



Asian Shakespeare Newsletter

Announcement



**The next ASA Conference will be held in Delhi, 1-3 Dec 2016.
Watch this space for further details!**

SHAKESPEARE AROUND THE WORLD

MANGA SHAKESPEARE

ANIMEX is one of the leading festivals in Europe for Animation, Game Design and Comics, and in February 2015 ASA committee members Ryuta Minami and Yukari Yoshihara, accompanied by Manga artist Harumo Sanazaki, travelled to Middlesbrough in the North East of England. The Festival, now in its eighteenth year, takes place at Teesside University, where the visitors gave a series of seminars, workshops, lectures and an

exhibition, all around the theme of Manga Shakespeare. Ryuta and Yukari have both published on this subject, and Harumo Sanazaki is one of Japan's leading artists in this widely popular genre, having published over three hundred books, as well as producing a number of animated films. Amongst these, she has treated a number of Shakespearean subjects, and has produced versions of *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and others.

ANIMEX attracts top talent from all over the world, and Harumo's work was seen alongside that of some of the very best comic artists from Europe and North America. The audience for ANIMEX is not usually over-burdened with an interest in Shakespeare, but the exhibition was enthusiastically viewed by gamers, animators and comic fans, and the presentation drew in students and academics from the University as well as gamers, Goths and geeks from all walks of life. Ryuta and Yukari gave a major presentation to the Festival, which was very well received. Manga Shakespeare is growing in popularity in the UK, where SelfMadeHero publish the Manga Shakespeare series, but Harumo's very Japanese approach was in fascinating contrast to the more eclectic western styles of comic on show elsewhere.

Ryuta first took the audience through Harumo's version of *Romeo and Juliet*. One of the fascinating aspects of Harumo's work is that, given that her Manga is aimed particularly at mature, female audiences (something which came as a surprise in the UK, where the normal demographic is young people), she takes the play from the perspective of one of the female characters whose viewpoint is marginalised. Thus, in the case of *Romeo and Juliet*, she looks at the play through the eyes of Lady Capulet. This offers some fascinating perspectives, and Harumo's Manga version also takes some of the interpretative decisions with regard to the play that a director might take in production. In her version, to give but one example, Mercutio and Tybalt have often fought, without actually harming each other. Their fighting is a ritual, almost a game. What goes wrong in what should be a ritual is the interference of Romeo. It is his intervention which causes the deaths, taking Tybalt and Mercutio completely by surprise. Ryuta delivered

a compelling insight into both Manga and Shakespeare, and the marriage of the two in Harumo's work, then handed over to Yukari to discuss *Macbeth*.

Yukari has a very different style, far more anarchic and challenging, which contrasted nicely with Ryuta's delivery, and provoked a different sort of reaction from the audience. She began by asking if anyone in the audience knew the name of Lady Macbeth, and when as expected nobody did, she delighted us by pronouncing the name of the Gaelic Queen from *Holinshed's Chronicle*. Harumo looks at the play through the eyes of the often-maligned Lady Macbeth. The presenters were all warmly received, Harumo answering questions afterwards, and were also invited to take part in the Plenary at the end of the Festival. At this one English Anime fan was so overwhelmed by meeting Harumo he had tears in his eyes. Again, not a reaction usually associated with Shakespeareans.

As well as their participation in ANIMEX, Ryuta, Yukari and Harumo also delivered a far lengthier session to students at Teesside University, where they addressed Final Year English students studying the Shakespeare Module. This brought a breath of fresh air into the sessions. Although Teesside does have an interest in Asian Shakespeare, (a look in the library will find books by many of the ASA committee!) it was the first time that visiting speakers from the other side of the world had addressed the students. The classes were delighted, helped at least in part by the fact that Yukari had insisted that eating Japanese snacks was an important accompaniment to listening to her talk.

Beside the talks and lectures, Harumo also led a practical workshop in Manga with Art and Design

students. Teesside University is starting a new degree in Comics, Graphic Novels and Sequential Design, and the enthusiasm with which the future students worked with such a wonderful artist was a delight to observe. Harumo was pleased with the work they produced, and it is hoped that this link can be fostered in future, with Japanese students and Teesside students exchanging work in the next year.

In between the superheroes and the killer robots, the Japanese guests ensured that William Shakespeare held his own with Batman, *Skullkickers* and *Guardians of the Galaxy*.

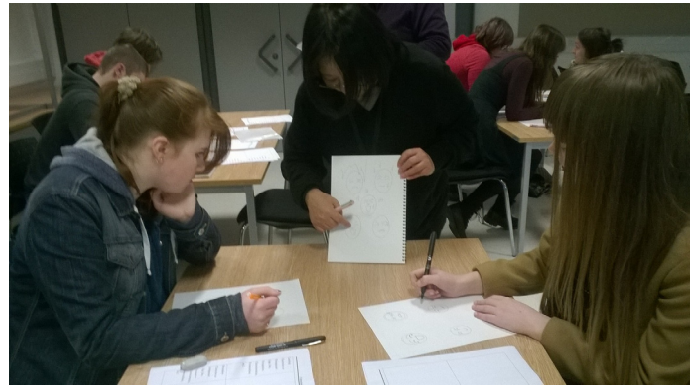
Ronan Paterson
Teesside University



1 Lady Capulet



2 The coronation of Macbeth



3 Harumo leading the workshop



4 Ryuta, Harumo, Yukari and Ronan together in front of part of her exhibition

GLOBAL SHAKESPEARE

Alexa Huang, founder member ASA, has been appointed the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in Global Shakespeare Studies at Queen Mary, University of London and University of Warwick, 2014-2015. She reported that it is a tremendous opportunity that has allowed her to 'teach and do research in London, to attend events and performances with the Global Shakespeare team, and to work with colleagues at Warwick and take advantage of its connections with the Royal Shakespeare Company, proximity to Stratford-upon-Avon, and research library resources especially its subscription to such databases as BoB: Box of Broadcasts by the British Universities Film & Video Council.' During her cultural immersion experience in the UK, she has also 'learned first-hand' how Shakespeare is

taught in the UK, and expanded her world views and research methods.



5 Alexa Huang with Ryuta Minami after she gave a talk at University of York's Centre for Renaissance on February 12

Shakespearean Plays in an English Language Teaching Class

How do we use Shakespearean plays in an English Language Teaching classroom? Last term, in the Department of Foreign Language Education, Faculty of Education, I taught our 3rd year students a Drama course. Some of our students found Shakespearean plays quite difficult to follow, because of their complicated meanings, symbols, and endless literary criticism.

My students read two Shakespearean tragedies, *King Lear* and *Romeo and Juliet* (among others, Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter*, Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard* and Ibsen's *A Doll's House*). In the class, they were divided into small groups (4-6 in a group). I asked them to use some parts of the play, particularly the beginning of *King Lear*, and *Romeo and Juliet*'s ending, to re-write them and enact them for English learning purposes.

As young English learners (between ages 20 and 22) and future English teachers, my students,

surprisingly, did come up with brilliant ideas of re-writing the plays. Their acting was even more fantastic! They made Ediz Turkoglu play Juliet (cross-dressing), and Hatice Birinci Romeo. Romeo eventually ran away with Juliet's nurse (Mizgin Korpe), turning the whole play into a comedy.

Some students designed wonderful in-class activities for *King Lear*. For example, Oktay Kara wrote in his term paper, a riddle game. He said, 'the teacher writes the names of characters on several pieces of papers, delivering them to students who are in small groups of 2-3 people. Each group should have one character and should not let others know what is written on their paper. Each group will describe their character, without telling the name. The rest of the class will listen and every group has only one guess. The group which collects most points is the winner'.

Teaching and learning Shakespearean plays can be fun and creative. Thanks to my students – for their passion and devotion.

Tzu Yu Allison Lin
Gaziantep University, Turkey

Performances

KL SHAKESPEARE PLAYERS: Othello

This is our fifth production under the 'Shakespeare Demystified' series, and we are gaining increasing recognition from schools and learning institutes for our approach in combining education with entertainment, making Shakespeare less intimidating to young

audiences.

Shakespeare Demystified: Othello will have its premier in local theatre in April. For the rest of 2015, we will be taking the same show to local schools. So far we have already received invitations from several international schools in Kuala Lumpur.

Lim Kien Lee

Founder/Producer/Artistic Director
KL SHAKESPEARE PLAYERS

www.klshakespeare.com.my

www.facebook.com/shakespearedemystified



6 Quartet



7 Des n Emi



8 Iago n Emi



9 Iago

The AUSA Outdoor Summer Shakespeare

production at the University of Auckland this year is *A Midsummer Night's Dream* running February 14th – March 7th. Directed by Michael Hurst, the production has been a critical and popular success. Its most striking feature is a chorus of fairies made up of senior actors ranging in age from 65 to 94, described by the director as displaying "wilted chic".

Here's a Facebook link:

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerShakespeareNZ>

And a review:

<http://lumiere.net.nz/index.php/a-midsummer-nights-dream-the-ladykillers/>

Tom Bishop

University of Auckland

The Rom Shing Hakka Troupe staged the Hakka version of *Betrayal* (inspired by Stephen Greenblatt and Charles Mee's *Cardenio*) in Kaifeng, Henan Province, China, on October 17, 2014, in conjunction with the 27th World Hakka Congress. Some of the photos taken during the performance are available in the following link.

<https://drive.google.com/?tab=mo&authuser=0#folders/0B7rgPbs80FddbDJrTDJxVE8tLTg>

Ching-Hsi Perng and Fang Chen, Co-playwrights of *Betrayal*, accompanied the troupe and lectured at Henan University of Science and Technology, Zhengzhou University, and Henan University on cultural adaptations of Shakespeare in general and on this play in particular.

The DVD of *Betrayal* will be released in early 2015 and available from Rom Shing. Please contact <http://hakkafans.myweb.hinet.net> or email

hakka.fans@msa.hinet.net



Fang Chen

Professor of Chinese Theater
National Taiwan Normal University

Pericles in South Korea

May 12 ~ 31 2015, at CJ Towol Theatre, Seoul Art Centre.

This production is supposed to contrast sharply the realistic aspects of *Pericles* with its fantasy. Directed by Yang Jung-ung, whose *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was performed at Barbican Centre and Globe Theatre, and *Hamlet* at Peacock Theatre in London.

Gower and old *Pericles* will be performed by You In-cheon, reputed actor of S. Korea, who has performed *Hamlet* five times, and was ex-minister of Department of Culture, Sports, and Tourism. His son, Nam Yun-ho, will perform young *Pericles*.

Hyon-u Lee, Professor of Soon Chun Hyang University in South Korea is the translator and dramaturge for this *Pericles*. He has earlier directed *Coriolanus* in 2005 and *HamletQ1* in 2009, and was a dramaturge for *Troilus and Cressida* in 2002 and of another *Pericles* in 2010, and *Hamlet*, a Woman's Son in 2014.

To Kill Or Not To Kill? in New Delhi

A solo-act adaptation of *Hamlet* and *Medea* woven around the theme of revenge was performed by the Arnav Arts Trust and directed by Ovlyakuli Khodjakuli, theatre artist from Turkmenistan, at the Bharata Rang Mahotsav, International Theatre festival at New Delhi on 10 February 2015.

'A woman downtrodden by society starts imagining herself as Medea and Hamlet and feels her personal tragedy is no less than theirs'. They are different stories but are similar in a tragic decision taken by these characters, just like our heroine. She uses words employed by Hamlet and Medea but it seems like she has come to the same ideas which were bothering both of them, like the final decision to kill or not to kill?'

(Director's note)

Poonam Trivedi
University of Delhi



10 Jilmil Hazarika in 'To Kill or Not to Kill?'

Exhibitions

Shakespeare Exhibitions in Taiwan

'Shakespeare Made in Taiwan,' a collaboration between Tainaner Ensemble and Taiwan Shakespeare Association, took place during the period of 3 October to 30 November 2014 in Taiwan's National Theatre and Concert Hall. The three co-curators (Lu Po-Shen, the artistic director of Tainaner Ensemble who has also directed several Shakespeare productions, Dr Bi-qi Beatrice Lei and Dr Lia Wen-Ching Liang) introduced to the public a myriad of Shakespeare productions created by Taiwanese artists in the following categories: Youthful Shakespeare, Xiqu Shakespeare, Musical Shakespeare, and Teasing Shakespeare. In addition to the exhibition itself, the programme included free public talks and workshops that presented the audience with in-depth explorations of the Bard for adults and children alike.

National Museum of Taiwan Literature is also planning a major exhibition on Shakespeare to be opened in September 2015. Co-curated by Dr Liang and Dr Lei with assistance from Taiwan Shakespeare Association, the exhibition will feature objects not only from local theatre companies and publishers but also from Shakespeare's Birthday Trust in the UK. In addition to Shakespearean productions done by Taiwanese professional and amateur troupes, the exhibition will also introduce to the general public Shakespeare's life and non-dramatic works, as well as his influences on contemporary culture.

Lia Wen-Ching Liang
National Tsing Hua University

Call For Papers / Future Events

Call for Papers: 'Where in the World is Shakespeare?' for the 2nd **International Shakespeare Conference: 'Translation, Adaptation, Performance'** September 18-20, 2015, at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

See www.umass.edu/shakespeare

Please e-mail a 250 word abstract to isc.umass@gmail.com by May 15.

British Graduate Shakespeare Conference

4-6 June 2015 at The Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire.

Invites abstracts of up to 200 words on subjects relating to Shakespeare, Early Modern, and/or Renaissance studies. More creative forms of criticism, including original writing, may also be submitted. See britgrad.wordpress.com, or email britgrad.conference@gmail.com.

To mark the tenth anniversary of *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation* a seminar and call for papers: **'Appropriation in the Age of Global Shakespeare'** University of Georgia, Athens, GA, USA, November 12, 13, and 14, 2015.

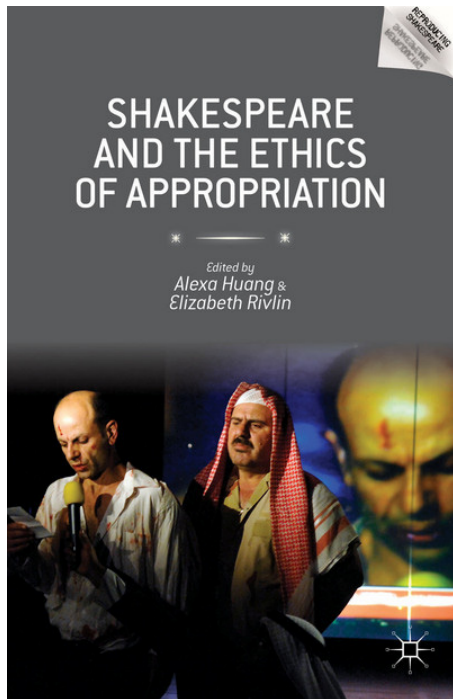
Send 150-word abstracts and a three-sentence biographical statement to Professor Sujata Iyengar <iyengar@uga.edu> and Professor Miriam Jacobson <jacobson@uga.edu> no later than April 10, 2015.

McMaster University is hosting the John Douglas Taylor conference (conveners: Helen Ostovich and Melinda Gough, English and Cultural Studies) called **Performance as Research: *The Three Ladies of London* in Context**

(threeladiesoflondon.mcmaster.ca) 23-25 June 2015. The conference will include two performances around which discussion in keynote lectures, seminars, workshops, and roundtable will revolve: Wilson's *The Three Ladies of London* (modernized Q2, 1592) (dir. Peter Cockett, School of the Arts, McMaster) and Shakespeare's *The First Part of Henry VI* (dir. Jennifer Roberts-Smith, Waterloo). Play reviews will be posted after the conference. Pre-conference essays are available online.

Dr H M Ostovich <ostovich@mcmaster.ca>
<http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~english/Faculty/Ostovich.html>

Latest Publications

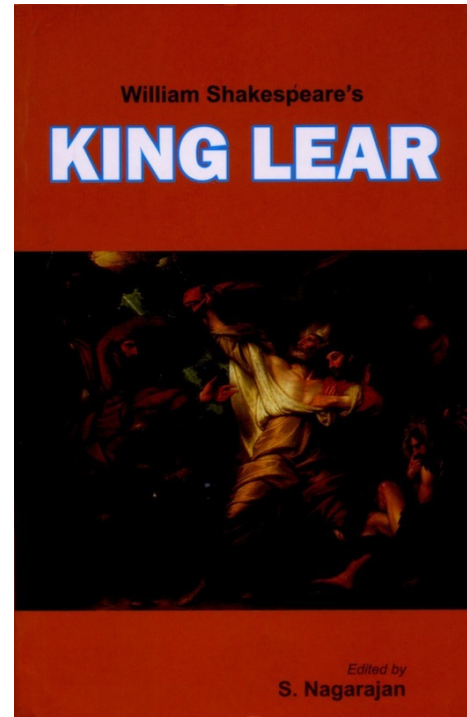


Shakespeare and the Ethics of Appropriation

Edited by Alexa Huang and Elizabeth Rivlin
Palgrave Macmillan, 2014

At a time when Shakespeare is becoming increasingly globalized and diversified it is urgent more than ever to ask how this appropriated 'Shakespeare' constructs ethical value across cultural and other fault lines.

Available in e-book (PDF) and hardback formats



King Lear

edited by S. Nagarajan

"Nagarajan's *King Lear* is not only for Indian students—it is for all students—yes, and for all readers, including professors—who want a thorough yet judicious, readable commentary on the play." Sylvan Barnet

Contact nagarajanlear@gmail.com to buy a copy priced at Rs. 250 (additional Rs. 50 for shipping & handling). Payment instructions will be sent upon receipt of your email. A 10% discount is available to libraries and academic institutions.