The New Fortune

1964
The University of Western Australia with its beautiful situation at Crawley has become one of the architectural and scenic features of the Perth metropolitan area. The creation of the New Fortune theatre within, and as part of, the new Arts Faculty building has provided for Perth and for Western Australia something which is unique.

The New Fortune is the only theatre in existence which faithfully reproduces the physical characteristics of both stage and auditorium of an Elizabethan public playhouse. It is good to know that the University of Western Australia has not only enhanced its attractiveness but has made theatrical history.

The new theatre will help our students towards a better understanding and appreciation of the classics of 16th and 17th century theatre and will provide rich opportunities for scholarly investigation into the many problems of staging these plays. The general playgoer will have the opportunity of seeing some of these older plays produced in the kind of theatre for which they were expressly designed and could come to learn to appreciate conventions of acting and production very different from those of today's theatre. In particular, performances of Shakespeare's plays should be rewarding to all those who have been trying with great devotion to present adequate performances in theatres and playing-places which have been very far from adequate.

It is good that the theatre is ready for use in 1964, the quater-centenary of Shakespeare's birth. There could be no better way of celebrating the occasion than by offering a performance of Hamlet, Shakespeare's most popular (and most puzzling) play.

The idea of incorporating this theatre in the new Arts building came from members of the Faculty of Arts. The University expresses its pride and gratitude to them for their imagination and enterprise, and to the architects who designed the building.

Alex Reid, C.M.G., 1.S.O., R.A., F.A.S.A.
Chancellor of The University of Western Australia.

The University of Western Australia welcomes the completion and opening of the New Fortune theatre, not only because of the exciting possibilities of this new vehicle for scholarly research, but also because, as an active theatre presenting the great classics, the benefits of this new acquisition will be felt by the members of all faculties at all academic levels.

It is very fitting that the first production in the New Fortune theatre should be a public performance. This is, I am sure, symbolic of the active part the University plays in the cultural life of Western Australia. I hope that we may long continue to make this kind of contribution to the intellectual life of the community we serve.

S. L. Prescott, O.B.E., M.S.C.
Vice Chancellor of the University of Western Australia.
The New Fortune theatre may be regarded as a tribute—somewhat belated—to the late Harley Granville-Barker.

After a distinguished career in the theatre as actor, playwright, and producer, Granville-Barker entered the crowded field of Shakespearian criticism nearly forty years ago with his Prefaces to Shakespeare and his Clark Lectures On Dramatic Method. In these, it will be remembered, he saw that the primary fact to remember about Shakespeare is that he, too, was a man of the theatre. An actor, a producer, and a shareholder in the most successful playhouse of his time, Shakespeare designed his plays for actors whom he knew intimately, actors accustomed to playing as a team in a theatre which he himself had helped to build and possibly design. To appreciate his work to the full we need to experience it in the theatre.

This approach to Shakespeare was by no means novel. What gave it especial force in his writings, besides his enthusiasm and his unusual eloquence, was his mastery of thirty years or more of learned investigations into the characteristics and resources of Elizabethan playhouses and into the character and organisation of the acting companies that used them. In his reading of a Shakespeare text Granville-Barker tried to provide the kind of notes that an Elizabethan might have made as he prepared a production of the play for the Globe or the Fortune. As he did so, he came to realise more and more clearly the need to construct a replica of the Globe in which disputed points of production could be tested in performances before live audiences. For years he advocated the provision of such a replica as a necessary part of a National Theatre and he looked to the Universities to build them as essential apparatus in any Department of English.

During his lifetime Granville-Barker was disappointed by the universities. He was widely read and acclaimed. He undoubtedly influenced the critical views of many academics and their students and he affected many productions of Shakespeare for the better, but academics in general remained content to repeat his views instead of acting upon them. No replicas of the Globe have been constructed in any of the universities of the English-speaking world. Here and there, it is true,—notably at Harvard,—reconstructions of the stage itself and the tiring-house behind it have been built, but nowhere do we have a theatre in which Elizabethan plays can be performed in conditions closely approximating to those of the Globe and the Fortune. In consequence much of our critical comment on Elizabethan plays rests upon the shaky foundation of productions that have taken place only in the learned heads of the critics.

Here in Perth, by a series of happy accidents, we have been enabled to do what other universities have failed to do. Within the new Arts Faculty building, we now have a replica of the 1599 Fortune theatre. A large platform stage surrounded on three sides by three galleries in which spectators may sit juts out into a paved yard open to the sky. Behind the stage, three open bridges can readily be converted into a tiring-house with an alcove-like inner stage at ground-level, a similar alcove at first-floor level (the upper stage) and a second one at second-floor level (musician's gallery). With this apparatus, and with our students as audience, we are hoping to discover by experiment, solutions to many of the vexed problems of Elizabethan staging; and we confidently expect to develop styles of acting and production that exploit to the full the peculiar virtues of the theatre as a playing-place.
Besides serving as an instrument of scholarly research and a most useful teaching aid in our undergraduate courses, the theatre will be used, of course, to bring performances of Shakespeare and other Elizabethans to the general public. Though from time to time performances will be given in daylight during the afternoon, we have provided facilities for evening performances and will use all the resources of modern theatrical lighting. How far the use of modern lighting will dictate modifications of acting and production techniques is one of those fascinating technical problems that we hope to explore through experiment instead of argument and speculation "in the air".

For the first performance in a theatre of this character, especially in this quarter-century year, there is no arguing about the choice of play. Generation after generation of playgoers has agreed that in the theatre Hamlet is THE play. It comes off in almost any theatre—and in the hands of almost any company of players. However, if Grassville-Barker is to be trusted, Hamlet is superbly designed for performance in the Globe, and in our replica of the Fortune we believe it will surprise even the most hardened and jaded playgoers by its freshness and its power to shock, disturb and exalt us.

May it be the first of a long line of exciting and illuminating "re-vivifications."

ALLAN EDWARDS

ALLAN EDWARDS.

Professor of English at the University of Western Australia, who originated the idea of the New Fortune.

Views of the New Fortune show moveable screens backing sections of the stage-house in preparation for the inaugural production. The balcony balustrading has also been removed.
Shakespeare's open stage

"This is the first time I have seen an Elizabethan stage built to its correct proportions," said Sir John Gielgud of the New Fortune, "it is a most important event in the reconstruction of an authentic Shakespearian drama."

Here lie the genuine significance and originality of this new university theatre. It is not the first attempt to reconstruct the Elizabethan theatre — there are a few examples in America and one in England; and open Elizabethan-type stages, though still extremely rare, are attracting much interest overseas. But the authentic Elizabethan proportioning of both stage and auditorium at the New Fortune is probably without parallel in the world and offers unique opportunities for the study of Elizabethan drama. The fact that these proportions were sanctioned, and probably devised, by Edward Alleyn, one of the great Elizabethan actors, is also of prime interest in the context of modern theatre design. The architectural problems of the open stage, of relating auditorium to playing area, are today provoking lively discussion. The New Fortune, substantially the theatre in which Alleyn played, stands as a solution of proved historic success.

Direct pictorial evidence for the structure of Elizabethan theatres is extremely thin. We have a few topographical views of London's Bankside showing roughly circular, open buildings identified as the Rose, the Globe, the Hope, generally topped by small huts which presumably housed winches for lowering gods and aerial machines to the stage below. There is also a flag flying to signify a play in progress. For the interior of these theatres we have only the evidence of the so-called de Witt sketch of the Swan. This contentious drawing, contained in the commonplace book of Arend van Buchell, was discovered in the library of the University of Utrecht in 1888. It was copied by van Buchell from a drawing (or perhaps even constructed from notes) sent from London by his friend Johannes de Witt about 1596. While the detailed accuracy of the drawing is therefore decidedly doubtful, its main features are not in serious dispute. Van Buchell shows a great rectangular open stage, partially canopied and backed by a stage house, the whole projecting within a three-storied arena of open galleries — precisely the arrangement called for by the most important theatrical document of the period, the Fortune contract dated 1599. Here Edward Alleyn and the entrepreneur Henslowe commissioned an auditorium or "frame" of three tiers of galleries about a courtyard fifty-five feet square, with a stage forty-three feet wide projecting to the middle of the yard—twenty-seven feet six inches. While Alleyn's square Fortune may seem a freakish departure from the typically circular Elizabethan theatre, it remains the only playhouse of which the proportions and stage-auditorium relationship are preserved in exact measurements. Here, then, is a sound basis for reconstruction today of an Elizabethan playhouse, and accordingly the New Fortune is modelled after the Fortune contract. The heights of the galleries correspond only roughly with those specified in the contract, but the yard and stage are almost exactly as Alleyn wished.

The New Fortune's chief distinction among Elizabethan reconstructions is not its stage, but the housing of that stage in an Elizabethan auditorium. The result is an actor-audience relationship of peculiar interest, recaptured here for the first time, probably, since the seventeenth century. Current enthusiasm for the Elizabethan theatre has tended to focus on the stage, so that the Elizabethan audience we at once imagine are the rabble standing immediately in front of the stage. But the New Fortune strikingly reminds us that the vast bulk of the audience were housed in galleries. These overhang the action, which becomes vividly three-dimensional. We look down upon figures interweaving in dramatic space; we see about and behind them as they move in an imagined world of extraordinary solidity and depth. And the scale of that world is huge in relation to the auditorium. The vast stage seems to fill the theatre. It invites an ample freedom of movement fit for creatures larger than life, who will dominate the crowded world of ordinary men pressing in close around, above, below.

This immediate dramatic confrontation of auditorium and stage, of mundane reality and mythic scale, already suggests a creative interaction; it is no surprise
that such theatres bred the intensely realised poetic grandeur of Elizabethan drama. For Shakespeare's heroes are to be seen at close quarters as those of—say—Sophocles are not. Oedipus and Lear are both giants; but while Oedipus remains at a distance, Lear is there, warts and all. The one is a legendary tragic mask addressing a hillside amphitheatre, the other a great and frail old man revealed in appalling intimacy on his heroic scaffold.

As the comparison suggests, open stage theatres may differ quite as radically among themselves as from the proscenium-arch theatre—a fact which should give pause in today's rather undiscriminating enthusiasm for the open stage. A particular kind of drama does not spring from a particular kind of stage but from a particular relationship between actor and audience. The New Fortune's platform seems ideally Shakespearean; but there is nothing specially Shakespearean about this stage in itself except at a purely mechanical level. It does, of course, facilitate Shakespeare's swift and various action, and it does relieve him of the picture-frame stage's irrelevant visual statement. Yet some of his plays would be better served by a reasonably intimate conventional theatre than by this same platform set down, say, in a huge hall where only those few about the stage could enjoy any sense of the play's flesh and blood actuality. This is roughly the situation at England's new Chichester Festival Theatre, where a big open stage is set within an auditorium shaped like a huge shallow saucer or a depressed Greek amphitheatre. The great bulk of the audience is "distanted" from the stage quite as effectively as by a proscenium arch, and in fact the theatre took triumphantly to Chekhov during the opening season and did nothing for Ford. Again, failure to provide an Elizabethan actor-audience relationship must, I believe, damage the entire effectiveness of more academic Elizabethan reconstructions, of which the interesting Shakespeare Festival Theatre at Ashland, Oregon, may stand as example. Here the stage—though prow-shaped—is built to the width and depth of the Fortune contract; but it is wedded to a modern single-level auditorium, far greater in area than the Fortune yard. The stage could hardly be said to project among the audience, to most of whom it must seem scarcely more three-dimensional or immediate than a proscenium-arch stage.

The sheer physical proximity of its big open stage, however, is not entirely responsible for the New Fortune's special character. The height of the stage, unspecified in the Fortune contract, is an important factor in the actor-audience relationship. If we looked down to see actors moving familiarly at the level
Chichester Festival Theatre, England.

The de Witt sketch.

Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis.

Experimental designs for the New Fortune by Mr. Peter Parkinson, based on (left) the "Mesalina" title-page and (right) the de Witt sketch.
of the audience standing in the yard, the stature of a Tamburlaine—or even a Volpone—would, I think, hardly come of itself. And if Tamburlaine were to approach within a few feet of us standing in the yard, we should certainly be aware of the actor rather than Marlowe’s hero. Dramatic conviction would vanish—good reason to believe that the Elizabethan gallants seated on the stage itself must have kept their distance from the action, unless they came only to be seen and with heartless indifference to the play in hand. For even the most intimate actor-audience relationship must remain at all times a relationship, a juxtaposition of the two distinct worlds of stage and auditorium. Their interaction creates the dramatic experience—but only while the fundamental identities of the two worlds are placed beyond doubt by some dividing line or space. This, of course, is the function of the proscenium arch in the conventional modern theatre. If large liberties remain possible there (such as direct address to the audience or even the occasional descent of a character into the auditorium), it is only because the proscenium arch remains as a permanent, visible frontier. Contrary to belief in some quarters, the open stage—or any stage—demands such a frontier or neutral zone equally with the conventional theatre.

Oddly enough, naturalistic drama will tolerate quite a slight gap, as arena staging on the flat has frequently shown; imaginative belief seems challenged less forcibly than by a larger-than-life world of verse-speaking heroes. These latter demand a correspondingly violent demarcation, and the Swan sketch suggests a stage some five to six feet high with the audience literally at the actor’s feet. As Mr. C. Walter Hodges has shown (The Globe Restored, 1933), there is good scholarly reason to accept the dubious evidence of de Witt on this point; and again, on a purely practical view, the stage must surely have been on eye-level for the audience in the yard if those at the rear were to see the actors at full length and not miss death scenes played flat on the boards. And so this actor-audience relationship has been preserved at the New Fortune. While our penny shilling seats are now expensive enough, they still have the stage at eye-level—an arrangement which has at once declared itself good dramatic sense. As seen from immediately below the stage, the physical dominance of the actor advancing to the edge of the platform is tremendous; his heroic elevation enables him not only to risk but positively to exploit the closest contact with the audience below. The rage of Othello or Lear towering over the audience at his feet in the Elizabethan theatre must have been terrifying.

Here again, the New Fortune suggests some interesting comparisons with other open stage theatres. The Chichester stage is differentiated from the auditorium floor by only a couple of broad and shallow steps, and this gentle, indefinite barrier again suggests that an audience would find it easier to get on comfortable terms with Uncle Vanya than Ford’s noble, rather precious hero. By contrast, at Chichester’s two American sister houses (designed by Sir Tyrone Guthrie with Miss Tanya Moiseiwitsch and reputed highly successful), several deep steps give the stage pronounced elevation, great enough for Shakespeare, not too great for naturalistic drama of some poetic stature. One remains a little doubt-

ful, however, of the theory upon which Sir Tyrone has attempted to design these theatres—that ritual, not illusion, is the essence of drama. Ritual is distinguished by precisely that continuity between the worlds of actor and congregation which, in my view, denies drama. If Chichester comes near to failure it may well be because it has almost taken Sir Tyrone at his word.

Finally and, in the long run, most important, the New Fortune is an instrument of research. Much remains to be discovered of Shakespeare’s stagecraft, chiefly because so many features of the Elizabethan stage remain in doubt. The precise location of the curtained enclosure and the acting area “above” are two of the more teasing problems. Dr. J. C. Adams has given us his well-known conjectural reconstruction of the Globe, its disposition of these features argued with great scholarship. He has, however, been sharply challenged by some practising men of the theatre; would the Adams reconstruction work? On the other hand, how practicable are any of the reconstructions so far proposed? For lack of full-scale model stages these questions have largely gone unanswered except on paper. The New Fortune has been provided with an extremely flexible stage to allow the widest possible range of reconstructions to be tested in production. The rear wall of the stage (the most hotly disputed area) has been built as an open scaffolding upon which a set of screen units may be bolted. These will transform the New Fortune into a working model of almost any version of the Elizabethan theatre. Here, through a series of experimental productions, we hope for notable drama which will also bring us a little closer to Shakespeare’s stage.

PHILIP PARSONS

Philip Parsons, Lecturer in English at the University of Western Australia.
Production for the Shakespearian stage

Much has been said and written of the problems of Shakespearian production and the limitations of the Elizabethan theatre; but a whole shapeliness cannot express the excitement of a Shakespearian play on its proper stage.

Paradoxically such a play is both easy and very hard indeed to produce; easy because, being what he is—poet, humorist, man of the theatre—, the playwright does so much for director and players; hard because, whatever measure of success you may achieve, it can never equal the vision that he has created for you on the private stages of the mind.

One approaches the play nervously, anxious to be aware of the problems—language, poetry, interwoven plots, changing scenes and weighed down by the accumulated wisdom of all the volumes on Shakespearian production... then, somehow, the miracle happens. Across the centuries, from the stir and bustle and song of Elizabethan England the mind of Will Shakespeare seems to touch one's own. No matter how poor and botched the presentation may be or how fumbling the players, something magical brushes us all. This is his peculiar gift—this perpetual enrichment that comes to us all in a Shakespearian production. And after this other plays seem a little thin and pale.

To savour fully this treasure of experience the director should approach, I think, both with reverence and familiarity. Our reverence brings us to much reading, much thought, the best skills we can muster, a belief that Shakespeare knew what he was doing; our familiarity reminds us that he was a man of the theatre who knew our problems and did not expect to be treated as Holy Writ... and so for four centuries we have shaped his plays to fit our varying tastes. And so shaped—or misshaped—they have done well.

To my mind, the first essential of a Shakespearian production is an open stage: given that, half the problems seem to melt into thin air. While the 18th and 19th centuries cramped the great Elizabethan drama behind the curtains of a proscenium arch, critics had constant need to apologize for Shakespeare's faulty techniques and producers transposed or omitted scenes to avoid set changes. Thus the heath scenes of Lear were run together, thereby losing the sense of the passage of long hours of storm and darkness. Artificial Act breaks to allow for major changes bailed the flow of the action. But on an open stage, uncluttered with representational scenery or unnecessary furniture, the movement is swift and fluid and the play's impetus carries it along at its own pace and rhythm. At first, the players are apt to be a little uncertain as scene melts into scene but they soon see there is little necessity for definite locale. They know where they are—Shakespeare usually gives them in the dialogue all they need—and they move with a confidence that extends to their audience. After all, there are only a few spots in a play where the setting is defined and these can be quickly established by a sign, a piece of movable property, a musical motif; for the rest, the setting is "a place" where the players are.
Here, as never on the proscenium stage, the imagination is set free to soar and create for itself its own world and the greater the degree of sensitivity we bring to the play, the richer our reward. Of course, this open stage playing demands a greater effort from director, player and audience but once the effort is made and the mode of communication established the artistic experience is tremendously exciting. There is no further difficulty in accepting the convention and, I think, no one wants to return to the limited stage cluttered with scenery and furniture.

The speech rhythms of great drama—particularly of poetic drama—have a way of imposing their own pattern of movement and we have found again and again that this pattern—broad, graceful, exquisitely right—is interrupted by some table, footstool or other fol-de-rol that stands squarely in the way. Director and player alike tend to glare at the offending object in angry frustration and demand its instant removal—only to find, in realistic plays, that it is probably necessary later on. And in realistic playing you can rarely have a benchman to carry the chairs about as desired. For this reason, much as I love the plays of Ibsen and Chekov, I find their production a series of hurdles as we leap over the furniture—particularly that central table of which Ibsen is so fond. From these one turns with a sigh of relief to the broad sweep of Elizabethan drama.

This sort of playing, naturally, stresses the marriage between the language and the physical movement of the play and so makes greater demands on the players. There is no furniture to hide behind, you cannot lurk in a couch-corner for half an act or fiddle with teacups behind a shielding trolley. There are one's head and

There is no doubt that with these four issues in 1963 “Westerly” has established itself as a national and not merely a local quarterly.

This was said by Geoffrey Dutton, leading Australian editor and poet about westery published by the University of W.A. Press.

Western Australia's quarterly review with a national reputation, available at all leading booksellers 6/- Subscribe (24/- per Annum) by writing c/- University of W.A., Nedlands, W.A.

Congratulations from Millars'

To the Architects, Marshall Clifton, and Builders, Civil & Civic Pty. Ltd., responsible for the construction of the New Fortune Theatre.

Millars' were entrusted to supply Timber and Joinery for this outstanding project.

A LONG TIME AGO IT WAS SAID BUT LONG BEFORE THAT A NATIVE WORD WAS TO BECOME TO MEAN “WIRRINA” “SOMEBREWDER TO GO” The personnel of Wirrina Drive-In Cinema, Morley, strive to make the name Wirrina a symbol of their endeavours to ensure that your visit to this popular Cinema will bring joy and pleasure. Showing every night.
Vickers Hoskins Ltd., in supporting the Festival and wishing it complete success, does so on behalf of our principal—Vickers Australia Ltd. The company is a member of the world-wide Vickers organisation, and therefore can call on the resources of this vast group for specialised knowledge in many fields of industry.

Associated companies in Australia are represented by Vickers Rawolp Pty. Ltd., Melbourne, and Cockatoo Docks and Engineering, Sydney.

The company’s contribution to W.A’s industrial requirements has been vast and spread over a considerable number of years. All major projects have been contributed to with the supply of specialised items comprising cranes, winches, kilns, dock loaders, mining machine pressure vessels and rolling stock equipment. We propose to continue to be in the forefront of progressive development now evidenced in this State and to maintain the high-standing reputation now enjoyed throughout Australia.

VICKERS HOSKINS LIMITED
BASSENDEAN
FACIT
at the University
We are very proud of the fact that our business machines are installed in . . . .

18 departments
at the University of W.A.

Available at last in Western Australia . . . .

*********** THE AMAZING ***********

"GLYNDOR"

*********** Glide-up Door ***********

☆ DOMESTIC OR INDUSTRIAL ☆ RUGGED, ATTRACTIVE
☆ NO KNOWN SIZE LIMIT ☆ AUTOMATIC LOCKING

MADE
ONLY BY Tubular Steel Structures
(RYAN & RYAN)
PEEL ST., O'CONNOR . . . 50 1361
SOLE W.A. MANUFACTURERS
Let our Security Services be your Safeguard!

PERTH NIGHT WATCH PATROLLING CO.
EST. 1894

PERTH ARMORED TRANSPORT Pty. Ltd.
WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY

CASH SAFE CUSTODY

MR. BUSINESSMAN!

Does an avenue exist in your establishment whereby employing our Watching or Armoured Transport Service a decided improvement will result?

If so, we will be pleased to handle your Security Problems for you.

We will be happy to arrange for our representative to call on you and discuss your proposals.

TELEPHONES 8 2951, 8 2848
AFTER HOURS 8 4308

ROBY & CO. PTY. LTD.

CHAMBERLAIN STREET
O'CONNOR
FREMANTLE

All Metal and Enamelled Coloured Awnings for Windows and Doors

FOR INFORMATION AND OUR FREE QUOTE

Ring 50 2154

The Symbol of Quality...

PHILIPS

EDUCATION
LECTURES
PRIVATE STUDY
PUBLIC SPEAKING
TEACHER TRAINING
PREPARATION OF LESSONS
DEVELOPING CREATIVE ABILITY
MEMORIZING FORMULAE
STUDY OF LANGUAGES
HYNOPAEDIA (Sleep Learning)
VOICE THERAPY and many more

...be Sure it's a PHILIPS TAPE RECORDER

On the four-hundredth Anniversary of the birth of Shakespeare we...

Congratulate all those associated with the birth of the NEW FORTUNE THEATRE

WESTERN MACHINERY
Company Pty. Limited
ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL, MINING ENGINEERS AND MERCHANTS
496 Murray Street, Perth
HAMLET
Prince of Denmark

By William Shakespeare

Presented at the New Fortune theatre for a season commencing on January 29th, 1964 by Bankside Theatre Productions, the Graduate Dramatic Society and the University Dramatic Society, for the Festival of Perth.

Directed by Jeana Bradley

Production planned in association with Philip Parsons

HAMLET........... Ian Tweedie
CLAUDIUS.......... Neville Teece
POLONIUS........... Philip Scott
LAERTES........... Raymond Omodei
HORATIO........... James Smillie
ROSENKRANTZ...... Collin O'Brien
GUILDENSTERN..... Maxwell Smith
VOLTEMAND......... Malcolm Pratt
CORNELIUS......... John Keilland
OSRIC............. Peter Cuffley
A LORD............ Peter Holland
MARCELLUS......... Russ Raymond
BERNARDO.......... Michael Louis
FRANCISCO......... Colin Cooke
GHOST............. William Dunstone
PLAYER KING....... Victor Marsh
LUCIANUS.......... Dan Symons
FORTINBRAS........ William Dunstone

PRIEST............. Dan Symons
GRAVE DIGGER........ Michael Louis
GERTRUDE........... Faith Clayton
OPHELIA............ Penelope Hanrahan
PLAYER QUEEN....... Kathleen Bourke
PROLOGUE........... Veronica Cuffley
SOLDIERS, PAGES, LADIES
Janette Cain, Margaret Saville, Judith Pullan, Patricia Macmillan, Maria Valaris
Tony Thomas, Ross D'Anne, Richard Farrar, Gerald Hitchcock, Alan Feeney, James Phillips, CLean Hitchcock, Peter Evans

MUSIC............. A. J. Waddell, A. E. Kemp, M. M. Jones, C. J. Cooper, Cpl. J. K. Lane, Cpl. F. H. Hanon of the Western Command Band, by kind permission of the Commander, Western Command, with special assistance from WO C. P. James, M.B.E.

Selected and arranged from the works of Albrieci, Byrd, Gabrieli, Gervaise and Praetorius.

THERE WILL BE TWO INTERVALS OF TEN MINUTES

Production and Business Manager........ N. I. Peacott
Stage Manager.................. Ruth Kott
Musical Direction and Arrangements...... R. D. Nussbaum
Stage Design................. Maurice Jones
Costume Designs............ Neil Hunsley
Lighting Design........... Murray Johnstone, Barry King
Wardrobe Mistress.......... Eleanore Wells
Property Managers.......... Lorna Johnstone, Juliet Adderley
Stage Assistants........... Jim Phillips, Alan Feeney, Donald Phillips, Geoffrey Milne, Graeme Briggs, Elizabeth Kent, Leonard Trainor
Costumes Made By.......... Eleanore Wells, Jeana Bradley, Margaret Macarter, Juliet Adderley
Lighting Assistants........ Tim Fry, Ian Jareis
Music Copying............. Sally Trethowan

Poster designed by PHILIPPA HENDERSON
Congratulations....

to the Western Australian University on the construction of
"THE NEW FORTUNE"

from

ENGINEER & MARINE SERVICES
(1963) PTY. LTD.

Fish Processors
(PLANET FISH PRODUCTS)

Manufacturers and Suppliers of
Fishing Vessels and Equipment

PHONE 5 1108

PRICE STREET ——— FREMANTLE

---

Warooma Abattoirs

WYNNE'S Pty. Ltd.

WHOLESALE BUTCHERS
"CARCASE AND BROKEN MEATS"

CLOVER MEATS

49 ALBERT STREET, NORTH PERTH — PHONE 28 2377
You can sleep anywhere anytime on...

Slumber King

Slumber King and Princess innerspring mattresses give the most comfortable sleep of all.

Sound, refreshing sleep comes naturally on a "Slumber King", with custom-built SIDE WALL and the latest TUFFNESS construction the NEW "Slumber King" and "Princess" innerspring sleepers give seating comfort, lasting beauty.

SEE THEM AT GOOD FURNITURE STORES.

MANUFACTURED AND GUARANTEED BY—

J. GADSDEN PTY. LTD.

LADNER STREET, O'CONNOR - 87 YEARS OF MANUFACTURING EXPERIENCE

More than a million square feet in stock...

PLYWOOD for every purpose

All kinds, all sizes: EXTERIOR, INTERIOR, FANCY, SUPER-MARINE. One sheet or a truck load, we cut plywood to handy sizes and dress fine timber while you wait. Open Saturday mornings. We deliver.

CULLITY TIMBERS PTY LTD

22-60 TOWER ST., LEEDERVILLE. TELEPHONE 28 1031
ALSO HOME AND OUTDOOR SUPPLIES
ALBANY HIGHWAY, CORNER GRODES ST., VICTORIA PARK. TELEPHONE 6 0838.

Best Wishes to the "New Fortune" Elizabethan Theatre

from

HARDIE RUBBER CO. PTY. LTD.

Manufacturers of The Safest Tyre on Australian Roads

HARDIE SAFETIBOND TYRES

Shortly to be made in your own State at GT. EASTERN HWY., GUILDFORD

THE STRONG, SAFE, QUICK-STOPPING TYRE
WALLACES of Piccadilly Arcade extend best wishes to the
"New Fortune" Elizabethan Theatre
Inspect our large range of Watches,
Diamonds, Opals.
Gifts for all occasions.
GUARANTEED WATCH AND JEWELLERY
REPAIRS

J. R. Wallace & Co.
Watchmakers & Jewellers

PICCADILLY ARCADE
Murray Street, Perth

WILLS TRAVEL SERVICE

"CENTAUR"
Round Trips
SINGAPORE

Living on board 5 days in Singapore included
in fare. Travel in comfort to the EAST.
Fully air conditioned—Swimming Pool.

BOOK NOW FOR XMAS '64 EASTER '65

CHAMBERLAIN SELLS AUSTRALIA WIDE
AND NOW IN SIX OVERSEAS COUNTRIES

Chamberlain is hard at work here in your own State
in providing employment for 1,170 West Australians
—building better tractors for Industry and Agriculture.
body, hands and feet—and a lot of empty space to fill while lines are being said and until the speech and movement become one, the result is halting and unsatisfactory. Some players never succeed here. Insurmountable self-consciousness, lack of muscular co-ordination, a defective ear... any, or all, of these, as well as other factors will hamper him or her. But it is surprising how many grow into this skill and there are some to whom it comes as easily as music to a songbird—and the effect is equally satisfying. I have noticed, too, that after a time the verse of Shakespeare tends to take over, so to speak. Time and again, working with sensitive players, I have found directions anticipated and the actors moving in the pattern I wanted without my telling. This is surely an interpretative ideal.

The extension of open stage playing to the full Elizabethan pattern of an apron stage—i.e., surrounded on three sides by the audience—is still more demanding and more exciting. Here the player has even less cover and his pattern of movement and voice delivery must always take account of the audience at his back—and they will not wish to be always at his back. This last point is, of course, the director's problem. The composition for an apron stage is an islanded piece of sculpture, not a picture, and it cannot be static. Nor matter how eloquent the back of your star's neck, the audience all want to see his face as well and you cannot keep him still too long. The group dissolves, reforms, holds and dissolves again, and all the while the pattern of movement must be within the sense or rhythms of the dialogue. It is hard to say which is worse—dull stillness or motiveless motion... and, of course, if the director has been brought up in the always-face-the-audience school of delivery he quickly resigns or is removed screaming.
Lighting, too, assumes a different importance. If you have been used to foot
(God forbid them for Shakespeare!) they are no longer there and the wall of
light which shut off your players, like the glass of a picture, cannot disguise the
tatty costume, the patchy makeup. Cross-lighting, with its interesting depths,
must go too because light from one side of the stage will shine in the eyes of
the audience on the other side. Mood lighting has reduced possibilities because
of the diffusion involved in long-range setting, and colour must come mainly
from costumes and properties rather than cunningly situated spots . . . so the
composition must be altered in yet another way.

But the apotheosis of this sort of playing is achieved in the dimensions of a
true Elizabethan theatre. This is an experience that is entirely new and unique
because never before have I—or any of us on this maiden voyage—had anything
like this theatre wherein to work. Nor, I think, have many people in the last
three centuries. Space and intimacy, galleries three storeys high and a spectator
so close he can touch hands with the player, a vocal range from Lear’s “Howl,
howl, howl!” to Antony’s whispered “I am dying, Egypt, dying . . .”—all these
the New Fortune offers us. I have worked on a variety of open stages—indoors
and out—a 60-foot sweep with an Elizabethan stagehouse—the audience below,
avove or on the same level—on one, two or three sides—but have not experienc-
ed or seen anything like this. In the remarkable 15th century theatre is
Richmond, Yorkshire (preserved, by a freak of fortune, exactly as it was built).
I was amazed at the intimacy achieved by its construction. A player on the
apron could shake hands with a spectator sitting in one of the boxes, an aside
could be given to him as an aside in polite conversation and heard all over the
house! But this is a small theatre with a small stage where an Elizabethan play
of even moderate dimensions would be sadly cramped.

In the New Fortune the player has a sweep of some 50 feet at his command,
unhampered by wings or sightlines. The distance from the stage to the back
of the pit is rather less than to Row D of a theatre of comparable size and
the high balconies on three sides bring the audience in to the players. I have
never before felt such a close relationship between the stage and the auditorium,
even in the most intimate theatres—such as the beautiful 18th century Residenz
Theatre in Munich, where the tiers of boxes in the tiny auditorium enclose the
stage.

The effect on the players is exhilarating and surprising. Before the theatre
was completed part of the play had been ‘set’ working on an open terrace where
the dimensions of the stage were exactly marked. The players were dubious
and rather nervous. “It looks awfully big!” But as they moved about the stage
of the theatre itself and looked up at the galleries or around the pit, seeing
faces so close, so oddly close, they relaxed visibly, sighed with relief and began
to step out more freely. They took the stage—and the stage took them. And
from a director’s viewpoint, a walk about
the circuit of the galleries, watching the
changing pattern of the play, was at once
frightening and stimulating, a challenge
and a joy.

If this, however far below our ideals, is
somehow like the manner in which his
contemporaries saw Shakespeare’s plays,
how little we have known of him even
after four centuries of love and admiration!
And how much more we have to know!

But this, as I said at the beginning, is the
inevitable reaction to a Shakespearian
experience.

JEANA BRADLEY,
Lecturer in English at the
University of Western Australia.
Director of the inaugural production.

Production notes for Hamlet,
the first play at the New Fortune

Every production of Hamlet is a reflection of the director, just as every inter-
pretation of the Prince is a reflection of the chief actor. This is the enduring
charm of the play. In this strange, rich but confused work there is matter for
all and, critic, player or régisseur, you make your choice.

In its entirety the play takes over four hours to perform; so, except for very
select audiences, it is considerably cut and the nature of these cuts will deter-
nine the play that is finally presented.

In the New Fortune theatre we have a vast, open stage where movement is
free and sweeping and considerable physical activity seems called for to combine
or alternate with considerable concentration of acting. Hence we decided to
play Hamlet as the Revenge Play, thus stressing sheer action, excitement and
by-passing Goethe’s oak-tree in the porcelain vase. We know that Shakespeare
was a man of the theatre who shrewdly wrote for the taste of his time. He
would not, surely, have overlooked the enormous popularity of the Revenger
Hero and the tragedy of blood, and we feel that too often the Lord Chamberlain’s Men are overshadowed by the pseudo-psychologist-critic.

So we have kept Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern as the two sub-villains to Claudius—a pair of smooth and pleasant traitors. But we have excised the advice to the Players and the long discussion on the state of the contemporary theatre as being irrelevant to the action.

The dumb-show, too, has gone. Such things were fashionable in 1600, they are not so now. And the story is told in dialogue anyway. To tell it twice is tedious, lengthens the play and reminds the audience of the vexing question—What was Claudius doing at the time? We have taken from the ‘Bad’ Quarto one of the Player King’s speeches—because it is shorter and because the language is more obvious rant.

The Polonius-Reynaldo scene—again tedious and unnecessary—has been cut (as it usually is) and, with it, Ophelia’s rather odd description of the distracted Hamlet which conveys very little to those who do not recognize the traditional Elizabethan portrait of a crazed lover.

One of the soliloquies—‘How all occasions . . .’—we have deleted in shortening the play, because it seems the one most militant against an ‘action play’ and because it is, perhaps, the least exciting poetically. Other cuts, such as dialogue between Claudius and Gertrude or Laertes come because they are repetitious, and yet others because the meaning is obscure—as with the Clowns. For the rest, we have cut mainly where the lines are incomprehensible through odd vocabulary or syntax or have become comic or offensive owing to alteration of meaning or because they are unduly tedious.

More surprisingly, but with a distinguished precedent, we have moved “To be or not to be” earlier in the play, before the meeting with Polonius and Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern. It seems to fit well with “the poor wretch sadly reading”, whereas, later, it arrests the action which, in our version, is beginning to gather speed.

Our division of the play into three unequal parts follows Granville-Barker’s masterly analysis which we feel cannot logically be bettered—an expository First Act, a rising action dominated by Claudius to Act III, 3, then a conclusion where Hamlet almost invisibly takes over and the King’s fortunes wane.

Nowhere do we feel that we know better than Shakespeare did or that we are improving on him. As all producers do, we have tried in love and fellowship to fit his great text to the habit of our times and to our stage and players.

JEANA BRADLEY
The actor and the New Fortune stage

Any assessment of the New Fortune as a working theatre can be little more than conjecture at this point of time. Until the whole complex theatrical experience has been viewed from all points, objectively, and, most important here, numerous productions have had audience reaction, estimates of the theatre's success, or potential, as a playing venue must exist as a frustrating guess. None-the-less from the actor's point of view, before the event, he is being confronted constantly by the problems involved in coping with a new theatre, and as a result certain factors emerge clearly in rehearsal—acoustic qualities, spatial relationships between actor and actor, and actor and audience, and here, overcoming habits acquired in more conventional theatres. I shall try to convey some of the impressions gained from rehearsing in a reconstruction of an Elizabethan theatre, from which a few elementary assessments may be made.

Stepping on to the stage for the first time gives an immediate impression of its vast area and its bareness—and this is disconcerting, to say the least. Bigger stages there are, but the very bareness of this in relation to the proximity of the audience appears to enlarge it. Twelve hundred square feet of stage must be filled and commanded with none of the conventional architectural framework to help the audience to focus on you. There is no proscenium arch, there are no footlights and no orchestra-pit to keep you at a comfortable distance from the audience. There it is—you, the stage, and an audience on three sides. Any move you make brings you closer to the audience, so close in most directions that you could reach out and touch the front-row audience—or they could touch you. For most actors their worst nightmare has come true—there you are, on opening-night on stage, naked. There is no easy way out.

After the first shock, the second immediately follows. Concentration has faltered. You can't just stand there. You must move somewhere. Where and how? As you look around for familiar signposts, you are aware only of a vast bareness, and the nearness of that vast area that later will be filled with pairs of beady eyes—everywhere very close to you, waiting. Not even the scene-designer's canvas-and-paint illusion is there to distract from your hesitation—any stage-dressing there is will have been taken in from the moment the audience arrived. Then realisation comes. You and your fellow-actors are of prime importance on that great bare stage—the focal point. A move can be made only to establish a spatial relationship between actor and actor, or actor and audience, and the motivating force is the play itself. All you can do is get on with it. With this understanding, the move, then, comes easily. And the reward to compensate for the shock lies in the knowledge that nothing stands between the move and its direct communication but you, the actor. With a script, a stage, actors and an audience, drama is being cut to its bare essentials. For the actor, on this stage, it is pure acting.
Perhaps the prime concern of the actor is to be heard. So, what of the spoken word? Any shock that comes here, is a pleasant one. The acoustics promise to be first rate. There is no need to push. Any adjustment to be made is towards easy, comfortable delivery. Soon you realise the merest whisper can be heard—everywhere. This is so different from so many theatres where the actor has to thunder through the ear canals of the stalls if he is to register in the gallery. Having found there is no effort needed to achieve an evenly-spread level of sound within a full vocal range, relaxation comes with its subsequent fullness of tone. Reserves can be kept in store and held over for the vocally dramatic highlights, the subtle colouring of tone and the fine rhetorical sweep that you know will sound even better than it did in the bathroom.

Given a theatre with a stage where speech and movement are freed from many technical encumbrances, the actor is able to achieve greater depth and subtlety. But it throws a heavy burden on him. The level of concentration must be exceptionally high at all times. In all areas of the craft the actor, technically, must be exceptionally well prepared for this experience. A voice, in a theatre where a wide range of vocal colour and tone is possible, that is incapable of this range, must be noticed to the detriment of the actor. Movement and gesture without fluidity and grace cannot be ignored, costumes must be worn easily and naturally, and a sense of shape and pattern and movement must be developed. Make-up must stand up to the closest scrutiny if it is to pass. But in spite of all this, the actor cannot escape the excitement of acting to his full powers. Where so much depends on the actor alone he is challenged into reaching for a level of performance, with its subsequent directness of communication seldom available to him. It is the physical nature of the Elizabethan theatre that makes this possible, and the actor begins to enjoy it.

As a result of earlier impressions a few, more specific, points arise. The 'aside' is no longer, from this stage, the artificial, 'staged' whisper it must be when pushed through a proscenium arch across an orchestra pit—here, the physical proximity of actor and audience allows a natural speaking tone to make the comment clearly. The soliloquy has the intimacy, the directness and, rightly so at times, the disconcerting effect of 'the unsolicited confession', and thus achieves a dramatic impact never quite successful in theatres lacking the spatial relationships of this one. The 'aside' and the soliloquy, here, are not the outworn theatrical conventions of an earlier age they are usually thought to be; they are telling dramatic strokes made possible by the nature of the theatre itself. Perhaps in this theatre, at least, the phrase, "Well—it's conventional!" can come off the 'dirty-words' list. And now, perhaps, is the time for re-assessing all that has been written on the 'imitations of the Elizabethan theatre'.

The flexibility of this stage is one of its obvious virtues, and although this mainly affects the director, the actor is aware of it as a positive quality working to help him. As the play flows easily, quickly, from one scene into another, with
THE
FINEST
CAR ON
THE ROAD
MERCEDES-BENZ

SPECIALISED SERVICE
IMMEDIATE LUBE SERVICE

Traditional quality cars bearing the Mercedes-Benz three-pointed star have won countless international awards for speed, reliability and elegance.

The superb engineering skill that made these victories possible is reflected in the endurance and beauty of today's range of Mercedes-Benz cars.

The 200SE and 300 models, all offer the ideal combination of comfortable suspension, unsurpassed road-holding, combined with high engine performance, to place them in a class of their own.

METRO SALES AND SERVICE:
REGENT MOTORS PTY. LTD.
Osborne Park

METRO SERVICE CENTRE:
TIVOLI GARAGE
St. George's Terrace, Perth

no curtain to break the mood and atmosphere, the actor's attention is kept well within its pattern and a sense of unity is achieved. In order to avoid any monotony as the play flows uninterruptedly, playing area can be varied. No actor who enjoys playing on a multi-level set can fail to appreciate the power afforded him by the upper stage. As the gallery audience is on the same level as the upper stage, direct contact is maintained and unity is preserved, while the sense of power comes from the degree of elevation above the stage and the pit. At this point a word of warning may not be out of place. In this theatre a new concept of stage-position values must be formed by the actor. The dominant position at any time is as flexible as the stage itself and changes as often as the director's patterns.

The impressions here set down are by no means all—nor can we hope them to be so. In a few years, after many productions, when many directors and actors have had time to think on their experiences in this theatre, it may be that some definitive statements will be made, but for the present it is wise that little more than impressions should be recorded. Perhaps, because its physical being has excited and stimulated positive creative activity in its actors in rehearsal, it is possible, even now, to say that the Elizabethan theatre as reconstructed here, is not merely a museum piece, not just a purist's toy nor an academic plaything. But that is the negative approach. An actor must attack his work positively— even at the cost of being wrong. To me this theatre offers the actor an opportunity to act within an imaginative and emotional range restricted only by his technical and personality limitations. Because of its freedom from cluttering externals and its directness and intimacy of audience contact, the New Fortune theatre opens the way for actors to create and project an art close to the vitality of immediate human experience and almost inseparable from it.

NEVILLE TEEDE

NEVILLE TEEDE,
Senior tutor in English at the University of Western Australia,
Architect's note

It was realized in the early stages of planning the new buildings to accommodate the Arts faculty of the University of Western Australia, that there would be enough space to allow for one or two courtyards. A block of study rooms was required in three storeys—the same number as in the Elizabethan Fortune theatre—and it was thought that a courtyard might be designed with the proportions of an Elizabethan theatre.

The plan for the study block developed into a long courtyard closed across the west end by a swing of seminar rooms served by wide ambulatories on the courtyard side. By dividing the courtyard with a three-storeyed bridge running north and south from level to level and by completing the balconies on the north and south of the west half of the courtyard, some of the main features of the original Fortune theatre were created. The stage was built against the bridge which is the framework for the tiring-house dressing and the correct orientation was achieved. A spiral staircase is incorporated in the bridge to allow actors to move from level to level in the tiring-house. Thus, by adapting bridge and balconies inherent in the study block design, the stage is the only main feature added to the original brief for the building.

The main dimensions of the Elizabethan Fortune are specified in the original contract document of 1599, but other details were obtainable only from what is variously shown in sketches prepared from scholarly conjecture. The dimensions of the original contract, 55 square between balconies and 27.5 x 43' wide of the stage, have been faithfully adhered to in the New Fortune.

There is little knowledge of the materials used in all the wall surfaces of the original theatre. The balcony construction would have been timber, and it is thought that the wall surfaces would have been rough, soft plastered nogging inlaid to half timbering. The walls of the New Fortune are brick, with brick paved concrete floors. 7' steel tube supports bush hammered concrete arches and beams. The balustrading is of tubular steel and the roof lining of the bridge is jarrah board.

As the stage was to be open to the sky there was argument for using concrete with a false floor of boarding in its construction. The difficulties in storing the boarding when not in use pointed towards the final choice which is a stage made from a durable local timber, wandoow. This is permanently fixed with spacing to allow rain to run to the ground below.

The stage is made level and set at the height of the ground floor bridge. An upper stage is incorporated with the first floor of the bridge at a height low enough for an actor to be able to leap onto the main stage below. All balust-
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

William W. Patton, general manager of the Oregon Shakespearean Festival Association, has been unfailingly kind in forwarding us material on the Shakespeare Festival Theatre, Ashland, Oregon, and has allowed us to use the ground-plan of that theatre which we reproduced from the RIBA journal by permission of the editor, Noel Musgrove. Cindy Maughan of the Press Department of the Minnesota Theatre Company Foundation, supplied details of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis, and gave permission to reproduce a view of that theatre from Design Quarterly.
Soul of the age,
The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage,
My Shakespeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room:
Thou art a monument without a tomb...

He was not of an age, but for all time;
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like Mercury to charm.
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joy'd to wear the dressing of his lines;
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
As since she will vouchsafe no other wit:
Sweet Swan of Avon, what a sight it were
To see thee in our waters yet appear;
But stay, I see thee in the hemisphere
Advanced, and made a constellation there:
Shine forth, thou star of poets, and with rage
Or influence chide or cheer the drooping stage;
Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mouriéd like night,
And desairs day, but for thy volume's light.

BEN JONSON

[Prologue to the opening of the New Fortune, 29/1/64,
to be read by Sir John Gielgud,
who recorded it at the A.B.C. on 6/11/63.]