to build on these models and experiment with digital media both on the stage and as the

stage. To return to Bill Blake's point from earlier in the chapter, theater has prized itself as an interactive art form, and within the attention economy, has sought to set itself apart from television and cinema, and even in many ways from the digital media that they are using to engage their audiences online. Steve Dixon refers to this as the "poor theater position" which situates theater as the underdog to the more popular media of the moment, and while theater is seeking new ways to attract the attention of audiences to their work, relying solely on theater's underdog status "sets up a peculiar, dialectic dynamic that celebrates the heroic radicalism of live performance's resistance to hegemonic media, yet simultaneously retains a deep conservatism through its fierce resistance to change from its traditional theatrical, historical past" (2007, 125). The continued relevance of theater and Shakespeare may rely on escaping this dynamic and seeking out the ways that digital technologies might serve to make the work of the theater relevant to new audiences. Instead of adopting a mentality where digital media threaten theater as an art form, it can only prove fruitful to explore the potential relationships that could be cultivated between Shakespearean theater and digital media.

Shakespearean performance institutions that choose to explore these relationships stand to gain new audiences, and even regain old audiences, through such work. Incorporating digital media into stage performance might allow older or more traditional theater audiences the opportunity to explore Shakespeare's plays from new angles. For new audiences, social media could offer a familiar framework to engage and interact with the plays if they are performed online, as well as provide opportunities for audiences unable to visit the physical sites to still engage with institutions and their work. As Christie Carson and Peter Kirwan argue:

> Fascinatingly, whereas widening participation and public engagement are inseparable in the case of universities from the commercial business model increasingly adopted by educational institutions, in the case of theatre—already a commercial enterprise—this kind of digital engagement, which carries no promise of material or financial gain, becomes a genuine extension of a public identity. (2014)

When envisioned not solely as individual productions or one-off experiments, but as parts of institutions' larger missions and brands of work, theaters and festivals can build on the productions discussed throughout this chapter to continue establishing their relevance with their audiences both on and offline. By investigating how digital media might be used within Shakespearean performance rather than at odds with one another, theaters and festivals can break away from the dynamic described by Dixon and prove to their audiences how and why they should still be considered relevant.

Since digital media have become ubiquitous in the daily lives of many of their audiences, theaters and festivals should seriously consider the ways that they can integrate digital media into their approaches to Shakespearean performance. Not only can digital media provide new ways to perform Shakespeare and attract audiences to his work, but also it could allow audiences to use Shakespeare to engage with current issues and reestablish theater as a site for public debate. Incorporating explorations of relevant themes or issues regarding digital media could represent a turn to a more socially engaged theater. Helen Nicholson identifies such an approach as applied theater, which utilizes "a focus on its intentionality, specifically an aspiration to use drama to improve the lives of individuals and create better societies" (2014, 4). While Nicholson's study of

applied theater focuses on performance examples that use found or institutional spaces (e.g. shuttered factories or prisons) as the settings for theatrical performance, this concept can be extended to digital spaces, nor does it have to exclude the physical stage. Bringing digital media into the *locus* of the plays, or using social media as the *platea* to frame performances, presents Shakespearean theaters and festivals with the opportunity not only to establish their relevance with new audiences by making their work accessible and engaging, but also to position themselves as institutions relevant to audiences because of their position as engaged cultural institutions, an issue that I will return to in the conclusion to this project.

Conclusion: Moving Forward

Throughout this dissertation, I have addressed the myriad ways that Shakespearean theaters and festivals have utilized digital media to engage their audiences online with the ultimate goal of gaining and maintaining those audiences' attention. By keeping hold of that attention, theaters and festivals are constantly seeking new methods for remaining relevant with their audiences in the ever-growing attention economy of digital media. In this conclusion, I want to return to the audience, and to some of the issues regarding access discussed in chapter 1. I also want to return to the argument for a more socially engaged theater from the end of chapter 4. As they continue to experiment with and incorporate digital media into their marketing and performance practices, Shakespearean performance institutions are continually negotiating and renegotiating issues of access between themselves and their online audiences. Many of these issues are rooted in the types of access they provide audiences so as to keep them interested without simultaneously undercutting the value of the live stage performances they offer. The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Stratford Festival have all touted their increased access for audiences through digital media, but even as they do so, they are still heavily controlling the avenues and types of access available to their audiences. Though they profess desires for more engaged and democratized audiences, opening up access and engaging audiences via platforms such as social media where institutions cannot necessarily control their audiences' responses is as I have discussed throughout this project more complex, and does carry some risk for institutions.

To open up access for audiences and allow them to engage with institutions via digital media, Shakespearean performance institutions have to give up some of the control over how their content is received and shared through those media. The benefit here is that theaters and festivals can tap into the potential of such media to reshape their missions and identities with their audiences, as Christie Carson has argued: "Digital technology offers the institutional theatres a real opportunity to reinvigorate and relegitimise themselves as centres of public debate" (2004, 153). Carson goes on to suggest "that real responsibility accompanies the expanded remit which an increasingly democratic communication entails" (2004, 153). Theaters and festivals are taking an active risk as they hope to foster institution-audience interactions, allowing themselves to be more vulnerable to criticism the process. As they use digital media to engage larger audiences in their performance work without necessarily having to visit the physical sites, their audiences are able to make their voices heard by both the institutions and other audience members in these spaces. Rather than just interacting with an institution's content, audiences are able to engage with that institution and their work in various ways, and while many of the online audience members for the theaters and festivals discussed in this project may participate in limited ways, others are commenting on institutions' posts or posting to the institutions' social media accounts to share their opinions. Through the online presences of theaters and festivals on social media sites and other online spaces that facilitate institution-audience interactions, audiences are actively shaping the narratives of cultural value for these institutions.

As audiences are more active in creating and debating the cultural value of institutions and their work, theaters and festivals have to approach the use of social and

other digital media strategically. Though the RSC's *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* experiment was not designed to foster any sort of public debate, the corporate sponsorship between the RSC and Google shaped numerous aspects of the production. Given that as a social network site Google+ has lagged behind both Facebook and Twitter in terms of active and engaged users, no doubt some of the reasoning for the partnership was to highlight the potential and value of Google's social network site and draw new audiences to the platform.[62] In this case, *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* did not take advantage of the users who participated, but the influence of Google's corporate sponsorship determined the platform for interactions between the RSC and their audience for the duration of the performance experiment. Though the choice to use Google+ for the experiment did create some confusion as to how the audience would participate, it did not seem to deter the audience from taking part in the production.[63] However, in other instances, some of the RSC's other corporate sponsorships have been less well received. Though it did not take place online, this was the case when the members of the Reclaim Shakespeare Company staged a guerilla Shakespeare skit on the RSC's stage to protest BP's sponsorship of the World Shakespeare Festival.[64] The Reclaim Shakespeare Company used the RSC's physical stage to protest the RSC's corporate partnerships, and

[62] While Google+ has a large user base of over 2.2 billion users, in part because Google+ profiles are linked to users Gmail accounts, the social network has not been able to sustain the level of user activity that sites like Facebook or Twitter have. A study conducted by Eric Enge of Stone Temple Consulting that only 111 million of the 2.2 billion Google+ users had ever actually posted to the site. For more, see Enge (2015) at https://www.stonetemple.com/real-numbers-for-the-activity-on-google-plus.

[63] For more on these issue, see my discussion of the performance experiment in chapter 4.

[64] For more on the protesters, see their website at http://bp-or-not-bp.org.

social media can provide audiences with another platform to protest or criticize the actions or partnerships of theaters and festivals.

The Globe's audience showed exactly how such protests could occur via social media during the Globe to Globe Festival. As mentioned in chapter 2, Ryan Nelson has discussed how social media, specifically Facebook, became a site for audiences to protest the Globe and call for a boycott of the Habima Theatre's participation in the Globe to Globe Festival (2014). In this instance, Facebook became a site for resistance for the members of the Globe's audience, to the point that the Globe had to create a separate discussion board for those audience members who wanted to comment on the issue. The Globe also posted a statement to their Facebook page responding directly to the feedback and criticism of their audience. Though social media can serve to attract audiences to institutions' work with Shakespearean performance in new ways, those same audiences are able to utilize social media as platforms to discuss, critique, and even protest their work. Thus, the active presence of audiences on social media requires Shakespearean performance institutions to heed Carson's call to take responsibility as they use social media as platforms for audience engagement. Through their active engagement with institutions via social media and other digital technologies, audiences are able to exert pressure on institutions and their work in new ways. While institutions seek to keep their audiences' attention through digital media, digital media simultaneous provide audiences the means to hold institutions accountable and shape the cultural value associated with theaters and festivals and their work.

One of the reasons that Shakespearean theaters and festivals have cultivated online presences on social and digital media is to interact with larger audiences and

expand the reach of their work, simultaneously providing audiences with new avenues of access to institutions and their work in the process. On the surface, larger audiences would always seem to be beneficial to institutions and their goals. The more people they have interacting with their content and following their work, the more likely those people are to invest or reinvest in the institutions and that work at some point in time. However, as audiences continue to grow in size, theaters and festivals may have to face new issues regarding their online presences. One of these issues is the tension that arises in institutions' online outreach between targeting local or national audiences, and targeting international or global ones. The RSC's *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* was one example that tried to navigate this tension, courting the participation of an international audience while privileging a local one at the same time. In his prologue to the social media performance experiment, Tom Uglow wrote "We are inviting everyone on the internet to take part. We'd rather like 10,000 contributors extending the RSC across the world, commenting, captioning, or penning a lonely heart column for Helena" (2013). The project did attract a large audience, but as discussed in the previous chapter their experience of the performance was partial at best. Social media and other digital technologies may offer theaters and festivals access to larger audiences, but if they are going to court the attention of those audiences and engage them online, they need to determine the best practices for valuing both their local and international audiences. If their digital outreach continues to be accessible only for either local or global audiences, theaters and festivals stand a strong chance of losing either of these audiences' attention and becoming less relevant to them as a result.

How the OSF, RSC, Globe, and Stratford conceive of and target their online audiences can provide valuable insight into how Shakespeare and his works are being made relevant for increasingly international or global audiences. As each theater or festival crafts its own particular brand of Shakespeare and then seeks to have audiences invest in that brand through their digital outreach, that brand circulates among larger groups of users. Eventually, to return to Kate Rumbold's claim discussed in chapter 2, the work of individual institutions contribute to the overall "*impression* of a Shakespearean brand" (2011, 26). What this Shakespearean brand is or continues to be can reveal much regarding how Shakespeare and his works are constructed for global audiences. Thus, when considering the tension between the local and the global, we need to focus on both, as it is through local practices that we can understand how a globalized Shakespeare is constructed. As Mark Thornton Burnett argues, "The notion that a nationless Shakespeare is mediated via a process of localization should not surprise us; as the sociologist Darren O'Byrne states, 'the 'global' is itself constructed through local practices'" (2007, 58). Through analyzing how Shakespearean theaters and festivals are using digital media to negotiate the tensions between the global and local in their work and outreach, we can gain a better sense of exactly what sort of globalized Shakespearean brand is being constructed by not only the four institutions discussed in this project, but also other performance and cultural institutions, whether Shakespearean or otherwise.

The ways in which international or global audiences interact with Shakespeare through the lens of Shakespearean performance institutions' digital outreach has a significant impact on how audiences value Shakespeare and his works, as well as what Shakespeare can mean as we continue to move further into the twenty-first century. In the

introduction to their book *Shakespeare and the Ethics of Appropriation,* Alexa Huang and Elizabeth Rivlin indicate why we need to be aware of and address how Shakespeare is marketed and conceived of on an international and global level: "In an age when Shakespeare is increasingly globalized, diversified, spread thin, and applied in service of a multitude of agendas, it is more urgent than ever to analyze the ethical ramifications, byproducts, and problems that inevitably attend such appropriations" (2014, 2). For audiences that are interested or invested in Shakespearean performance but unable to attend live performances, their only exposure to how Shakespeare is being performed today may come through outlets such as social media, institutional websites, or clips on YouTube. What audiences have access to online may be what shapes their notion of Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance now and in the years to come. Therefore, accessibility to online content looks to continue to play a central role in how audiences conceive of Shakespearean theater, and how institutions shape and control that access may prove incredibly influential to the online audiences they target and interact with. As Huang and Rivlin contend, there needs to be greater attention paid to the ethical implications regarding how institutions utilize various digital media to engage with their audiences online.

I want to note here that whether Shakespearean theaters and festivals choose to target local or international audiences through their digital presences is not simply positive or negative. Social media can be used to engage local audiences as well as national or international ones, and conceptualizing outreach for each of these audiences presents an opportunity for Shakespearean theaters and festivals to build new connections with local, national, or international audiences alike. However, these institutions need to

be aware of the power they have in such situations, and the potential implications of either opening or closing access online for audiences. While social media such as Facebook or Twitter allow more audience members to make their voices heard by institutions or interact with institutions' content, having a website and establishing presences on social media does not constitute equal, or even necessarily open, access to their work. As Henry Jenkins argues, while "we might now see [media producers and consumers] as participants who interact with each other according to a new set of rules that none of us fully understands," the fact is that "Not all participants are created equal" (2006, 3). The institutions I have focused on in this study may all have online audiences that number in the tens or hundreds of thousands, but all these audiences do not necessarily have the same types of access as one another. One of the ways that theaters and festivals shape this access is by the platforms they choose to establish presences on to interact with their audiences, as well as the content they choose to share with their audiences on those sites.

Though digital media may seem to offer audiences a particular level of access, accessing the content of theaters and festivals online does require several things on the part of those audiences. To access the content of institutions through social media sites, audiences usually need to have accounts on those sites, or at the very least be familiar enough with them to navigate the sites in order to access the institutions' accounts. On a more basic level, to interact with institutions through digital media requires having the technology and internet access to do so. According to the United Nations *The State of Broadband 2015* report, 57% of the world's population do not have regular access to the internet (2015, 8). Not only does less than half the world's population have internet

access, but only an estimated 5% of the world's languages are available on the internet (United Nations 2015, 21). So while theaters and festivals (and a great many other institutions) tout the fact that digital media provide them the means with which to be open access, this access is only for some, and by no means all. Worldwide internet access is obviously not in the hands of Shakespearean theaters and festivals, but what is in their control is how they frame their claims regarding the access they provide. Their work may contribute to an international or global conception of what audiences value as Shakespeare or Shakespearean performance, and they have a responsibility to account for who can or cannot access their content, and how that content contributes to global perceptions of Shakespeare in performance.

Shakespearean performance institutions need to be careful of the narratives they craft through their digital outreach as well, whether these narratives regard access or not. This is not to say that institutions should not engage in various methods of digital outreach, but that when they do so, they should be open about their practices and policies. If theaters and festivals make claims that are false or misleading about the types of access they offer or their potential to democratize audiences, they run a real risk of isolating those audiences and damaging institution-audience relationships. Sharon O'Dair has discussed the problems of such "phony" claims: "And I submit that (phony) democratizing claims…are not innocuous. They are powerful and powerfully distort our own and the public's understanding of how elite professional institutions like the [Shakespeare Birthplace] Trust, the Royal Shakespeare Company or any major university work" (2011, 92). When interacting with their audiences online, theaters and festivals should consider the power politics at play in online spaces. Though audiences can exert

their views on important or relevant issues, as the Globe's Facebook audience did during the Globe to Globe Festival, such instances are rare, which may be due in part to how institutions present themselves in online spaces. If an institution claims to be open to feedback from members of their audience, but then fails to engage with that feedback or seeks to hide it from the audience at large, they undercut the very relationships they are trying to establish.

Theaters and festivals also need to think more about how they can build relationships with new audiences through digital media. In many ways, as discussed in chapter 2, the new audiences that institutions are hoping to engage with online are extensions of their traditional ones, who tend to be white and affluent. While it makes sense that they would continue to build their audiences that serve as their lifeblood, in many cases they fall into the trap of thinking of internet access as "inflected strongly with the neoliberal discourse of color blindness and nondiscrimination," which Lisa Nakamura rightly contests is "a paradigm in which failure to overtly discriminate on the basis of race, and the freedom to compete in the 'open market' despite an uneven playing field in terms of class, education, and cultural orientation constitutes fairness" (2008, 5). Considering the influence that institutions have in shaping the types of access and engagement they use for audience outreach, they can and should make a more concerted effort to build relationships with new audiences, not just expand on their traditional ones. Rather than thinking that the internet has created a level playing field, theaters and festivals should be more active in creating new forms of outreach designed to be more inclusive of diverse audiences. If they truly desire to establish their relevance with new audiences while remaining competitive in a global attention economy, Shakespearean

performance institutions need to work on developing new strategies and outreach that invite a greater number of voices and perspectives into their audiences.

Throughout this project, I have discussed some of the technologies and strategies that Shakespearean theaters and festivals are using to maintain their relevance with their current audiences and build it with new ones. Many of the approaches I have addressed offer a promising start, though theaters and festivals can continue to do better. It would be heartening to see these institutions embrace the potential the digital brings to theater, as Bill Blake has discussed:

> Particularly important in our digital moment are values associated with the global, plural, and inclusive. Greater artistic freedom, increased audience involvement and access, further engaged civic commitments—in the context of the digital there is something newly obvious about such concerns among theatre artists and producers, theatregoers and critics, arts supporters and cultural policy makers. (2014, 7)

Digital technologies represent potential avenues for expanding the role that both Shakespearean theaters and festivals and their audiences play in making Shakespeare relevant for a new generation. By using their positions as respected cultural institutions, theaters and festivals can utilize digital technologies to interrogate their audiences' relationship to Shakespeare, to institutions—whether cultural, commercial, social, or governmental—and to each other. Whether the OSF, RSC, Globe, and Stratford embrace such roles or not remains to be seen, but the time seems right for these institutions to reevaluate their purposes and consider how they can open up their institutional work to new audiences.

To develop methods and strategies to open up their work to new audiences will require institutions to develop combinations of qualitative and quantitative approaches that will allow them to better understand their audiences and their audiences' reception of their work. Rather than only understanding the demographics of audiences, theaters and festivals need to establish methods to account for the experiences of their audiences as well. As Katya Johanson argues, the "need to understand audiences—rather than take them for granted as the passive recipients of an artist's expertly prepared offerings—is all the greater in an era in which audiences are engaging actively in critiquing, creating and co-creating performances" (2013, 162).[65] Audiences are going to increasingly continue to engage with institutions both on and offline, and their experiences are going to help craft the narratives of cultural value regarding institutions, their missions, and their work, which makes it all the more important for theaters and festivals to know and understand their current audiences as they attempt to court the attention of new ones. Digital media can offer insight into audiences and their relationships with theaters and festivals to some degree, and so there is potential to utilize such media in ways that will help to develop a greater understanding of audiences' experiences. Through focusing on those experiences, and not just who is in the audience, Shakespearean performance institutions may stand to learn more about their audiences and those audiences' relationships with Shakespeare and Shakespearean performance.

Much like theaters and festivals, as scholars we should continue both to study the ways in which Shakespearean theaters and festivals use digital media to engage their

[65] Johanson's chapter details some examples of how such research is being conducted. For more, see her chapter in Radbourne, Glow, and Johanson (2013).

audiences online and to seek new methods for gaining a greater understanding of audiences' experiences. Will the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, the Stratford Festival, and other institutions build on their current strategies and audiences? And if so, will they utilize them to open up the spaces for new forms of interaction between themselves and their audiences, ones that may move towards more open, democratic relationships? Digital media are continually changing and being incorporated into our lives in new ways, so we should be attentive to how theaters and festivals integrate new technologies into their approaches for marketing and performing Shakespeare to better grasp how the concepts of relevance and cultural value continue to change. We also need to delve more into if and how digital technologies are changing or reshaping the experiences of audiences, whether with individual performances or productions or with institutions' missions and work as a whole. Whether digital media will lead to a major shift in the power politics between institutions and their audiences still remains to be seen, but whatever the results may be, they will continue to influence what Shakespeare can mean to local and global audiences alike.

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