

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA  
PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM LETRAS/INGLÊS E LITERATURA  
CORRESPONDENTE

“WE ARE MOCK’D WITH ART”:  
THEATRICALIZING DEVICES IN PERFORMANCES OF  
SHAKESPEARE’S *THE WINTER’S TALE*

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Tese submetida à Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina em  
cumprimento parcial dos requisitos para obtenção do grau de

DOUTORA EM LETRAS

FLORIANÓPOLIS  
Fevereiro 2011



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work could not have been accomplished without the financial support offered by CNPq, in Brazil and in Canada, from 2008 to 2010, and by CAPES, in the past semester (2010/2).

At the end of an intense, demanding, but always delightful journey, I offer my sincere thanks to those who embarked on this ride with me.

To my supervisor, Prof. Dr. José Roberto O’Shea: for being such an encouraging, inspiring, and passionate researcher. I could not have done this without his support and guidance. In fact, I will never have the words to properly acknowledge how truly thankful I am.

To my co-supervisor, Prof. Dr. Emeritus Anthony B. Dawson: for sharing precious ideas, knowledge, and a library card, and for vital comments on the dissertation’s first version.

To the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, in particular my professors and the members of the office of the Pós-graduação em Letras/Inglês e Literatura Correspondente.

To the University of British Columbia, particularly the staff of the Koerner Library and the English Department.

To those who helped me gather material for analysis: the Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon, especially Mareike Doleschal; the Victoria & Albert Theatre and Performance Enquiry Service at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London; Théâtre de la Complicité, especially Poppy Keeling; the Folger Theatre and the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC, particularly Beth Emelson; the Royal Shakespeare Company Education Team at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon; Companhia Atores de Laura, especially Susanna Kruger in Rio de Janeiro; and last but not at all least Prof. Dr. Emeritus Marlene Soares dos Santos.

To the professors who read and commented on my research project at different stages of its development: Sérgio Bellei, Maria Lúcia Martins, Alai Diniz, and Stephan Baumgärtel.

To my parents, siblings, and in-law relatives: for all the love, understanding, and patience.

To my husband, Eduardo: for his companionship, encouragement, and love beyond borders.

To my dear friends and classmates, who are always there (even if far away) to share joys and concerns.

To God.

## ABSTRACT

“WE ARE MOCK’D WITH ART”: THEATRICALIZING DEVICES  
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UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA

2011

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This dissertation discusses the use of theatricalizing devices in four stage productions of William Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale*. The selected performances were staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company (England, 1992), Théâtre de la Complicité (England, 1992), Folger Theatre (United States, 2009), and Companhia Atores de Laura (Brazil, 2004-2005). The discussion is structured following the notion of “performance text,” proposed by Marco de Marinis (1993), which testifies to the importance of analyzing a performance in terms of its stage elements and also its contextual circumstances. Hence, the notion of “theatricalizing devices” is proposed in the present study as a tool to look at those devices employed on stage that can, simultaneously, comment on the theatrical medium and its conventions *and* help a production address themes and concerns related to the world outside the theater building. Additionally, the referred devices have to do with further fictionalizing the already fictional stage reality, without losing sight of the fact that those making and attending any given performance are inserted in an outside context.

Number of words: 52278

Number of pages: 144

## RESUMO

“A ARTE ZOMBA DE NÓS”: RECURSOS TEATRICALIZANTES  
EM PERFORMANCES DE *O CONTO DO INVERNO* DE  
SHAKESPEARE

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2011

Professor Orientador: Dr. José Roberto O’Shea

A presente tese discute o uso de recursos teatricalizantes em quatro produções teatrais de *O Conto do Inverno*, de William Shakespeare. As performances selecionadas foram produzidas pela Royal Shakespeare Company (Inglaterra, 1992), Théâtre de la Complicité (Inglaterra, 1992), Folger Theatre (Estados Unidos, 2009), e Companhia Atores de Laura (Brasil, 2004-2005). A discussão está estruturada seguindo a noção de “texto espetacular” proposta por Marco de Marinis (1993), a qual testemunha a favor da importância de se analisar uma performance em termos de seus elementos de palco e também de suas circunstâncias contextuais. Dessa forma, a noção de “recursos teatricalizantes” é proposta na presente tese como ferramenta para olhar aqueles recursos empregados no palco que podem, simultaneamente, comentar o meio teatral e suas convenções e ajudar uma produção a tratar temas e preocupações relacionados ao mundo existente para além do auditório do teatro. Além disso, os referidos recursos associam-se com ficcionalizar mais profundamente a realidade já fictícia do palco teatral, sem perder de vista o fato que os indivíduos que realizam e assistem a qualquer performance estão inseridos em um contexto exterior.

Número de palavras: 52278

Número de páginas: 144

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*“Truth, is it? Well, well, well. This is the theater! Our motto is: truth up  
to a certain point!”*

(Luigi Pirandello *Six Characters in Search of an Author* p. 101)



## Chapter 1 Introduction

“The game is up.”<sup>1</sup>

In William Shakespeare’s famous *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, there is an acting troupe known as “The Mechanicals” which chooses a playtext to perform, distributes roles for the actors, discusses the text to be presented, makes decisions during rehearsals, and finally presents its theatrical performance<sup>2</sup> during Theseus and Hyppolita’s wedding. All these parts of the process of an acting endeavor are shown to the *Dream*’s reader/audience in between the other developments of the story (such as the entanglements between the four lovers Lysander, Hermia, Helena and Demetrius). In this way, the troupe offers a play within the main play, creating a second layer of fiction for the readers/spectators. The addition of another layer of fiction, as well as the consequent presence of an on-stage audience attending the performance by “The Mechanicals” (besides the off-stage audience or reader), are elements pertaining to what I propose to call “theatricalizing devices.”

In order to better expose the notion of theatricalizing devices that permeates this study, let me refer to a practical example drawn from a stage production of *Dream* by the Royal Shakespeare Company (hereafter RSC) in 2005. Director Gregory Doran demonstrated in a creative fashion how the story staged by “The Mechanicals” was a fiction to both the audience members and the on-stage spectators who were not part of the acting troupe. Theseus, the Duke of Athens, attends the theatrical performance by “The Mechanicals” and urges Quince and his theater company to skip the epilogue, saying: “No epilogue, I pray you; for the play needs no excuse.” Yet, Quince and his fellow actors have intended to present an epilogue, and in order to obey the Duke’s cry they have to improvise and cut it out of the theatrical performance. The figure below shows this moment on the Mechanicals’ stage (which is within the *Dream*’s own staging):

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<sup>1</sup> Belarius’ line in *Cymbeline* (Act III scene iii).

<sup>2</sup> The expressions “production” and “performance” (succeeding or not the words “theatrical” or “stage”) are used interchangeably in this study.



A Midsummer Night's Dream - RSC production 2005  
 Directed by Gregory Doran  
 Designed by Stephen Brimson Lewis

Photograph shows: Bottom (Malcolm Storry, left) and Peter Quince (Paul Chahidi) with Theseus (Miles Richardson, right).

THESEUS No epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse.  
 Act V scene 1 line 335

© RSC 2005

Fig. 1. The epilogue, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (RSC, 2005)

The actor playing the Epilogue barely appears on the stage and, at the sight of him the Duke delivers his line in such a way that the actor understands the dismissal of his role and quickly leaves (though feeling surprised, as fig. 1 suggests). This passage helps to illustrate, in general terms, my idea of theatricalizing devices, which has to do precisely with the *highlighting* of theatrical elements on stage, being that certain elements are stressed in a theatrical performance in order to call attention to the qualities, powers, conventions and beauty of the theater medium. Yet, my proposal goes further, as I submit that these devices have a *two-fold purpose* in that they do more than comment on and celebrate the art and conventions of theater: I argue that the devices are also employed to enhance a production's ability to communicate with the audience on real-world issues and current topics, and on the spectators' own feelings and experiences as human beings. Hence, my approach submits that these devices can simultaneously be a reminder of the fictionality explored on stage that celebrates the art of theater *and* a

means to develop and express thematic constructs, and cause reflection on the reality<sup>3</sup> outside the theater space.

This view is derived from theoretical claims regarding the effects of theater. According to Marco de Marinis, a “performance always provokes *effects of the real* as well as *theatrical effects*, not only in the sense of simulation and duplication of reality [...], but also in the sense of its real production of meanings, kinds of awareness, events and lived experiences” (*Semiotics* 157, emphasis in the original). In this study, I appropriate this claim on the effects (real and theatrical) of stage performances and see them as features pertaining to theatricalizing devices themselves. Further, my approach encompasses specific components of *theatricality* and *metatheater*<sup>4</sup> that, to me, *generate* those devices. I review critical literature on these two areas (in my third chapter) so as to enhance and develop the definition, characteristics and functions of theatricalizing devices that I want to advance in this study.

The present research explores theatricalizing devices in four stage productions of another, less popular Shakespearean playtext, *The Winter's Tale*. The corpus of the research is made of a 1992 production by the RSC, directed by Adrian Noble in England; a 1992 production by the Théâtre de la Complicité (hereafter Complicité), directed by Annabel Arden also in England; a 2009 production by the Folger Theatre, directed by Blake Robison in the United States; and a 2004-2005 production by Companhia Atores de Laura, directed by Daniel Herz in Brazil, soon to be justified in this introduction.

This investigation on the use of theatricalizing devices in the above mentioned stage performances of *The Winter's Tale* is especially concerned with the employment of these devices in moments that deal with the motto of Shakespeare's main source of inspiration. *The Winter's Tale* was inspired by Robert Greene's *Pandosto: The Triumph of Time* (later titled *The History of Dorastus and Fawnia*), from which the Bard borrowed and adapted many of the plot's events and characters

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<sup>3</sup> By “reality” I mean the non-fictional world of the spectators, that is, their location in real contexts and circumstances beyond the theater building. I also mean the spectators' experiences as human beings, that is, the reality of their lived lives.

<sup>4</sup> Devices related to highlighting the theatrical aspects of a performance could be studied under the perspectives of the *theatrum mundi* metaphor, allegory, masquerade, symbolism, mimesis, parody, satire, and even other fields of study. Yet, it has been my deliberate choice to select and limit the related fields that I want to investigate as merging with and generating theatricalizing devices (namely, focusing on metatheater and theatricality). This choice has been motivated by my need to control the scope of the study and avoid superficiality in the treatment of loaded fields that would require an exclusive study for each. The implications and possible losses caused by my limiting of the scope are my entire responsibility.

(I detail the main differences between the two texts in the next chapter). Shakespeare's main source of inspiration not only cites a triumph of time in its subtitle; it also presents a motto, in Greene's title page, which reads: "*Temporis filia veritas*," i.e. "Truth is the daughter of Time."

Hence, I am particularly interested in discussing the use of theatricalizing devices in the treatments given by the referred productions to the general theme of Time unfolding and revealing Truths. This theme is intriguing given the abundant references to time in Shakespeare's playtext (its passage and its seasons), and the telling addition made by the Bard, in relation to *Pandosto*, of a character called Time (as chorus), suggesting the relevance of the theme to the story. Additionally, I discuss devices in scenes that are related to the particular motivations and possible themes and thematic constructs attempted to be explored by the companies (for example, the optimistic message of hope, or the exploration of painful themes such as that of loss). In short, then, all devices discussed are related to either the main theme of the relationship between Time and Truth or to specific themes that are also relevant in each production.

Each of the four stage performances selected was developed in certain circumstances, and this research explores not only the conception(s), production and reception, but also the precise context<sup>5</sup> of each company in their staging of *The Winter's Tale*. This exploration is accomplished through an attempted reconstruction of the historical moment and recollection of the remarkable facts surrounding those contexts. In my view, a broad understanding of the specific contexts facilitates an investigation of the motivations and purposes of each company in producing the selected text at those times and places. To put it differently, by studying the context of a production one should be able to perceive some of the possible goals and meanings the companies expect to achieve in the reception of their work.

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<sup>5</sup> I understand that a company could choose to perform a text motivated by long-past events that would not normally be considered as pertaining to the *current* context. Yet, I have chosen to follow Christopher Hardman's thought that "[t]he very choice of which plays to present in a season sometimes reflects a perception of their relevance to contemporary audiences, and the ways in which they are treated show the director's understanding of that relevance" (104). Additionally, I find that Roberto Ferreira da Rocha's saying that "the theater, the most political of all the arts, always refers itself to the present" ("Performance Correta" 20, my translation) further supports my decision to investigate the immediate and present (not past) contexts, as this is the context to which the productions most likely refer.

Thus, the research is interested in verifying how theatrical performance and context inform each other, being in this way concerned with the interactions between theater and real world. Besides, the analysis of each production in the light of its specific context, and the subsequent comparison between the selected productions as regards the interpretations to the playtext and the uses of theatricalizing devices are expected to demonstrate how a single text (the Shakespearean playtext) can be used and adapted in varied ways, for several purposes, according to the different environments and the objectives at stake.

The focus on the relations between theatrical performances and their contexts relates to the notion of “performance text” introduced by de Marinis (1993). In short, a performance text takes into account “every unit of discourse, whether verbal, nonverbal, or mixed, that results from the coexistence of several codes” (*Semiotics* 47). In other words, the performance text involves *all* stage elements, combined with the surrounding circumstances of a given theatrical performance. More specifically, still according to de Marinis, “by performance text is meant a theatrical performance, considered as an unordered (though complete and coherent) ensemble of textual units (expressions), of various length, which invoke different codes, dissimilar to each other and often unspecific (or at least not always specific), through which communicative strategies are played out, also depending on the context of their production and reception” (*Semiotics* 48).

It is necessary, first, to endorse an existent criticism on the issues of “completeness” and “coherence” cited in this definition. These two qualities are much criticized because they imply an “essential truth” in which only one way of seeing a performance is “possible” or “correct.” Establishing, instead, that performances actually allow various understandings, possibilities and meanings attributed *by* the spectators, I find de Marinis’ definition useful and central to this research. This is so because his idea of performance text includes internal, stage features of a theatrical performance, like the use of different means and units of expression (e.g. “the available verbal text, intonations and accents, mime, gestures, costumes, music, stage sets,” *Semiotics* 79), and includes also the surrounding circumstances of the theatrical performance, i.e. the contexts in which it is produced and received.

This is a fundamental take as it helps justify my analytical procedures, which move *from* a quick investigation on the contexts of England, U.S.A. and Brazil at the time of the productions (the outside circumstances), discussing the possible goals and conceptions developed

in those specific contexts, *to* the stage components employed and developed (the internal elements) that use theatricalizing devices. By attempting to connect the selected stage performances with their contexts of productions, my analyses look at the whole “performance text” of the productions, going beyond what happens on stage *only*.

The four stage productions of *The Winter’s Tale* selected for this research (RSC in 1992, Complicité in 1992, Folger in 2009, and Atores de Laura in 2004-2005) were identified based on their specific significance and potential impact on the occasion of their reception, as well as their creative constructions as regards the uses of theatricalizing devices. Additionally, a sense that these productions share similar conceptions even though they are informed by different places, times and circumstances is intriguing and hence has also contributed to the selection of these works for a comparative analysis. Moreover, the location of the companies in different countries offers an interesting triangle of productions of *The Winter’s Tale* in distinct parts of the world—North America, South America, and Europe— I say “interesting” because productions of the same playtext in separate places and contexts carry varied ideological, artistic, cultural and socio-political assumptions, so a comparison of these productions proves exciting and rewards academic inquiry.

The research has been conducted with a few objectives in mind. First, as already pointed out, it aims at proposing an approach to analyze theatrical performances by means of theatricalizing devices, specifically used in the selected productions of *The Winter’s Tale*. The goal, then, is both to propose and to explore the notion of “theatricalizing devices” as a strategy for theater artists to manifest simultaneously their celebration of the art of theater and their comments on real world issues. The term “theatricalizing devices,” though perhaps awkward to the ear, is sufficiently specific to define and describe the kind of tool I am interested in exploring: a tool that is developed on stage, at the moment of the performance and within its context, and which has a two-fold purpose, that is, a purpose simultaneously artistic and related to the spectators’ outside reality. Besides, it should be stated that the notion and use of the devices is, to my knowledge, a topic not yet explored, particularly in light of the corpus selected.

Additionally, by investigating the varied contexts and the differences between the selected productions in their uses of theatricalizing devices, the research aims at understanding and elaborating on the specific conceptions of each company in their process of producing *The Winter’s Tale*. Such understanding of the conceptions

shall enable a broad view of the motivations and goals of each company in adapting a playtext in a certain way and with certain target meanings, in varied contexts. Another objective, then, is to analyze the relations between the playtext by Shakespeare and the selected different historical contexts in which this text has been produced, in order to testify and elaborate on the relevance of the historical context in the meanings the companies attempt to produce. Hence, it is expected that this research starts from the theatrical environment and addresses also historical issues, by discussing political and socio-cultural topics that inform the historical context of each production and the probable objectives of the companies.

A final objective is to analyze each production's critical reception in order to establish whether the production's conception(s) and goals (artistic, social, cultural, and political ones) were successfully received or not. In other words, the research aims at investigating whether the selected stage performances have effectively contributed to the audience's perception and stance vis-à-vis the specific circumstances pertaining to the production's contexts.

To conduct this study, some hypotheses were raised. The first one has to do with the very approach I present and explore for the field of theater studies: theatricalizing devices. My hypothesis is that these devices are employed in the productions and used in such a way as to both comment on art (its characteristics, qualities, powers, and conventions), celebrating theater itself, and at the same time comment on real-world issues, given the circumstances of the productions and the meanings suggested by the use of theatricalizing devices. Therefore, it is part of my thesis that theatricalizing devices simultaneously call attention to the fiction of the staged reality, praising the art of theater, and, paradoxically, are also used to call attention to the reality *outside* the theater space. Hence, this dissertation establishes a dialogue between the theatricalizing devices employed and the attempted thematic constructs and goals of each production (aesthetic and beyond) in the light of the given contexts involved.

A second hypothesis is that an analysis of a production's historical contexts may bring insights to the understanding of specific theatrical choices, and similarly, an analysis of a given element on stage (in the present case, the uses of theatricalizing devices) may contribute to the understanding of specific historical contexts. In other words, it is also part of my thesis that a production and its context inform each other.

A final hypothesis is that the selected productions confront Shakespeare's alleged authority, by "updating" the original meanings of the playtext to make them legible to the target audiences in early 1990's England, Brazil in 2004-2005, and the United States in 2009. Thus, I investigate if the productions try to "find" and reconstruct Shakespeare's alleged original meanings, or if they actually create *their* own meanings instead, *through* Shakespeare's text, in order to communicate successfully with their contemporary audiences. This hypothesis is inspired by Terence Hawkes' claim that "Shakespeare doesn't mean: *we* mean *by* Shakespeare" (3).

The importance of researching Shakespeare in stage performance is partly credited to the chance to "theorize about the significance of the Shakespeare myth across cultural boundaries," particularly as Shakespearean texts have now been studied less as pieces of literature and more as performance texts (O'Shea, *Preface* 9) that may communicate with their contemporary audiences on concerns of the present times. Thus, the relevance of studies on Shakespeare in performance is that they allow one to theorize about socio-cultural and political identities and the contexts that inform the stagings analyzed. Further, such an analysis is relevant due to "the multiple effects Shakespeare's work has had internationally in the process of shaping cultural identities, ideologies, linguistic and literary traditions" (Delabastita 15-6). In addition, the research shall contribute to the critical literature on theatrical performance analysis, on Shakespeare in performance, and on theater studies in Brazil.

This dissertation is organized into seven chapters, this introduction being the first. Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature on *The Winter's Tale* in terms of its received criticism as playtext and of its stage history. Chapter 3 elaborates on and explores the concept of theatricalizing devices, by reviewing and appropriating elements from relevant theoretical literature on the areas of theatricality and metatheat. Chapter 4 analyzes the productions by the RSC and Complicité. It elaborates on their shared context of production, discusses the possible goals and conceptions developed, analyzes the theatricalizing devices used (which ones, how, and with what contextual and/or thematic connections and effects), and also informs about the productions' critical reception. Chapters 5 and 6 repeat such process with the productions by Folger and Atores de Laura, respectively. The conclusion (chapter 7) evaluates the approach to theatricalizing devices, debating its two-fold purpose aforementioned, with examples from the productions analyzed. It also explores possible relations between the



four productions; discusses the issue of Time-Truth dealt with in the analyses; indicates points of limitation of the approach used and of the research itself; and suggests possibilities for future research.

Ever since its first appearance *The Winter's Tale* has “fluctuated both in popularity and critical esteem” (Draper 46). In the recent past years, it has been gaining more and more attention and appreciation from theater companies and researchers, being considered “one of the most popular pieces of the Shakespearean canon today” due to the “seductive powers” of its poetry and performance (Marlene Soares dos Santos “Introdução” 7, my translation). Having said that, it is time to take a closer look at the histories of this playtext.

## Chapter 2

### “Welcome to Our Shearing”<sup>1</sup>: The Histories of *The Winter’s Tale*

“What’s past is prologue.”<sup>2</sup>

This chapter reviews relevant literature on *The Winter’s Tale* in two parts: the first one introduces the playtext’s origin and sources, its characteristics within the group of “late plays,” and its received criticism on selected main themes that are relevant to the issues investigated in this research. The second part reviews its stage history.

#### 2.1 Shakespeare’s Playtext

The main piece of evidence to date *The Winter’s Tale* is an account of a performance of the text, attended by Dr. Simon Forman in 1611, at the Globe Theatre, in London. Forman recalls some events of the plot, citing Leontes’ jealousy and plan of murdering his visitor; the escape of the cupbearer (Camillo) and Polixenes to Bohemia; the request for the Oracle’s message; and the loss and recovery of the baby. Forman also calls especial attention to the rogue Autolycus, citing his early tricks, and advising one to “[b]eware of trusting feigned beggars or fawning fellows.”<sup>3</sup> While Forman’s text dates the first staging of *The Winter’s Tale* as of 1611, the play was first published in the Folio<sup>4</sup> of 1623, only, with no previous quartos’ publications.

Other pieces of evidence to help date the playtext as belonging to the end of Shakespeare’s career are some common traits that *The Winter’s Tale* shares with other so-called “late plays” written by the Bard, namely, *Cymbeline*, *The Tempest*, and *Pericles*. These four plays may be referred to as tragicomedies, late comedies, and romances. Susan Snyder & Deborah T. Curren-Aquino (2007) validate Barbara Mowat’s phrase,<sup>5</sup> “tragicomic romance” (9), whereas Marlene Soares

<sup>1</sup> Perdita’s line in *The Winter’s Tale* (Act IV scene iv).

<sup>2</sup> Antonio’s line in *The Tempest* (Act II scene i).

<sup>3</sup> The full account written by Forman is reprinted in: Henry Morley and William Hall Griffin. *English Writers: An Attempt Towards a History of English Literature*. Charleston, SC: BiblioLife, 2008. p. 122-123.

<sup>4</sup> The First Folio was the gathering of 36 plays written by the Bard, collected by two fellow actors from Shakespeare’s theater company after the writer’s death. About 20 of Shakespeare’s plays, including *The Winter’s Tale*, would have been lost were it not for their publication in the Folio.

<sup>5</sup> Mowat, Barbara A. “What’s in a Name?: Tragicomedy, Romance, or Late Comedy.” *A Companion to Shakespeare’s Works: The Poems, Problem Comedies, Late Plays*. 4 vols. Eds.

dos Santos (2006), invoking Gary Taylor,<sup>6</sup> claims that most contemporary scholars use the term “romances” (“Introdução” 10). Following Santos, some of the common traits shared by these four texts (and which therefore reinforce the view that *The Winter’s Tale* dates from the end of Shakespeare’s career) are the aged and mature leading characters; family separations and reconciliations; false deaths and resurrections; the presence of divinities; and the “fancy and daring theatricality,” especially displayed in these plays’ “deservingly most famous *coups-de-théâtre* of all Shakespearean dramaturgy” (Santos 11, my translation).<sup>7</sup>

J. H. P. Pafford (1963) cites other characteristics common to the four “late plays:” the fact that wrongs and evil in human characters are responsible for bringing disharmony; that human errors are healed by the virtue of people with the help of gods; and that time and natural processes help men eventually reestablish harmony. Richard Pilgrim (1983) also elaborates on the similarities between the late plays, following a markedly Christian approach. Among the common features, Pilgrim mentions that human action, frailty and evil are the agents responsible for the wrongs in life; and that remorse, penitence, and forgiveness are the means to reach resolution and reconciliation. In sum, the fact that *The Winter’s Tale* is identified with these other plays in terms of style, common characteristics, and themes reinforces that the *Tale* is one of the last plays written by the Bard, and Forman’s 1611 account specifically sets its date.

It is agreed among Shakespearean scholars (e.g. Snyder & Curren-Aquino 2007; Emma Smith 2007; Marlene Soares dos Santos 2006; Laurie Maguire 2004) that *The Winter’s Tale* was strongly inspired by Robert Greene’s novel *Pandosto: The Triumph of Time*, also known as *The History of Dorastus and Fawnia*, written in 1588. Ros King (2009) confirms that Shakespeare “relies heavily on Greene’s story for the first half of his play” (77). Yet, scholars such as Stephen Orgel (1996), Mario Digangi (2008) and Jonathan Bate (2009) acknowledge

Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003. Vol. 4, p. 129-149.

<sup>6</sup> Taylor, Gary. *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present*. London: The Hogarth Press, 1990. p. 173.

<sup>7</sup> While these specific traits appear individually in other plays too (such as a false death in *Romeo and Juliet*, the apparitions in *Macbeth*, the separations in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*), Santos’ point is that *all* of these cited characteristics appear in *all* the last four plays, thus making them constitute a group. In *The Winter’s Tale*, the famous *coup-de-théâtre* is the stage direction “Exit, pursued by a bear” (Act III, scene iii).

still another source of inspiration, namely, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1567). This latter text influenced Shakespeare specifically concerning both the style and the idea for the statue scene (Bate xvii), and the myth of Proserpine alluded to in the debate between Perdita and Polixenes (Orgel 44).

Concerning his main source, *Pandosto*, as usual, Shakespeare made minor and major changes, so as to adapt the tale to his interests. Here are some of the differences concerning the first part of the story (that corresponds to Shakespeare's first three acts). In Greene's text, Pandosto (Shakespeare's Leontes) is the king of Bohemia, not Sicilia. Greene's Belaria (Shakespeare's Hermione) is only found pregnant when in jail, which means that in the source text there is no speech of "nine moons." The men who go to Delphos for the Oracle hear the truth before returning to Bohemia, whereas in Shakespeare's text all characters hear the Oracle's message *during* the trial, only. Besides, Greene's Pandosto does not defy the Oracle (unlike Leontes), and the prince's death in the source text occurs with no previous indications of the child being sick. The queen dies in *Pandosto*, and her apparent resurrection only happens in Shakespeare's version. Also, in the source text, the baby is abandoned being put on a boat left on the ocean, whereas Shakespeare designed the abandonment in the wilderness, followed by the aforementioned famous stage direction.

Next, these are the principal differences between the source text and Shakespeare's text in what constitutes acts 4 and 5 of *The Winter's Tale*. The character named Time and his speech as chorus have no equivalent in the source. In Greene's text, the king of Sicilia, Egistus (Shakespeare's Polixenes), arranges marriage to his son Dorastus (that is, Florizel) with the daughter of the king of Denmark, and this event does not take place in the Shakespearean text. Besides, there is no sheep-shearing feast in Greene's story, only a shepherdess feast of which Fawnia (i.e. Perdita) is the hostess. Greene shows the beginning of the romance between the young couple (from their early talks and hesitations due to rank issues to their engaging in a love relationship), whereas Shakespeare presents Perdita and Florizel already in love during the sheep-shearing feast. While Shakespeare places Florizel's father disguised in the sheep-shearing feast to learn about the secret relationship, in Greene's text it is the neighbours of Fawnia and her adopted family who notice the royal presence in the shepherd's house and tell the king about it.

In *Pandosto*, Fawnia and Dorastus plan to escape to Italy with the help of Capnio, an old servant of the prince, but due to bad weather their ship reaches Bohemia instead. There, Pandosto sends Dorastus to jail and entertains and feels attracted to Fawnia, who rejects him—the incest is greatly minimized in Shakespeare’s text, with the help of Paulina, a character with no equivalent in *Pandosto*. In Shakespeare’s text, the reunion between lost daughter and royal father is only reported. In the source text, however, when Egistus learns about his son being in Pandosto’s jail, he goes to Bohemia to have Dorastus released and Fawnia, Capnio and Porrus (the shepherd) killed. Scared, Porrus shows the evidence of Fawnia’s rich birth, and it is learned that she is the daughter of Pandosto. In the end, while Shakespeare’s Leontes recovers his lost daughter and allegedly dead wife, having a happy ending, Greene has Pandosto kill himself, tormented by his wrongs to Egistus and Belaria and by his incestuous desire for Fawnia. The Bard thus turned Greene’s story that ends bitterly into one with a much more joyful ending.

The artistic quality of *The Winter’s Tale* has been debated throughout time. Maurice Hunt (1995) recalls the early criticisms by Ben Jonson in 1614, and by John Dryden in 1672, which focused on the “violation” of the so-called unities of time, place and action, and on the playtext’s alleged disunity, suggesting that the text was unsophisticated. Other authors who confirm the early disturbance regarding the disruption of unities of time and place are Jan Sewell (2009), Hallett Smith (1997), Bill Overton (1989), R. P. Draper (1985), and Andrew Gurr (1983), and they all agree that contemporary critics are no longer disturbed by those issues.

As for more recent criticism on the text’s artistic quality, Smith (1997) mentions a tendency to explore the symbolic aspects of the text and features like the stage direction “Exit, pursued by a bear,” the so-called artificiality of the figure of Time, the revelation of Perdita’s true identity being told by a messenger, and the alleged improbability of the statue scene. Yet, Smith upholds that all critical problems pointed out concerning these scenes “disappear if we remember the play’s title and its meaning” (1615), because “Winter’s tales [are] not supposed to have credibility, consistency, or conciseness” (1616). I particularly enjoy Smith’s argument on the meaning of the title, since it gets close to conceptions developed by some of the companies analyzed in this study (this point is further discussed in the analyses themselves).

The play's artistic quality has been fiercely defended in a famous essay by Nevill Coghill (1958). Coghill considers six points from the text that have been considered crude and unsophisticated, and argues that these alleged troubles are actually well designed and/or necessary. The first point is the suddenness of Leontes' jealousy. Coghill claims that it is *not* sudden because by stressing that Polixenes' visit has lasted precisely for nine months, Shakespeare makes one intrigued about the queen's pregnancy, by wondering *why* the specific duration of the visit is mentioned. Not fully convinced by Coghill's claim, though, I endorse other critics (e.g. Marlene Soares dos Santos 2006; R. A. Foakes 2003; Anthony B. Dawson 1978; A. D. Nuttall 1966), who support that the outburst *is* sudden and unexplained, probably made in this way to stress Leontes' (initial) tyrant character. Harold Bloom, in special, highlights that Leontes is *his own Iago*, and that his tragedy is caused by his *disease* (Bloom 2010). In contrast, it is important to recall that in the source text, *Pandosto*, the outburst is clearly not sudden, given that for at least 9 pages in a sequence there are descriptions of the relationship between the queen and the visitor, suggesting dubious behavior that may have led the king to his misjudgment.

The second point has to do with the stage direction "Exit, pursued by a bear." Coghill maintains that the introduction of a bear is a strategy "to create a unique and particular effect, at that point demanded by the narrative mood and line of the playtext. It is at the moment when the tale, hitherto wholly and deeply tragic, turns suddenly and triumphantly to comedy" (203). Thus, Coghill holds that the bear signals the text's change of mood. I agree with this claim, particularly given that the stage productions I analyze do mark a change in tone at or around the bear scene. The third point is the presence of Father Time and, again, I entirely agree with Coghill. He argues that since the content of Time's speech is presented in a subsequent scene, Time is not important for *what* he says, but for his relation to the theme and quality of the playtext: "Time is absolutely central to both and if he were not a character in the play, it would be necessary to invent him" (205). Coghill asserts that Time moves the reader from the world of realism into the fable of the Bohemian sequence, and also, like the bear shown early before, it helps change the tone from tragedy to comedy.

Coghill's fourth point refers to the "crude shifts to clear the stage in the Florizel-Perdita-Camillo-Autolycus sequence." Such shifts refer to the direct addresses to the audience/reader and several asides

and movements backwards and forwards made by these characters, which for some (e.g. S. L. Bethell, 1947) do not make sense. For Coghill these shifts are necessary for the reader to follow the characters' plans and the development of the plot (with Florizel and Perdita's trip to Sicilia, being followed by Camillo and Polixenes)—in this way, the shifts are required, not "crude." The fifth point is that Perdita's recovery as the lost princess and the reunion with her father are reported, not shown. Coghill holds that this reporting, which includes a reference to Hermione's statue, postpones the climax to the last scene, and guarantees "that mounting thrill of expectation needed to prepare us for [it]" (210). I endorse the author's view that this is not crude but rather clever, because otherwise the showing of Leontes and Perdita's reunion would cause the statue scene to be an anti-climax, and thus it would ruin this scene's power and beauty.

The final point is the statue scene itself. Coghill argues that this moment, allegedly improbable, needs to be a miracle for Leontes as well as for the reader (hence the several previous references to Hermione being dead, and Paulina's claim for the awakening of one's faith). Coghill's study is particularly relevant to me for debating and defending textual moments that, on stage, are likely to use theatricalizing devices, specifically the points on Father Time, the bear scene, the statue scene, and the report of Perdita's restoration, all of which I analyze in at least one of the four stage performances selected.

Due to my focus on investigating theatricalizing devices, one of the themes that most interests me in *The Winter's Tale* is its fictionality and inherent theatricality, including the effects of magic and illusion and the relations between fantasy and realism. Several scholars have addressed these issues. One such study is Pafford's (1963). The author submits that Shakespeare's play contains realism "in plot and character" (l), but overall it constitutes a "complex mixture of realism and fantasy" (lxx). While the fantasy aspect refers to the alleged improbabilities (e.g. the statue scene), among the ways to ensure credibility Pafford cites themes that have a strong element of realism: "[t]he play is also concerned with the passion for justice and personal honor and with the virtues of integrity, loyalty, courage, love, patience, and self-sacrifice" (lxvii). I agree that the apparently improbable story also addresses realistic themes, and endorse Pafford's conclusion that it is in the subject matters that it deals with that the story finds its connections to reality.

Francis Fergusson (1977) also discusses fictionality and realism in *The Winter's Tale*. For Fergusson, there is a realistic style in Sicilia,

which contrasts with the unrealistic atmosphere that emerges after Antigonus' scene on the nonexistent seacoast of Bohemia. Fergusson submits that the stage direction "exit, pursued by a bear" wants to "bid the audience accept the rest of the play in the spirit of an old tale" (134), signaling a shift in tone (a claim similar to Coghill's). Also, following Fergusson, the Oracle, with the atmosphere of divinity, and the speech by Time, "with his attitude of the teller of old tales" (134), further enhance the unrealistic tone. In the end, Fergusson states that the reunion of Leontes and Hermione, connected to a lot of trouble, pain, and a long passage of time, "acquires a solidier, realer quality in spite of the fairy-tale device of the living statue" (136). Hence, for the author, the so-called improbabilities of the text do not disturb the spectators' belief in the story and awakening of their faith.

Another author who investigates the play in terms of its co-existent fictionality and realism is Michael Goldman (1972). Goldman maintains that elements from the sheep-shearing feast such as the dances, backstage preparations for the party, characters' comments on their costumes and the role-playing (Perdita becomes Flora, for instance) impart "a remarkable mixture of artifice and realism. Indeed, they both seem to increase as the action develops" (132). These elements, Goldman says, occur under the justification of the festivity, since "it is an occasion of art, and everyone involved, like Perdita, is playing a role" (133). So, while the role-playing signals fictionality, the comments on the costumes remind one of reality, and in these instances one can notice the interplay between fantasy and reality.

Pilgrim (1983) also argues that the play shares realism and improbabilities, and states that it presents characters with "intense vividness" and who are "brilliant and lifelike" (7). A similar opinion is expressed by David Daniell (1986). The author believes that the play has a "tough realism" (118), which Daniell incisively notices in the intricate relations between king, court, and country. At the same time, Daniell also sees the text as "altogether alert to the theatrical, that radioactive area between illusion and truth" (119). Further on this interplay between illusion and reality, Daniell writes: "Leontes knows his accusation to be true. Autolycus swears his ballads are true. Perdita is only playing at shepherdesses; everyone in Bohemia acts, and the long episode in that country is another play-within-a-play" (119).

Anthony B. Dawson (1978), holding a similar view, analyzes possible interpretations and stagings for scenes that involve issues of reality, falsehood and magic. Dawson describes events in the first



Sicilian part of *The Winter's Tale* that are true facts misunderstood as false by Leontes, and events in the Bohemian part that are false in the sense of being played (like the role-playing in the sheep-shearing festival), and which “characters and audience must see as true, and which turn out to be true in fact” (150). Considering these issues of reality and fantasy, Dawson asserts that the text of *The Winter's Tale* owns some sort of magic, a “beneficent art which [...] bears a close resemblance to the art of the theater” (153).

Subsequently, Dawson shows how this magic, which gives some sort of inherent theatricality to the playtext, can work well on stage. Indeed, the author discusses the statue scene, for instance, as a great moment of “theatrical act par excellence” (153). Besides, in a later work (Dawson 1988), he states that “we are all children in the theater, ready and eager to accept the magic before us” (229), which implies the audience’s easy acceptance of theatrical effects (such as, I think, those that I call theatricalizing devices). Hence, Dawson’s view is relevant for demonstrating that moments which in the reading of the playtext may have caused trouble, in theatrical performance can work more smoothly—something made possible with an understanding and appropriate exploration of a text’s theatricality. Thus, for my research, I approach Dawson’s view as a support to the perspective of stage performances fully exploring a text’s theatricality and, therefore, the theatricalizing devices that can emerge from it.

Still another study focused on the interplay between realism and fictionality is provided by Andrew Gurr (1983). Gurr insightfully discusses Shakespeare’s bear and statue as matching counterparts. In his view, the bear marks the end of the first, tragic and realistic mode of the text, being “a creature of brute nature” (423). The statue scene, on the other hand, relies on tricks of art and illusion, being unrealistic and “holy and lawful magical art” (423). For Gurr, the statue scene is also unique in that, unlike other tricks of the kind employed by Shakespeare, not only the characters are surprised by it, but the reader too does not know in advance what is to happen (420-421). Finally, Gurr asserts that the bear and the statue remind the reader “that what we see is a fiction” (425). This claim on the two scenes as reminders of the text’s fictionality is extremely valid to my research given that, among the selected stage performances, I observe the use of theatricalizing devices that comment on the art of theater and its fictionality, including in the discussion of the staging of these very scenes (bear and statue).

Also within the theme of fictionality, illusion, and reality, Bill Overton (1989) maintains that *The Winter's Tale* is a text with “powerful theatricality” (85). For instance, there is theatricality in the outburst of Leontes’ jealousy, in a scene filled with “dramatic tension” (64). The sheep-shearing festival is, too, a source of theatricality for Overton, especially due to its marked entertainment in dances, song, “graceful romance and broad comedy” (64). The presence of *coups de théâtre* is another indicator of theatricality, in his perspective—specifically, Overton refers to the bear and the statue scenes, also explored by Gurr. At last, Time as chorus is another example of theatricality explicitly described as such by the author. I endorse Overton’s claims, and his study is important for this research because most of the ways and moments in which he finds theatricality are actually analyzed in at least one of the selected stage performances (all the ones I cite here *are* analyzed), specifically due to their uses of theatricalizing devices.

Overton goes further and claims that the theatricality of the playtext is found in more complex ways, i.e. by the use of words that call for imagination and refer to theater metaphors, renewing the audience’s “awareness of the dramatic medium” (65). This awakening of the awareness that it is all theater is also significant to me because it refers to what I mean by theatricalizing devices. I see this reminder that “all is theater” in the stage productions I analyze, not only by words predicted in Shakespeare’s text, but also and especially via the companies’ own visual creations and sometimes added lines spoken—this is explored in the analytical chapters, later.

Finally, Overton states that the playtext’s “contradictory responses” also enhance its inherent theatricality. The author exemplifies this position reminding that the Old Shepherd encounters the baby while the Young Clown sees Antigonus being eaten by a bear and the ship being swollen by the ocean: “the sequence is contradictory, simultaneously tragic and comic. It seems designed to convey the shocking co-existence of living and dying, suffering and renewal. It is hardly an accidental symmetry which has an old man stumbling on birth and a young man on death” (68). In the end, Overton rightly concludes that the Bard uses theatricality playfully but to discuss serious themes like madness, violence, death, and restoration, playing “conscious games with his audience’s awareness” (68).

Yet another discussion on issues of fictionality is Judd Hubert’s (1991). Hubert acknowledges the presence, in *The Winter's Tale*, of

several reminders of the play's own fictionality, and the author approaches such reminders as forms of metadrama. Among the metadramatic techniques, Hubert cites Perdita outperforming the others; Camillo's acting as a dramatist, given that he "invents the plot, places the cues, and thoroughly coaches his players" (126); Paulina's directing of Hermione's restoration; and Time as Chorus making explicit self-references to the events developed in the story. Additionally, Hubert shows how Leontes "play[s] the role" of cuckold, exposes Hermione as in a spectacle (111), and even says "theatrical metaphors" such as "that is entertainment!" Following Hubert, Leontes displays "two salient aspects of theatricality: the awareness of playing a part and an addiction to spectacle, for not only does he elaborate his fictions but he visualizes them while compelling others to share his vision" (113). In the end, Hubert thinks Leontes fails as both dramatist and director.

Further, for Hubert, Autolycus, unlike Leontes, succeeds as dramatist, being eager to make his fictions true so that he can immediately benefit from his show (by stealing or selling things). Hence, Autolycus "shows far greater mastery of the stage than does Leontes and multiplies successful shows instead of repeatedly externalizing the same self-defeating obsession" (118). Hubert's insightful conclusion is that the appreciation of the playtext depends on understanding the manipulative power of the theatrical medium, that is, the operations made through metadramatic/metatheatrical techniques. With this focus on metadramatic techniques and theatricality, Hubert's ideas resemble my own version of theatricalizing devices, and some of the author's examples are discussed in my analytical chapters.

Similarly, Michael O'Connell (2002) approaches the playtext's self-reflexivity, and sees this technique as a reminder of the theatrical experience. O'Connell gives examples of the ways in which *The Winter's Tale* displays awareness of its improbabilities and theatricality. The author's most interesting insight, in my view, concerns the statue scene, which he conceives as "Shakespeare's greatest *coup de théâtre*" given that the statue is not really a statue, the queen is not really dead, and "[t]hat this is announced through her posing as what we are led to believe is a statue of the 'dead' queen, a statue that comes to life, places an intense focus on the issue of theater, what theater is and what it can demand of an audience" (225). In other words, for O'Connell the statue scene stands for the art of theater itself, "of playwright, actors, and stage—and an art that is verbal, visual and embodied" (226). His conclusion is that readers and spectators need to be aware of the need of

their participation in the conclusion of a text like *The Winter's Tale*, by awakening their faith towards Hermione's restoration.

Another scholar who discusses the playtext in terms of its fictionality is Marlene Soares dos Santos (2006). Santos asserts that *The Winter's Tale* presents “great poetic richness and fascinating theatricality” (“Introdução” 7, my translation). For the author, the text is open to incidents, events and characters, and this is so because there is not much concern with reality and logic as there is with imagination and creativity—this claim is relevant to me for implying that the text has great possibilities for the development of theatricality and its emergent theatricalizing devices, when it is put on stage. Moreover, Santos argues that the playtext is a fiction, not only because of its own title that informs readers that the story is a tale, but also due to reminders of this fictional feature *throughout* the text, especially with the appearance of the figure of Time. Santos cites as another example of the reminder that the story is a fiction the fact that the plot is often condensed through the device of narrative, in which characters tell what has happened (e.g. in the visit to Apollo in Delphos; in Antigonus' dream of Hermione; and in the recognition of Perdita).

For Santos, all these aspects together reveal an unreal and playful nature of the playtext, which causes the appreciation of *The Winter's Tale* to require a “willing suspension of disbelief” (Santos refers to the phrase by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Introdução” 20). In short, Santos' thesis is that *The Winter's Tale* is “about the universe of fiction” (“Introdução” 20, my translation). This overall perspective that the tale is *about* fiction itself is extremely important for the present research, because it indirectly validates possible stagings of the story that explore the fictional aspect of the tale, something which, in my view, actually happens in the selected productions analyzed, *specifically* through their uses of theatricalizing devices.

Christopher Hardman (1988) also discusses the fictionality of *The Winter's Tale*. Hardman proposes that the presence of Time as a character and chorus, “cobbling together the tragic and comic parts of the play” (60), emphasizes the play's own fictionality. As Hardman phrases it, “[o]ne thing [Time] certainly does is contribute to the much commented on fictionality of the work. *It would indeed be hard to forget that one was watching a play*, for there is no attempt to conceal the time gap: quite the contrary, a personification addresses the audience directly and even somewhat ineptly, presenting himself as the teller of the tale” (60, emphasis added). In this sense, Hardman says that “the idea of life

as some kind of artistic fiction, perhaps a play, runs through *The Winter's Tale*" (66). Such a claim is clearly important to this research, since Hardman implies that *The Winter's Tale* as a whole is an opportunity for the use of theatricalizing devices because *the story itself* highlights its fictionality and artificiality.

Another issue that has been explored in the received criticism of *The Winter's Tale* and which interests me refers to the theme of regeneration and renewal, specifically concerning the factors that enable renewal to take place *through time* towards the end of the play. Many scholars have insightfully addressed this topic, and have done so under different perspectives. While most agree that it is a combination of several factors that helps set things right, scholars usually defend *one* single factor as the main agent responsible for renewal and restoration. The most debated factors are two: while some consider that the main agent for restoration is the power of a divine order, connected to faith and miracle, others consider it to be the passage of time.

One such religious-minded perspective is S. L. Bethell's (1947). The author sees the play as a tale of "providence and guidance, miracle, mysterious prompting to good or evil—a whole range of inexplicable experience over against, yet intimately bound up with, the natural affections, social sanctions and other manifestations of the natural order" (30). Bethell acknowledges that the playtext has many pagan references (such as sexual love outside marriage, regarding the Clown), but recalls that Shakespeare explicitly puts forward references to Christian dogma as well. In this manner, Bethell insists that the text has "a changeless divine order whose redemptive function is providentially effective within the time-process" (44). Hence, at the same time that Bethell defends the power of a divine providence as the main force behind the tale, the author still acknowledges the role of time, in the sense that it is through time that the divine providence works.

In this way, Bethell's perspective is that the play is about regeneration (89) linked mainly to Christian faith (102) and the divine order, which are made manifest with time. Bethell supports the Christian view exploring references to original and actual sin, guilt, innocence, and divine grace, which can be found throughout the text. In the end, Bethell argues that the statue scene is the climax for the restorations, because at this moment "Perdita is returned, Mamillius is, as it were, renewed in Florizel, Hermione is soon to come to life, and the friendship of the two kings will be cemented into a union of the kingdoms by the marriage of the heirs. Leontes and they all are born again—regenerate,

'ransomed' and restored; the old world of suspicion and hatred has been destroyed" (102). In short, while Bethell considers the divine order crucial to the story, the author still implies that time can help in the healing process.

John Anthony Williams (1967), similarly, believes that divine providence is needed for healing and regeneration to take place. He develops the thesis that *The Winter's Tale* is about faith, claiming that, "[l]ike Leontes in the final scene, the audience is asked to awaken its faith in the ability of law and providence to transcend human expectation and to insure by their natural working a restoration of life" (21). Yet, like Bethell, Williams acknowledges the importance of time to the story, stating that it "assumes an exaggerated responsibility for the events" since "[a]ll things may be subject to Time within the natural order" (19). Hence, Williams sees time as part of those natural processes that are guided by the divine order, and for this reason he approaches the issue of time as also relevant.

Coghill (1958), unlike Bethell and Williams, does not take the divine order into account, and stresses much more emphatically than these two authors the fundamental role of time to the play's quality and thematic structure. In fact, Coghill urges that "Time is at the heart of the play's mystery" (206), and precisely for this reason his visible presence should be celebrated instead of taken as offensive. Draper (1985), likewise, thinks that the treatment of the issue of time in *The Winter's Tale* means that Shakespeare "wished to give it exceptional dramatic prominence" (12). Thomas McFarland (1972), in turn, debates the cycle of disintegration and subsequent regeneration in the text implying the relevance of the time factor, too.

McFarland's view is that the first three acts are dominated by death, restlessness and hate in such a way that a happy, comic resolution to Leontes' madness could *only* emerge after a long gap of time and the appearance of a new generation. The author points that disintegration takes place through Leontes' rage, which makes everything fall apart. Then, the bear "appears as suddenly and ferociously as the rage of Leontes, clears the coast for a new entrance" (131), not only the entrance of the shepherd, but also of what he represents: the comedy and subsequent renewal, which reverses the disintegration. McFarland thinks the distribution of flowers in the sheep-shearing also signals renewal: "by giving flowers here, healing blossoms are strewn over the entire desert seared by Leontes" (132). Thus, McFarland conveys that it is not only time in terms of number of years that plays a role in cycles of

regeneration, but also time related to nature and its seasons, since the flowers distributed symbolize spring, a period of blossom.

A last study to be commented on that discusses the role of time for the resolution of problems is provided by Inga-Stina Ewbank (1995). The author proposes that, in comparison to the source text *Pandosto*, Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* greatly enlarges the role of time to "a controlling theme," since the play is "a dramatic exploration of the manifold meanings of Time" (140), and "communicates a constant awareness of the powers of time" (153). To support her view, Ewbank evokes several references to time made throughout the play. Then, the author submits that time not only *unfolds* errors, enabling thus future regeneration; for Ewbank time also helps *make* errors, and the author cites as example the fact that Leontes does not give it time to investigate his suspicion of Hermione's adultery. Hence, Ewbank blames time, not Leontes alone, for the error in judgment. While I agree that time *is* crucial to the playtext (and central to my analysis, in light of its relationship to the issue of Truth), I must recall and endorse Overton (1989), who explicitly criticizes Ewbank's perspective on this point, in that it reduces Leontes' fault and his possible initial characterization as an unreasonable tyrant.

Ewbank then holds that the statue scene is the ultimate manifestation of the triumph of time over the human beings. This is so because the scene 1) recalls the *past* in which the characters were last seen together; 2) reinforces the *present*, in which Hermione is wrinkled by the intervening time; and 3) points to the *future*, with the enjoyment of the family reunion and the restoration of Perdita, about to get married and "potential mother of future generations" (153). In light of Ewbank's defense of time as "the" controlling theme of the play, I endorse Overton (1989) again, who claims that it is troublesome to apply to a text a particular theme as bearer of a *single* meaning of an entire work. Overton criticizes Ewbank for ascribing to time all the responsibility for what happens to men, while, in Overton's view, *The Winter's Tale* shows what *men* do to men, and to women (Overton 31). To me, the story shows what people do to one another (in good and bad senses), and how errors can be corrected and life renewed, with the help of *several* elements—among them, the passage of time, of course; but *also* divine providence *and* human agency, the latter manifested in people's goodness, the ability to forgive, and growth through reflection and penitence.

## 2.2 *The Winter's Tale* on the Stage

Dennis Bartholomeusz (1982) once said: “[a] play needs the art of dramatic performance to complete itself” (2). Since this art can only be completed with teamwork made of human agents (director, technicians, actors, spectators), Bartholomeusz recognizes that “the patterns of interpretation change from one age to another. The necessary absence of the immutable is both the strength and weakness of the art of performance” (2). In this light, the following review of *The Winter's Tale* on stage shows how approaches to staging the playtext have differed from time to time, being that these differences are not necessarily a path towards progress, but certainly a feature that imparts richness, creativity and force to a playtext's stage history. Further, we shall keep in mind Bartholomeusz's perspective (also claimed by Charles Frey 1980) that the changing conventions of theatrical performance inform more about the value and taste of an age/era than of Shakespeare's original texts, meanings, and times.

Concerning the Jacobean stage, that is, the productions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Shakespeare's own time), Frey states that, overall, the performances were “less than spectacular” and emphasized “verbal purity” (16). In other words, the stagings were more concerned with the speeches and poetry of the Bard. Then, drawing on Forman's famous account (mentioned in the beginning of this chapter), Frey submits that the first production of *The Winter's Tale*, in 1611, probably focused on familiar physical action, and had rapid pace and continuity. From my own reading of Forman's register, I would like to add the implied thematic concern with morality and falseness, which is likely to have been well-explored by the Shakespeare theater company themselves, given Forman's choice caveat on the rogue Autolycus: “[b]eware of trusting feigned beggars or fawning fellows.”

The productions of *The Winter's Tale* in the 18<sup>th</sup> century were “bigger and better,” in Frey's view, because they were “more spectacular” and the characters were “more finely drawn” (25). Frey discusses David Garrick's 1756 production, probably the most popular of the time, and recalls that the entire action was placed in Bohemia, so that the first Sicilian part was summarized in a narrative. Also, minor characters were eliminated, their lines given to major characters, and in this way roles such as Autolycus', and the statue scene itself, were expanded. Hardman (1988) also comments on Garrick's work. He



informs that it was titled *Florizel and Perdita: A Dramatic Pastoral*, and says that the shortenings made to the playtext aimed at enabling an exploration of the sentimentality of the Bohemian sequence. Hunt (1995), similarly, sees Garrick's production as the most popular at that time, and adds that Macnamara Morgan, in 1754, also staged the Bohemian sequence only, thus signaling a tendency.

Hunt then informs that, after Shakespeare's own time, the next "complete" staging of *The Winter's Tale* (i.e. with the Sicilian part *not* suppressed in narrative form) took place early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, only, with John Philip Kemble, in 1802. Even though this production differed from the original text in a few changes (such as the notorious absence of Time's speech and of Perdita and Polixenes' debate on art and nature), Hunt submits that it "set the tone" (7) for the next fifty years of *The Winter's Tale* on the London stage. Subsequently, Frey states that, in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of spectacle, with sensational effects, pictorial realism, and elaboration of detail was accentuated even further in comparison to the previous century (29). Hunt laments this fondness for the spectacular, because, as he puts it, such fondness resulted in stagings of *The Winter's Tale* (and other Shakespearean texts) having a lot of poetry cut to favor the inclusion and emphasis on pageantry and scenic effects (10).

To explain the point more specifically, Hunt discusses the production by Charles Kean, in 1856. Describing its wide spectacle character, Hunt recalls the criticism that individual characters got lost in this production, and that his conception of the text "ignored both the poetry of the play and the dynamics of ensemble acting" (11). Frey, similarly, disapproves of the sensational effects, claiming that Kean's "and the major productions of the next fifty years demonstrated [that] the play itself could more easily be hidden than enhanced by splendid decoration" (29). Hardman, in turn, merely states that Kean's production was "spectacular," with "amazing" costumes and settings (102), and other extravagant features. In my view, *both* the poetry (i.e. the language) and the scenic effects are important and ought to be used in a *collaborative* manner to reinforce each other and help advance the story being told.

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the appreciation for extravagant productions diminished, and the focus returned to the poetry of Shakespeare. According to Worthen (1997), in fact, affirming a critical consensus, the return to this focus on the "beauty of the words" *started* with director William Poel, who

attempted to recreate the original staging conditions of Shakespeare's time. Indeed, Frey confirms that Poel, in 1881 (as well as Ben Greet, in 1895, and Frank Benson, in 1903), produced *The Winter's Tale* in a "plain" manner, with "[s]implified sets, a rapid, tuned delivery [of the words], continuous staging, and experiments with a platform" (33). Yet, the most influential performance around that time, and which established the tone for the forthcoming productions was, indisputably, Harvey Granville-Barker's, in 1912.

Hardman describes the importance of this production, stating that "[i]n 1912 everything changed when Granville-Barker produced the text at the Savoy. It was the beginning of a series of productions performed on an apron stage encouraging a greater intimacy between actor and audience, with a minimum clutter, limited and slightly more stylized scenery, and clear, hard overhead lighting" (103). Hunt, in turn, claims that the importance of Granville-Barker's *The Winter's Tale* is to a great extent due to his understanding of the playtext's genre as being romantic tragicomedy. As Hunt submits, Granville-Barker "was ahead of his time in perceiving that Shakespeare had introduced comic moments in the tragic half of the play and potentially tragic motifs in the sunny humor of the pastoral scene" (17). Also, following Frey, Granville-Barker's performance of *The Winter's Tale* employed rapid delivery, with few pauses, "no scenery other than painted walls, backdrops, and curtains," and ahistorical costumes. As Frey puts it, these elements combined made this production "evidently a new *Winter's Tale*" (34).

Concerning the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the after-Granville-Barker era, Hardman concludes that directors and companies started to look for "some governing idea and [make] sure it is made manifest on the stage" (104). In other words, Hardman submits that stage productions from the last century on make contemporary and critical interpretations of the playtext in one way or another, "and may well reveal the ideas and interests as well as the preoccupations of the director and of his time" (104), *not of Shakespeare's time*. Thus, Hardman seems to align with Frey and Bartholomeusz (mentioned earlier in this section of the chapter), in a perspective that I myself endorse as well, regarding the claim that the way a playtext is staged comments on the performance's present time and its specific (and not permanent) concerns and tastes. This also has to do with my hypothesis (mentioned in the introductory chapter) that a stage production of a given text informs about its own surrounding circumstances and contexts, by way of what the director

and actors can mean by *appropriating* Shakespeare to their present time, instead of by trying to reproduce the Bard's probable original meanings.

Within this approach of "updated" critical interpretations, Hardman discusses productions of *The Winter's Tale* such as those by Trevor Nunn's in 1969, John Barton & Nunn's in 1976, and Ronald Eyre's in 1981. His general assertion is that these productions successfully made changes to Shakespeare's text, and that the disruption and replacement of structural patterns were made due to the directors' belief that the changes employed make the story "more meaningful to the audience" (107). Hunt, in turn, values Peter Brook's 1951 and Nunn's 1969 productions as the most noteworthy ones in the 20<sup>th</sup> century post-Granville-Barker. Also, as much as Hardman, Hunt foresees that future productions will "certainly [bring] other unfamiliar yet familiar stories in *The Winter's Tale*" (56), that is, other changes that can make the story communicate better with the audience, and it seems to me that this is possible especially given the playtext's vastness of thematic and staging possibilities.

Being better acquainted with *The Winter's Tale*, let us now review the theoretical background on theatricalizing devices, in the next chapter. This review constitutes a fundamental measure to prepare for the analyses of the stage performances under investigation.

**Chapter 3**  
**“Proceed, No Foot Shall Stir”<sup>1</sup>:**  
**Approaching Theatricalizing Devices**

“Though this be madness, yet there is method in ’it.”<sup>2</sup>

Initially, let me set down a proviso: my understanding of and approach to what I call “theatricalizing devices” goes beyond the ordinary perspective that all things related to the theater are, as a terminological consequence, “theatrical.” Overall, my proposal is that elements from metatheater and from what configures theatricality *generate* theatricalizing devices. I term “theatricalizing devices” those strategies developed on stage that *highlight* or *refer to* a theatrical quality pertaining to the performance itself. In other words, these devices emphasize the fictionality and artificiality of the staging, particularly in those moments in which such artificiality and theater conventions are explicitly used, referred to, or displayed.

In this way, I also hold that theatricalizing devices are reminders that what one attends to and watches is theater, not real life. So, to put it still in other words, theatricalizing devices refer to the “extraordinarily” theatrical (which does not mean merely exaggerated), that is, the “highlighted” parts of the theater, so to speak: just like when one reads a text and uses a highlighter pen to detach relevant passages, I see theatricalizing devices *as such highlighted parts* of a stage performance. This “highlighted” or “extraordinarily theatrical” is expressed in scenes that show self-awareness of the fiction of the production, or scenes that somehow double-fictionalize the reality (already fictional) of the stage.

In what follows, I explore in more detail the characteristics and constituent elements of what I mean by theatricalizing devices, by explicitly referring to the readings that inform my approach. The selected readings reviewed here deal with metatheater and its various forms, including the play-within-the-play, and with theatricality, the main fields that I draw on to develop my own perspective on the devices I am interested in exploring. First, I offer an overview on the basics of theatricality and metatheater.

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<sup>1</sup> Leontes’ line in *The Winter’s Tale* (Act V scene iii).

<sup>2</sup> Polonius’ line in *Hamlet* (Act II scene ii).

The topic of theatricality is a delicate one, given that the term has received a broad range of different understandings and meanings. To get started, Heloíse B. Vidor (2007) classifies the fundamentals of theatricality, both within and outside the realm of theater. To Vidor, these are: 1) the presence of a *gaze* observing the action; 2) the *developing* aspect of theatricality, in that it is only developed during the moment in which it takes place (when it is functioning); and 3) the *intentional* aspect, in which theatricality is not only perceived as such by the spectator, but also its purposes are made visible too. In this way, theatricality has to do with performing something, on the stage or in everyday life, with the awareness of an audience that perceives the goals of such performance.

Elizabeth Burns (1972) talks of theatricality as “the double relationship between the theater and social life” (3), being therefore an element inherent in all human action, within and outside the theater world, and noticed in the relation between our actions and the conventions associated to those actions. Burns criticizes the fact that, because theatricality relates to human action also outside of the theater, the term is often oversimplified and misused by routine references. Burns states that “[b]ehavior can be described as ‘theatrical’ only by those who know what drama is, even if their knowledge is limited to the theater in their own country and period” (12). Further, the author claims that “[t]he ‘theatrical commonplace,’ as it is accepted by ordinary people today has lost much of its moral and cosmic significance” (11) due to its being taken for granted and oversimplified.

Given that theatricality relates to a society and its customs and values, Burns concludes that it is not just the diffusing of a certain set of codes helpful to classify something (in theater or in everyday life) as “theatrical.” In addition, as Burns puts it, theatricality is like “a store of possible modes of representing social action which accumulates over the generations” (4). Hence, for Burns, theatricality varies according to the person, time, and place, being related to a broad socio-cultural context. I explore Burns’ more specific ideas on theatricality soon. For the moment, let me remark that Tracy C. Davis and Thomas Postlewait (2003) echo Burns’ views. They say that the perception of theatricality on stage varies from person to person, period to period, and according to the context. This happens because “[j]ust as theater changes, so theatricality changes. Both are being reinvented and re-experienced” (Davis and Postlewait 27).

Additionally, Davis and Postlewait point that “the idea of theatricality has achieved an extraordinary range of meanings” (1), and say that this fact alone leads theatricality to possibly mean everything and, consequently, nothing at all. Hence, it is necessary to go further into what theatricality can actually mean *and do* too. For Davis and Postlewait, theatricality can be dismantled from the theater world, and applied to all aspects of ordinary, everyday life—a claim similar to Burns’. Yet, even if restricted to the theater (as is my focus in this study), the array of meanings is of considerable size. Following Davis and Postlewait, theatricality “to some people [is] quintessentially the theater, while to others it is the theater subsumed into the whole world. Apparently the concept is comprehensive of all meanings yet empty of all specific sense” (1). In light of this perspective, Davis and Postlewait (and myself) do not aim at elaborating or validating *a single definition* of theatricality, yet they do provide important and more specific insights into it, reiterating that the meaning of theatricality cannot be taken for granted.

A dated understanding of theatricality has it as a pejorative term. Davis and Postlewait mention a range of terms and expressions that are borrowed from the theatrical activity to express disapproval or hostility, such as “playing up to,” “putting on a performance,” and “making a scene” (examples from Jonas Barish cited in Davis and Postlewait 5). Further, according to these authors, the pejorative connotation was reversed in modernism, when “[n]ot only the styles but also the ideas that defined modernism came to be identified as theatricality,” and as a result of this reversal, theatricality reached “an aesthetic aura and justification apart from its long (im)moral heritage” (12). Within the context of this reversal, Davis and Postlewait cite Mordecai Gorelik and his 1940 assertion that theatricality is a stage form that subscribes to the well-known principle that “theater is theater, not life” (Gorelik cited in Davis and Postlewait 13). I endorse this view, believing that theatricality *in the theater* (my focus here) has to do with all that is artistically planned, rehearsed and displayed to the gaze of others, within a particular context and set of conventions, and with clear objectives being shown.

This principle that “theater is theater, not life” is interesting to be placed next to my thesis—that theatricalizing devices used on stage can actually help communicate and reflect on real-world issues, apart from celebrating and commenting on art in itself. I do agree with Gorelik that theater *is not life*, and I hold that theatricalizing devices

*emphasize* that what is being watched is theater, arts, and not ordinary life; yet, I also argue in this study that theater *can* fictionalize life on stage (in more or less direct ways) so as to make statements and achieve certain goals with the theatrical performance—statements and goals that do reach the real world, outside the stage performance and the theater building. On this note, I recall Christopher Hardman (1988), who suggests that life can relate to and resemble theater just like theater can resemble life—a suggestion that implies how arts in general and the art of theater in particular, and the non-fictional, ordinary world of the spectators, have lots to share and to speak with and about each other.

Furthermore, when we talk about fiction (e.g. the fictional world staged in the theater), reality is, at its best, merely imitated. In other words, the stage can engage in the spectators the feeling or impression of reality, but it is still all fictional. The Aristotelian concept of mimesis considers just that. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle establishes that in literary creations reality can be imitated in three manners: imitation “of things as they are or used to be, things as people say or think they are, and things as they ought to be” (Aristotle 37). Michael Davis (2002), in an introduction to the *Poetics*, adds that drama “reflects the distinction between doing and looking at doing—between acting and reflecting. On the one hand drama must *attempt to convince its audience of the reality of its action*; on the other hand it must *always remain acting*” (xviii, emphasis added). In short, then, reality does not fit into a fictional world *as reality* itself; it is always a form of imitation and a sort of “fictionalized reality” which can still create those “effects of the real” stated in the introduction (page 3).

In fact, “mere” imitation can be a very valuable thing: Gerald F. Else (1967), in his introduction to a translation of the *Poetics*, reminds that Aristotle considers that the imitation of human action can give “a valuable extension of our ordinary experience” and in this sense, imitation “is a positive and fruitful [activity]” (6). Kenneth McLeish (1998), likewise, introduces the *Poetics* explaining that seeing imitations of reality and comparing them with reality itself is pleasurable and “morally instructive” (viii). I support these claims in that they align with my perspective that theater (and the devices I explore) can teach about human beings, feelings, relationships and themes. Yet, it is crucial to state that my approach is not interested in imitation, but in theatricality, and that not all theater needs to bring an illusion of reality to the spectators in order to teach them about themselves. On the contrary, the epic theater of Brecht, Piscator, Meyerhold and others aimed precisely at

no illusion at all, by developing a constant reminder that all is a fiction, based on the idea that too much illusion may alienate the spectator and prevent critical detachment and positioning. My approach, similarly, calls attention to the fact that what is watched is theater, not real life, and that is why mimesis and its connections with imitation was not one of the fields included in the scope of my research.

Finally, Erich Auerbach (1953), in his classic *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, discusses examples and manners in which reality is treated in works of literature. Among strategies used to confer realism and a “convincing” imitation of reality, Auerbach describes relationships between characters (such as Sancho and Don Quijote) that show “how variable and composite our human relationships are” (352); the vivid expression of characters’ thoughts, emotions and speeches; the use of direct discourse; “orderly, perfectly well-articulated, uniformly illuminated descriptions” (3); realistic references concerning a person’s or object’s origin and nature or past story; “informational” digressions; individuality of language; references and descriptions of the sensory and the gestural; and graphically imaged descriptions. In my research I do not explore further the concept of mimesis, but I do try to pay attention to the ways in which a fictional staging, with its fictionality highlighted by means of theatricalizing devices, can imitate and approach allegedly realistic themes and feelings.

To return to the issue of theatricality, Davis and Postlewait bring up the important point that theatricality does not take place only on the stage, but also *within the audience*. This is so because it is the spectator who has to recognize the attributes of theatricality as such (like the expressions and modes of behavior enacted on stage). The authors’ points signal their up-to-date understanding of the audience as playing an active role in the theatrical event, not only by coming up with the interpretation but also with the perception of the theater event as such—through the realization of its employment of theatricality. Another relevant remark by Davis and Postlewait is that one should not reduce theatricality as mere opposition to reality, for in fact both are in a way realism (thus making the dichotomy a false one) in that they present and work on the truth of a situation (which, on stage, is presented *fictionally*).

Lynn M. Voskuil (2004) seems to agree with Davis and Postlewait on several points. First, that theatricality has a variety of meanings. Second, that it should not be reduced to a binary of



theatricality versus authenticity or realism (which is “a binary that remains surprisingly firm in our scholarship,” 2), because the two are “clusters of concepts whose meanings variably intersect, overlap, and cooperate—as well as compete” (12). Third, that theatricality (though Voskuil refers strictly to the Victorian kind) can challenge beliefs and institutions (this resembles Davis and Postlewait’s claim that theatricality presents the truths of a situation). Additionally, Voskuil submits that theatricality is conceived as such by the beholder, a claim that implies, similarly to a position stated by Davis and Postlewait again, that the perception of theatricality varies according to the spectator, for each has different experiences which enable the recognition (or the failing of recognition) of theatricality.

Putting all these initial ideas together, theatricality can take place on stage and on daily life, as long as there is someone watching someone else perform something (in real life, for example, a quarrel witnessed by others constitutes theatricality, as exemplified by Burns), being that the possible goals of the thing performed have to be more or less clear to the observer. Also, the recognition of a moment as one of theatricality depends on the beholder of the action, and is influenced and marked by the specific culture and context involved for this recognition to take place. In this sense, a certain performance understood as containing theatricality for some can be understood differently if the circumstances and context change. In the end, then, theatricality proves a complex term that means more than mere theater, is not a mere opposition to realism, and has to do with all people within and outside the theater building, that is, on stage and in the everyday life.

Having seen some major ideas on theatricality, I turn now to a similarly overall perspective on metatheater, before moving to more specific examples of how both theatricality and metatheater generate the devices I am interested in exploring.

Richard Hornby (1986) considers “metatheatrical” those productions that make theater their own subject, or something that they refer to. That is, metatheater occurs when the stage production addresses the theater art itself, “whenever the subject of a play turns out to be, in some sense, drama itself” (Hornby 31). Hornby sees some major ways in which metatheater can occur. These are called *variations* of metadrama and metatheater, and they can occur together or in merged forms. Hornby presents six variations, namely: play-within-the-play, ceremony within the play, role-playing within the role, literary and real-life references within the play, and self-references. According to the

author, the main feature required for these variations to actually constitute metatheater is that they cause the audience to “see double,” in the sense of dislocating the spectators’ perception by breaking the fictional illusion presented on stage, and becoming self-conscious of the disruption of the imaginary, fictional world; a disruption caused precisely by the metatheatrical techniques employed. I further elaborate on “seeing double” later.

The first variation discussed by Hornby, the play-within-the-play, creates “two sharply distinguishable layers of performance” (35), the outer and the inner plays. Hornby states that these two layers must integrate in minimal ways for them to constitute metatheater. In Hornby’s own words, then, “the outer play must in some way acknowledge the inner play’s existence” (34). Such acknowledgment is reached as long as the characters on stage distinguish the inner play’s characters and plot, and see the inner play itself as a performance. Yet, for Hornby, prologues, choruses, narrators and the like usually acknowledge the inner play, but often they are mere conventional frames that do not cause the “seeing double” (35), that sort of dislocation of perception in the audience to see two layers of performance co-occurring. While I understand Hornby’s claim, I show in my analysis that devices such as the prologue in the Folger production and the uses of Time as narrator in the Atores de Laura’s production do cause the “seeing double,” ensuring metatheater (and therefore theatricalizing device) to those productions.

Next, as regards the ceremony within the play, Hornby characterizes it as omnipresent because it occurs in playtexts from all cultures and all times. Ceremony includes feasts, balls, games, trials, processions, funerals, initiations, weddings, and other occasions in which there is “a formal performance of some kind that is set off from the surrounding action” (49), and which conveys meaning. In short, the ceremony within the play explores concerns and changes related to social life, its transitions, rituals, and values. To me, the ceremony within the play generates theatricalizing devices for constituting a performance (with temporary role-playing) within the overall action of the staging.

Regarding the third variation, role-playing within the role (treated within the action of the play itself, not of the play-within-the-play), Hornby holds that this is a way for exploring the character (and in this way the concerns of the individual in real life), because the role played within the role frequently shows who the character is and who

he/she *wants* to be. “When a playwright depicts a character who is himself playing a role, there is often the suggestion that, ironically, the role is closer to the character’s true self than his everyday, ‘real’ personality”<sup>3</sup> (67). Moreover, the role-playing within the role should also cause a dislocation of the perception, but specifically the perception of an individual character. The impact of the role-playing within the role, as put by Hornby, is “its reminding us that all human roles are relative, that identities are learned rather than innate” (72). In my view, role-playing within the role is a kind of theatricalizing device, given the spectator’s raised awareness of a character’s fictionality (with an usual role and a new one, role-played).

In terms of the types of role-playing within the role, Hornby mentions voluntary, involuntary and allegorical. The voluntary may be a complete disguise (with even a different name or gender), or a false attitude (like Hamlet’s pretended madness, or Iago’s manipulation of Othello through his false honesty), but in any case it is consciously employed by the character. The involuntary, in turn, is caused by factors outside the character (like when one is convinced not to be whom one thinks he/she is, such as Sly in *The Taming of the Shrew*). The allegorical happens when the character is indirectly associated to a well-known figure (real or fictional), which can happen in the role-playing within the role as well as in the literary or real-life references (other variations of metatheater, following Hornby’s categorization).

Next, Hornby discusses the literary and the real-life references within the play. A first point on these two forms of metatheater is that both have a greater or smaller degree of metatheatricality depending on the degree to which the audience recognizes them as referring to something or someone from “the real world”: if a reference is too obscure for theatergoers, or if it is too well-known (like a common proverb or a biblical saying, or a person so often referred to), the literary and the real-life references within the play may not cause an effect of uneasiness and dislocation of perception, and therefore may not reach a

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<sup>3</sup> Hornby cites Portia (*The Merchant of Venice*), Rosalind (*As You Like It*), and Viola (*Twelfth Night*), who “dress up as men, and in doing so reveal the ‘masculine’ sides of their nature” (67). Cleopatra (*Antony and Cleopatra*), who cross-dresses, plays roles (i.e. Venus), and puts on manipulative shows, could, I think, be seen as the epitome of voluntary role-playing within the role. In fact, “To suggest that Cleopatra is a performer and playwright has become a critical commonplace” (100). Singh, Jyotsna. “Renaissance Antitheatricality, Antifeminism, and Shakespeare’s Antony and Cleopatra.” *Renaissance Drama: Essays on Dramatic Traditions, Challenges and Transmissions*. New Series 1989. Ed. Mary Beth Rose. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1990. p. 99-121.

quality of being metatheatrical. A second point is that both types of reference normally pass with time, and for future readers of a playtext or viewers of a recorded production, for example, the metatheatrical quality of the literary or real-life reference may be lost. In addition, they tend to vary from spectator to spectator (a point that possibly aligns with Hans Robert Jauss' "horizon of expectations," though this is not stated by Hornby).

Finally, Hornby's last variation on metatheater is self-reference, and this is *always* strongly metatheatrical: like literary and real-life references, self-reference has its metatheatrical impact dependent on the audience's ability to recognize the reference(s) made, and obviously there can be nothing more recent than the very production that makes a reference to itself! In this way, self-reference shall always be easily perceived. Hornby then says that "[w]ith self-reference, the play directly calls attention to itself as a play, an imaginative fiction" (103), and obviously breaks the fictional illusion and dislocates the audience's perception. So, self-reference (like the play-within-the-play) reminds the audience that what is being watched is a performance, but unlike the play-within-the-play "such reminders [...] are direct and immediate, a splash of cold water thrown into the face of a dreaming, imagining audience" (104).

Hornby significantly differentiates self-reference from mere acknowledgment of the audience. Mere acknowledgment can occur through the use of choruses, narrators, monologues or asides, which transform the audience "momentarily [into] the characters' confidants" (104-105). The author goes on saying that asides, choruses and narrators normally help the dramatic action move along, but do not *necessarily* make self-references; and prologues and epilogues more commonly do refer to the story, yet ironically they themselves are *not* part of the story they are referring to—they are prior or subsequent to it. To conclude, Hornby exposes that self-reference is the most extreme form of metatheater and metadrama, and "[h]owever playful a moment of self-reference may seem ("nobody dies halfway through the last act"), it always has the effect of *drastically* realigning the audience's perception of the drama, forcing them to examine consciously the assumptions that lie behind and control their response to the world of the play" (117, emphasis added).

To summarize, metatheater and its variations make theater (or an element from theater) the very subject to which the performance refers. Additionally, metatheatrical techniques are employed every time

an element on stage, such as a role-playing within the role or a ceremony within the play, causes the audience to break the illusion of the fictional world and become self-aware of the fictionality, by “seeing double” the stage, that is, by simultaneously seeing the performance as a fiction and also noticing the techniques used on this fictional stage. Finally, following Martin Puchner (2003) on his introduction to Lionel Abel’s seminal study that coined the term “metatheater,” in 1963, it is important to recall that metatheater always displays “self-awareness, self-reflexivity, and self-knowledge” (Puchner 2).

Next, having seen the basics of metatheater and its variations, as well as of theatricality, I turn to the specific features and elements that I borrow from these two fields for my own approach proposed in this study.

Theatricalizing devices play with the fictionality of the staging, a feature that Maurice Hunt (1995) relates to a discussion on theatricality. Hunt refers to the work of Barbara Mowat to say that the playtext of *The Winter’s Tale*, specifically, interrupts the “illusion of lived life” mimed by the plot, “through devices such as the theatricality of asides, choruses, and self-conscious allusions to the play as play” (40). It is implied here that theatricality distances the stage performance from the imitation of real life, emphasizing and enjoying its own fictionality, and also reminding the audience that what is being attended is a performance (since the story interrupts the “illusion of lived life”). Indeed, Hunt says, “[i]n this romance, the presentational style [...] mainly informs playgoers that they are watching an improbable, make-believe tale. The appearance of Time the Chorus and the absurdity of Antigonus’ death suggest so, for example” (40). In this way, devices that disrupt the illusion generated by the production by calling attention to the production’s fictionality and by playing with such fictionality are understood as theatricalizing ones.

Still specifically on *The Winter’s Tale*, Hunt recalls other strategies to develop theatricality that I borrow for my approach. He mentions the uses of a “self-conscious tale-telling, among them Mamillius’ winter’s tale for his mother and the court ladies, Father Time’s narrative and the mini-narratives of the gentlemen of Act V, scene ii” (41). The way I see it, the device of narrative passages and self-conscious narrations through asides or choruses, or even other ways, are further means to highlight the theatrical features of the stage performance, playing with its fictionality, and frequently telling the

reader or spectator that what is shown before them is a fiction. Hence, devices of this kind are theatricalizing ones, too.

Davis and Postlewait (2003) also discuss several ways in which theatricality can be reached on stage in terms of the highlighting of the production's own fictionality and, therefore, they help to further characterize the devices I am exploring here. For the authors, theatricality can be put to use through strategies that raise the awareness of both the actor and the spectator regarding the fictionality of the staging, and among the possible strategies they cite plotting devices such as mistaken or disguised identities, exchanged genders (cross-dressing), and misdirected suspicion (15). These, then, are ways of employing the devices I am interested in exploring. Also, if a character on stage makes direct reference to an audience member, or reveals his/her self-awareness of playing a role and following a script, for example, he/she is again calling attention to the fictive aspect of the theatrical performance, and raising awareness of the medium and its fictionality. In short, then, I hold that theatricalizing devices borrow from the field of theatricality the *consciousness of viewing* (or reading) on behalf of the audience, a phrase submitted by art critic Michael Fried and recalled by Davis and Postlewait (20).

Connected to the self-awareness that a production can display and to the spectators' own awareness of fictionality by the disruption of the illusion of real life imitated on stage, there is a feature mentioned by Abel regarding metatheater that I also apply to my approach, which is the *characters'* self-consciousness of their selves as fictional characters. This claim resembles Davis and Postlewait's one regarding the character showing his/her awareness of following a script. As Abel puts it, metatheater is the way "for dramatizing characters who, having full self-consciousness, cannot but participate in their own dramatization. Hence the famous lines of Jacques, Shakespeare's philosopher of metatheater, 'All the world's a stage, and all men and women merely players'" (Abel 153).

The character's line implies that not only he is aware of his fictionality (like the spectator is, too); in metatheater (and in theatricalizing devices, as follows my claim), this awareness *leads* to actions and participation in the "game" of the theatrical production. Considering that Jacques is a fictional character and his commentary implies that his fictional reality *is* real life (though on stage), Jacques is therefore acknowledging that in the real world, like on the stage, everything is theatrical, and he is taking actions to make this fictionality

work. Another way for a *character* aware of his/her fictionality to advance this game of fiction is by directly addressing the audience and still keeping the fictional identity (that is, not addressing the audience as the actor, but as the character he/she plays). In my claim, then, theatricalizing devices take place when the character reveals the awareness of his/her *fictional condition as a character*, and helps advance the theatrical fiction performed.

In a similar view, Burns (1972) shows that a way to understand theatricality is through the actor's and/or character's awareness of the presence of an audience (and its effects on him/her), and the awareness one has as "interpreting" or "acting" for this audience (be it the regular audience or the gaze of other characters on stage). The awareness of the gaze, for Burns, is actually one of the most fundamental takes to understand theatricality, both on stage and outside the theater building. Burns states that "a demonstration, a street fight, a wedding or even a family quarrel glimpsed through a window becomes a show for those who watch, and, although the acts which are, for those who are involved, instruments directed at accomplishing an immediate objective, that accomplishment is often only complete if the full meaning and intention of their actions is apprehended by others" (14). In other words, for Burns, both on and off-stage, theatricality is expressed by the idea of a "show" performed by some to the gaze of others. In my approach, theatricalizing devices can occur in this manner, too, in that a character's *manifestation* of his/her *self-awareness* of the fictional role and of the position of performing *to an audience* emphasizes the fictionality behind the staging.

Next, my particular approach is also marked by the presence of different "layers" of theatricality and illusion, a feature borrowed from Puchner's reading of Abel's concept of metatheater. Theatricalizing devices are expressed in scenes that show more than one "fictional reality" within the characters involved. For example, when a character assumes different roles, and disguises his/her "original" identity (as fictional character), making others believe him/her to be someone else, there is both the original situation of theatricality (that of the whole performance itself) *and* the added layer of illusion within the overall illusion of the production. In *The Winter's Tale*, for instance, Autolycus produces different layers of illusion by playing the roles of a victim of robbery, a ballad singer and seller, and a member of the Royalty, all these behind the identity of a rogue. His role-playing within the role is therefore a form of metatheater, following Hornby's classification, and

also a manner to develop theatricalizing devices by multiplying, so to speak, the layers of fictional reality. Yifen Beus (2007) seems to reinforce this point, stating that in the play-within-the-play technique there is “a complex fusion of theatrical realities” (15).

Related to the different layers of illusion is the idea of “seeing double” already exposed and which I want to explore in more detail. I argue that seeing double (from Hornby’s view of metatheatricality) is part of the understanding of theatricalizing devices, particularly in that the dislocation of perception it causes reminds the audience that all is fiction, and to me theatricalizing devices do just that—comment on the art of theater itself, by calling attention to its artifices, techniques, and fictionality. Thus, applying the notion of seeing double to my approach, this process takes place in that the different layers of fictional reality cause in the audience some uneasiness and a dislocation of perception regarding the fiction at stake, given that the spectators realize several “realities” coexisting within the staging. This can be reached, for instance, through the role-playing within the role, or by means of putting a (fictional) audience on the stage, as in the ceremony within the play or the play-within-the-play.

A close perspective is offered by Beus (2007), who holds that the spectator is required to temporarily suspend his/her disbelief when the play-within-the-play is at work, and to engage in the displacement of fictional realities. In my own perspective, it seems that the spectator needs to “play the game” with the actors, accepting the illusion of the staging as well as the occasional disruption of that same illusion, and acknowledging also the fictionality on stage and the playing with this fictionality that the theatricalizing devices offer, by means of their techniques borrowed from theatricality and metatheater.

The idea of seeing double can be further enhanced by the reading of Gerhard Fischer & Bernhard Greiner (2007), though they do not refer to Hornby’s notion. First, Fischer & Greiner establish that the play-within-the-play causes a duplication of the theatrical reality, a claim that resembles Beus’ “complex fusion of theatrical realities” and Abel’s “different layers” of illusion. Then, Fischer & Greiner state that with this duplication (that is, the inner and outer plays within the main play), the regular audience is faced with an internal audience, an audience on stage, made of fictional characters, “which acts as a double to the actual audience” (xi), and thus dislocates perception and, I claim, causes the seeing double. To be clear, for Fischer & Greiner, the play-within-the-play “describes a strategy for constructing playtexts that



contain, within the perimeter of their fictional reality, a second or internal theatrical performance, in which actors appear as actors who play an additional role” (xi).

Putting it all together, these ideas of seeing double by dislocating one’s perception through the manifestation of different layers of illusion and theatricality, reached for example with a fictional and on-stage audience of a play-within-the-play or a ceremony within the play, or even with the “show” performed to others on stage (such as Autolycus’ singing ballads, which follows Burns’ notion of theatricality), are here applied to my approach specifically because of the emphasis on the stage’s fictionality that is offered by such seeing double, and the playing and displaying of the theater’s artifices, medium, and self-awareness.

Next, another feature that I borrow for my approach comes from Abel (2003). Abel ascribes to metatheater the use of imagination and the aforementioned consciousness of the metatheatrical elements, in such a way as to develop a so-called “stagy” quality. This “stagy” quality means the emphasis on and exploration of conventions specific to theater, and this is exactly the element I borrow for my own approach. I would say an instance of the “stagy” quality is the actors’ movements to the back and foreground of the stage, since these movements are planned and rehearsed to follow the development of a plot in light of the presence of an audience—as seen in the previous chapter, Coghill (1968) discusses this kind of movement in the sequence between Perdita, Florizel, Camillo and Autolycus, in *The Winter’s Tale*. His point was precisely that the movements are *required* in order for the plot to be advanced: Camillo, for example, could only share with the audience his plans because Florizel and Perdita moved to the back of the stage. These movements, then, are called “stagy” and work as theatricalizing devices due to their clear exploration of conventions and techniques of the theater medium.

Associated to the idea of a “stagy” quality is the “theatrical effect.” This is described by Patrice Pavis (1998) as “stage action that immediately reveals its playful, artificial and theatrical origins” (*Dictionary* 394). That is, the “theatrical effect” refers to the conventions of theater too and, at the same time, implies one’s buying the game of fiction and its playfulness and artificiality. In this light, Pavis mentions what he calls “theatrical gadgets” employed to reach such theatrical effects, and these gadgets are, to me, other means to develop theatricalizing devices. This is so as Pavis states that the

“theatrical gadgets” emphasize that *theater is theater, not life*. Pavis exemplifies the gadgets as “exaggerated make-up, stage effects, melodramatic acting, stagy costumes, music hall and circus techniques, exaggerated body language, and etc” (395). The mere exaggeration of everyday life elements (like make-up and gestures) is not all that theatricality and theatricalizing devices are, of course, but this exaggeration certainly approximates these elements to a certain theatrical quality that constitutes theatricalizing devices.

Heloïse B. Vidor (2007), likewise, claims that a way to enhance the development of theatricality is through “the *emphasis on the material exteriority*, the *ostentation of signs* to be used in the representation. The aim of this is to attract the gaze of the observer, who after being seduced by the form [...] establishes the game of theatricality: what is behind that which is being represented” (61, my translation, emphasis added). Again, while mere exaggeration is not all that theatricality and theatricalizing devices are, still this feature is one possibility to employ the theatricalizing devices as I understand them.

Martin Puchner (2003) also discusses exaggerations on stage, arguing that metatheater, specifically, can be developed through histrionics and ostentation (14), in which there is some sort of exaggerated display to reach a certain effect. Lynn M. Voskuil (2004), in turn, in a study focused on theatricality, recalls that theatricality is exercised by means of self-display, in which a character “shows off” to others in an exaggerated manner, linked to the idea of flamboyance and spectacle itself, which includes, once again, the exaggeration and the awareness of actors’ and spectators’ presence and roles at a theatrical event (12). I take these characteristics—exaggeration, flamboyance, spectacle, etc.—as features that enhance theatricality and therefore constitute the kind of devices I am exploring. Also, even though Voskuil refers strictly to Victorian theatricality, he nevertheless indicates some ways to develop it in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that are valid still today—some of which were, in fact, noticeable in the stage productions I analyze. Voskuil recalls the uses of masks (and the act of unmasking); the character who is self-conscious of being a character and who makes that feature explicit, and the actor who plays multiple roles. To be clear, these features are then included in my approach, too.

Besides the actor who plays multiple roles, another way to develop and call attention to a performance’s theatricality is by having a *character* playing multiple roles (as discussed before, specifically on the issue of different layers of illusion, in *The Winter’s Tale* the character

Autolycus plays multiple roles, such as those of a ballad singer, a victim of robbery, and a member of the Royal family). This constitutes another characteristic of the approach I explore in this research. On the note of a character playing multiple roles, Beus (2007) considers that the variation of metatheater called play-within-the-play takes place every time a character doubles roles, pretending to be someone other than the character's "original" person, or pretends to be experiencing something that he/she is actually not experiencing (as a fictional character, of course). As we have seen, Hornby (1986) would call this *role-playing with the role*, but Beus does not make this distinction.

Next, Lionel Abel (2003) assigns to metatheater the presence of a so-called "fantastic" element, and I borrow this feature for my own perspective, too. This fantastic element has to do with strategies employed on stage that clearly distance the staging from what is commonly found in the "real world." That is to say, the fantastic refers to displaying on stage that which is highly incredible, unrealistic, and fictional. Productions that make use of the fantastic end up, consequently, developing a stronger sense of fictionality (and hence develop uses of theatricalizing devices). Examples of "fantastic elements" on stage are an apparition, an Oracle, or an alleged resurrection, not by chance all<sup>4</sup> of these elements are present in the analyzed stagings of *The Winter's Tale*, which is a tale, as its title suggests.

Another characteristic of theatricalizing devices borrowed from theories on metatheater and more specifically on play-within-the-play has to do with the relations and interactions between actors and spectators. Beus (2007) claims that the play-within-the-play constantly makes audience and actors interact, in a "playing with the boundaries between fiction and reality" (22). This is exactly one of the ways that I see theatricalizing devices to operate—in interfering with these boundaries, the devices call the spectators for a more active involvement, and also highlight the theatricality of the event, by calling attention to the fact that some people are playing roles while others are watching.

Paul Yachnin & Myrna Wyatt Selkirk (2009), in a more general discussion on metatheater, hold a similar perspective. For the authors, metatheatrical characters require the *audience's complicity* with the

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<sup>4</sup> Antigonus' dream of Hermione is staged by Atores de Laura, for instance, with the presence of the queen as an apparition, with a ghost-like aspect.

game of the fiction, while they “[invite] actors to be themselves and their characters at the same moment so as to engage the audience more effectively and to deepen the characters they personate” (151). In other words, for Yachnin & Selkirk, metatheater requires the actors’ active engagement with the staging and requires also that spectators “awake their faith” regarding the performance (to use Yachnin & Selkirk’s own reference to *The Winter’s Tale’s* playtext), being aware of the fictionality but buying the fictionality “game” at the same time. These claims are important both to my own approach and in signaling the perspective I myself have concerning the *active* role the audience must play, a role in which spectators act as co-creators of the performance and of its meanings—a perspective derived from Marco de Marinis (1997, 2005).

In an attempt to briefly summarize what has been advanced in this chapter, I conceive that theatricalizing devices emerge from several elements from metatheater and theatricality that further fictionalize the always already fictional theatrical stage, reminding the audience that all on stage is fictional. The devices therefore emphasize and explore a production’s artificiality, and play with the illusion it creates for the audience, constantly disrupting this illusion and making the audience aware of both the fiction and the fictional techniques used. Most importantly, the referred devices can also be used both to comment on the medium of theater (its beauty, powers, conventions, etc.) and on the world outside the theater building (the specific or overall context of the production in relation to the production’s main goals other than artistic, and issues pertaining to each spectator’s condition as a human being).

Among the characteristics and constituent elements of theatricalizing devices, I have discussed and/or cited the creation of distinguishable layers of performance (an inner and an outer play); the use of different layers of illusion that emphasize artificiality (with actors playing multiple roles, characters playing multiple roles, the presence of an audience on stage, cross-dressing and mistaken or disguised identities); the idea of seeing double and dislocating perception by being reminded that all is the illusion of lived and fictional life, by means such as self-conscious tale-telling and uses of narratives with asides and choruses; the direct addressing to the audience and awareness of its presence; the character’s awareness of following a script and being a fictional person; the ideas of spectacle, self-display, and a “show” performed to others (like a character’s show to other characters); the creative exploration of conventions of theater (such as movements back

and foreground on the stage); the exaggeration and histrionics (of acting, make-up, gestures, costumes); the use of mask and the act of unmasking; the exploration of imagination; the presence of fantastic elements; and the audience's complicity and interaction with the actors.

Bearing these points in mind, let us shift in the following chapters to the analysis of the four selected stage performances of *The Winter's Tale*. It is time to investigate the powerful, self-confessed fictionality of theater, through the uses of theatricalizing devices employed by the companies in their productions.

## Chapter 4

### Boxing & Semaphoring the Bard: Royal Shakespeare Company & Théâtre de la Complicité

“Go with me, and see what I can show in this.”<sup>1</sup>

While the RSC have produced *The Winter's Tale* on several occasions throughout their history (following the company's website, there have been 12 productions since the 1960s), Complicité's production was their first attempt at Shakespearean staging. Another major difference between these two productions consists of their size: RSC's *The Winter's Tale* involved more than three times the number of actors that performed for Complicité's production of the same play. Still, these two companies and their 1992 productions are placed together in this chapter for at least two important reasons.

The first reason is that, unlike Folger and Atores de Laura (which are treated each in a separate chapter), I could not watch the RSC's and Complicité's productions, neither live or through video recordings. The RSC do hold a recording of the production but it could not be made available to me, as the video can be accessed on-site only (and the site is in Stratford-upon-Avon, England). Complicité, in turn, claim that there is no recording at all of their production. As a result, the analyses on the RSC's and Complicité's performances rely on the analyses of photographs, published interviews with the directors, published theater reviews, and scholarly studies collected. Additionally, for the RSC's production I had access to a copy of the prompt book, and for the Complicité's I could rely on the advertising material, the production's program, and an informative package on the playtext with the director's thoughts about it, sent to the actors prior to rehearsals. The other major reason to place these companies together is that they share a context: England in the early 1990s.

Before going any further, let me highlight the validity of analyzing what one has not seen. Pavis (2003) distinguishes “performance analysis” from “historical reconstruction” or “theater historiography” (2). The former implies being present at a performance and having a direct experience of it live (my case with Folger and Atores de Laura), whereas the latter means reconstructing a performance from secondary documents and accounts (my case with all four

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<sup>1</sup> Octavius Caesar's line in *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act V scene i).

performances, in fact, but also *the only way* for me to access the performances by Complicité and RSC). As Pavis states, both possibilities are equally valid, since “any performance, whether it occurred yesterday or in ancient Greece, is lost for ever; and we can no longer have an aesthetic experience of it, nor have access to its living materiality” (10). Furthermore, “Whether we are dealing with a production that has actually been witnessed by the person describing it or a reconstruction of a past performance, in reality we can only ever hope to restore some of its main principles and not the authentic event” (11). In this sense, there is undeniable legitimacy in analyzing the records of a performance that one has not actually seen: after all, no one who is analyzing Victorian Shakespeare today, for instance, saw those productions.

Next, it is my claim that the context the two companies experienced possibly relates to their very choice of a playtext to produce and such context also dialogues with the productions’ objectives as well as conceptions of the playtext. In this way, the following discussion on the context is immediately connected to the companies’ possible reasons for performing *The Winter’s Tale* in that particular country and time. The general context soon before and at the time of the selected productions was heavily marked by the transition from Margaret Thatcher to John Major as English Prime Minister.

After three mandates and eleven years in office, Thatcher left Downing Street being fairly unpopular among many of the British people, including people in the arts who were, mostly, from the left. This was so mainly due to a serious loss of jobs and economic recession faced by the country in 1990, and which resulted in public dissatisfaction. As Peter Riddell puts it, Thatcher’s “considerable virtues—courage, vision and the ability to appreciate and be decisive in face of key challenges—had by the end become overshadowed by her faults” (221). Still, “she had been one of the most remarkable British prime ministers ever, presiding over important changes to British politics and society” (Riddell 221). Riddell states that the main reason for Thatcher’s fall was that her party “believed it was necessary to modify some of the most unpopular aspects of Thatcherism,” and a change in office was meant to provide “a change of personality and style, rather than of fundamental strategy” (220). Indeed, the subsequent years of Majorism were, according to Dennis Kavanagh, “a large dose of Thatcherism, minus the abrasiveness and much of the hyperbole” (192).

When Thatcher left office, the main troubles faced by the British people referred to a depressed housing market, weak business and consumer confidence, the country's trade balance in the red (Childs 238), rising inflation, heavy burden of taxes, and unemployment—all of which emerged or got worse in the 1990-1991 recession (Kavanagh 120-127), precisely the period in which the RSC and Complicité were producing *The Winter's Tale*. Within this recession, the new Prime Minister Major was initially well received and “[a]t the end of January 1991 he had become the most popular Prime Minister for thirty years” (Childs 231), certainly a remarkable fact given the relative decline of the British economy at the time.

Among the strategies employed by Major to cope with the troubles faced by the country there can be cited the help to pensioners, the ease in the transition from the much hated poll tax to the council tax, and expanded government programs for unemployed workers (Reitan 126). Major also reformed the health and civil services, as well as the use of private-sector management in education and health areas (Kavanagh 204-205), though it is valid to recall that some of these measures were opposed by the left. Still, as Reitan remarks, even though Major later fell down in public esteem, his initial measures made him “most popular during his first two years [1990-1991], when Britain was wracked by inflation and recession” (127).

How could such a context relate to the RSC and Complicité in their choice to stage *The Winter's Tale*? First, it must be observed that the RSC's decision about this play may have been influenced merely by the well-known fact that they alternate the Bard's plays each season, and their previous staging of *The Winter's Tale* had been in 1986 (directed by Terry Hands). Besides, it must be admitted that both the RSC's and Complicité's productions in case do not seem to aim at making explicit statements strongly related to the English concerns at the time. However, this fact does not invalidate the importance of looking into the context of a production; it only alerts us that some productions may have stronger or weaker connections to the surrounding circumstances. In general terms, then, it may be stated that the English companies staged *The Winter's Tale* within the context of serious economic recession, unemployment, and dissatisfaction, and these factors very likely carried a widespread feeling of anticipation for better days, of hope for recovery and renewal—if this is true, the choice for staging *The Winter's Tale* proves wise in that this play can effectively discuss the themes of



regeneration and hope (as seen in the second chapter), which in turn can be easily connected to the theme of Time.

With this possible connection in mind, I proceed to discussing the productions by the RSC and Complicité separately. I first elaborate on each company's possible conception of the playtext, and then analyze the use of theatricalizing devices in light of this conception and taking into account, also, the reception of the performance.

#### 4.1 Royal Shakespeare Company

Michael Billington's perception of Noble's production, as reported by Carol Rutter, is that this *Winter's Tale* was conceived as a "child's darkling fantasy" (cited in Rutter 108), and to me it seems an altogether reasonable view of the production's conception. It is consistent with the fact that in the opening scene of the production, the child, Mamillius, is apart from the adult world, because the adults are confined to a gauze box (hence the reference in the chapter's title), celebrating, precisely, the boy's own birthday, while the boy himself is not actually part of the celebration. Further, the adults, through the gauze box, have shapes that "lacked definition, [were] fuzzy, like hallucinations, their motions slightly out of synch, spasmodic" (Rutter 107), a description that enhances the idea of a child's fantasy, given that the only child on stage, Mamillius, is not inside this box, is not part of that frame, and sees those shapes that resemble hallucination (and may seem darkling for a child), from the outside.

Also, following Rutter's description, the opening scene shows that the young prince is "separated from the grown-ups, a lonely spectator with no other children to talk to," later a "damaged child" who, after he is dead, seems to haunt (Billington's word) the rest of the theatrical performance, "darkening *The Winter's Tale* into the interrupted ghost story Mamillius was telling" (Rutter 136). Thus, drawing on Rutter again, perhaps the production was indeed an infant's fantasy, a fantasy later "brought to life when the gauze box rose and the adults spilled out into the child's space" (Rutter 108), and which by wrongs (especially on behalf of Leontes), the child's fantasy is darkened and the innocent world of childhood is contaminated, while chaos is brought to the kingdom.

Rutter further helps to see the probable conception of Noble's production as a fantasy, commenting on the publicity material for the production. It seems that the material registered from the start, prior to the theatrical performance itself, the production's chosen perspective:

In 1992 [...] Adrian Noble advertised a *Winter's Tale* according to *Mamillius*. The program cover illustration gave a close-up on a little boy's wide eyes while the poster reproduced the production's opening image: the solitary child, far downstage, sat playing on the floor, holding his crystal ball, gazing behind him at the adults who were trapped in the gauze box as if caught in the structures of court protocol (or the child's imagination). (133, emphasis in the original)

In this way, the character of Mamillius seems to be central in the conception of the RSC's production. Indeed, as Rutter puts it, "spectators were both invited to privilege the child, *to see everything through his eyes*, yet also to see him marginalised, alienated" (135, emphasis added). Furthermore, still as reported by Rutter, Mamillius receives a gift from Polixenes, a top, which the boy sets spinning, and "[i]t whirled and whirled—and whirled. The adult world froze. Time stopped" (108). In this sense, Mamillius seems to control/own the fantasy; hence, it is a child's one. Moreover, still following Rutter, after the party the boy plays ghosts in the sheets the queen's ladies are trying to fold. In my understanding, this mimicry of ghosts with the sheets is related to Billington and Rutter's claim that the (dead) child later "haunts" the story; and this seems to be another piece of evidence that Noble conceived the production as, specifically, a *child's* fantasy, and a "darkling" one at that.

Other ways that Mamillius is at the core of the RSC's conception are implied by Peter Holland. After describing the gauze box (which appears in several scenes in the production) as a "representation of another world, a different perception co-existing with the rest of the stage and always offering to burst on to it" (127), Holland suggests that Mamillius is "in control" of the telling of this tale, as if being the narrator or, as Rutter says, as if spectators were invited to see the events from Mamillius' perspective. This can be noticed in the report Holland gives of a moment in the opening scene in which Mamillius shakes a snow globe toy, and by so doing "[brings] the rest of the court, frozen in tableau in the box, into play" (127). In short, Mamillius controls the tale of the production; the darkling fantasy is of a child, and this child is him. Another example provided by Holland is Mamillius' "whispering of the sad tale of sprites and globins" in Hermione's ear, which makes "Leontes suddenly appear in an echoing world within the box, a greater

terror than his son's attempt to 'fright' Hermione" (127). Maybe it was a greater terror, or maybe it was just the realization of the child's fictional fantasy.

Even if Noble conceived his production to be something like a child's fantasy, it seems clear to the director himself that the playtext and the production need to address real-world audiences. This can be noticed when, in an interview (published in Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen's edition of *The Winter's Tale*), Noble says "[i]t strikes me that underpinning the play is a very traditional medieval morality story," a story that moves to "repentance and finally redemption. A very simple story, but one of the most important stories one could ever possibly tell about human beings, because we are all seriously flawed" (162, emphasis added).

In other words, Noble seems to realize that in spite of all the fictionality of *The Winter's Tale* and its improbabilities (such as the baby not being eaten by the bear and its safe rescue), it is still a story that has lots to teach to human beings today, as it addresses the flaws inherent in all people, including the spectators. Noble's claim suggests his view that *The Winter's Tale* deals with morality, with right and wrong, and it also gives hope for redemption after a period of repentance, a view that aligns the director's interpretation of the play to the importance of the issue of Time. Hence, even if it was conceived as a child's darkling fantasy, this fantasy may have effects of the real for the actual spectators, who are flawed and hopeful, like the characters.

Further, Noble makes it clear that he does not see Sicilia and Bohemia as two different, apart worlds. In fact, this is why he did not aggressively contrast, visually speaking, the two countries. As Noble himself says in that interview, "it's not two worlds. It happens in one world. It's one story. To create totally different scenery for one and the other is just rubbish" (162). To summarize, for Noble *The Winter's Tale* takes place in one world, which is a fictional and fantastic one, but its plot and themes are those of the spectator's conditions as human beings and their real world.

In this way, Noble fits the developments of the story into a child's fantasy but actually deals with serious matters that address the spectators outside the theater space. As he puts it, "one of the wonderful things about the play and one of the reasons it engages an audience in an almost unique way is that it's partly about getting a second chance. It's a notion that chimes in so many ways with people. Leontes does these terrible, terrible things but he gets a second chance; that's why it's so

moving” (171). Noble seems to aim at focusing on morality and themes related to justice and family values; to present a story that gives hope with the idea of a second chance being possible; and to discuss how all people have flaws and are susceptible to errors that can be corrected, remarkably, for my purposes here, through Time: “you can have a second chance, but it requires a huge amount of time” (171), he says.

The opening scene, briefly described earlier, presents the first instance of theatricalizing devices to be analyzed. As has been said, the scene portrays Mamillius’ birthday party, but the boy is isolated in the foreground of the stage, while all other characters are framed within the gauze box in the background. The child is, therefore, visibly detached from everybody and everything else. The figure below shows the isolation (and perhaps loneliness) of Mamillius:



Fig. 2. Mamillius outside the gauze box (RSC)

The gauze box constitutes a telling theatricalizing device because it eloquently indicates and enhances the boy’s separation from

the others in a theatrical way—note the framing of a ceremony within the play inside the box, with the presence of balloons and an especial atmosphere made with dry-ice, as well as the exposition of all characters inside the box as if they were aware of the gaze of the audience. Further, the box is such a kind of device in that it makes a character on stage (Mamillius) act as an audience member (the child even looks back, watching the others), in the same way as the real, off-stage spectators. The creation of on-stage audiences, such as in the moment expressed in this scene, reoccurs in the production, especially at times in which the gauze box is used, for this box functions as a sort of framing device that emphasizes some characters while detaching others on stage.

This first use of the gauze box is highly significant in light of a specific theme developed in the story. In separating the child from the others, the device of the box here anticipates, in a way, the theme of loss: loss caused by death cannot be recovered and therefore it separates people; and Mamillius, separated by the box, dies mysteriously and is the only character (together with Antigonus) not to be given a “happy ending,” with restoration and family reunion. In other words, the child first appears alone in this production, because of the box device, and the production also closes with everybody separated from the boy, because he is lost forever.

Still in this scene, another theatricalizing device is the technique of “freezing” characters, which strongly emphasizes the fictionality of what is shown on stage. In the aforementioned interview, Noble states: “I used that method [of freezing] from the beginning of the play. There’s a feeling about the beginning of the play whereby people are clinging on to joy, clinging on to memories,” and the freezing suggests that those people are “hanging on to something” (165). Besides, as Noble says, “I dramatized that [hanging on] by using a lot of freeze-frames, allowing Antigonus and Camillo to walk around and look at beautiful things frozen in time” (165-166).

Taking Noble’s words into account, then, the freezing device, like the gauze box, clearly relates to the theme of loss, but this time not the loss of Mamillius, specifically. By freezing the characters, Noble wants to suggest the characters’ desire to keep something they do not want to let go (a joy, a memory, etc., as the director himself stated). Then, as the characters are eventually “required” to return to “normal” moving on stage (so that the story can continue), it is implied that they go on and lose that which they wanted to keep. Loss, of whatever it is, is

inevitable, and the freezing device “to hang on to something,” *because it cannot last forever*, suggests this fact.

The next scene to be discussed is Leontes’ mistaken accusation of Hermione. Leontes accuses his visibly pregnant wife of adultery, and the public disclosure of such an intimate marital matter is emphasized in the RSC’s production, by way of a blocking of the characters in a semicircle that seems designed on purpose by Leontes, so that *others are to listen and witness* the scandalous accusation. Obviously, Leontes is unconcerned with respect or dignity: by publicly accusing the queen of adultery he humiliates and exposes her to those who, being forced to act as spectators, watch the whole event on stage. This accusation is a theatricalizing device precisely given the idea of a “show” performed by Leontes, and given the presence of three kinds of spectators: Hermione, perplexed; the other characters on stage; and the regular theatergoers. The next figure illustrates the scene:



Fig. 3. Leontes accuses and exposes Hermione (RSC)

This scene is related to the theme of Time as the father of Truth that interests me. Leontes *hastily* judges and makes errors in these judgments, with no evidence of the cuckoldry case. Likewise, the king *quickly* makes his suspicions public: he briefly reports his ideas to Camillo, and a few scenes later he exposes Hermione to all, convinced

that his suspicions are true. While Leontes' mistaken judgments and accusations occur *speedily*, with an unexplained outburst of jealousy, the revelation of the truth only comes after *the passage of time*, in which Hermione goes to prison, delivers the baby who is then brought to Leontes and later abandoned, and finally goes to trial. The truth emerges only after the passage of these events, with the Oracle's message at the queen's judgment. Hence, the relation between Time and Truth emerges in the aftermath of Leontes' public accusation of his wife and is fulfilled later, with the Oracle, when it is time for the revelation of truth. In short, then, it is *the passage of time* that proves the *truth* of Leontes' errors and tyranny.

Let us now look at the scene of Apollo's anger at Leontes' defiance of the Oracle. As predicted in Shakespeare's text and staged in the RSC's production, Leontes' famous line "there is no truth at all in the Oracle" is immediately followed by the entrance of a servant announcing the death of Mamillius. To this announcement Leontes replies that "Apollo is angry, and the heavens themselves do strike at my injustice," meaning that he is being punished with the death of his son—in truth, not only Leontes but also the royal family and the kingdom itself, which loses its heir, shall suffer the consequences of Leontes' injustice.

This defiance of the Oracle is staged by the RSC with a furious tempest (not predicted in Shakespeare's text), which to me operates as a theatricalizing device. This tempest is actually criticized by Holland, who considers it "one piece of excess," and describes it as "a hugely extravagant storm" with "thunder and high winds flattening the courtiers, umbrellas skidding across the stage," and which caused the language of the actors to be "lost in the theatrical tempest" (127). Theater critic Paul Taylor, likewise, thinks that the device is too ostentatious: "the storm that breaks out when Leontes defies the oracle is of such showy, Lear-like violence (spectators flattened by the sudden gale; up-ended brollies skidding picturesquely round the stage) that when Gemma Jones's excellent Paulina cries 'This news is mortal to the Queen' you simply feel that she's not the only one who will be a goner if they stick around in these spectacularly inclement conditions" (*Novelty Shop*).

Yet, I myself claim that the very sense of exaggeration *is* a form of theatricalizing device (as seen in the previous chapter), because this sense enhances the notion of "spectacle." Still, exaggeration can sometimes go too far, even within the theatricalizing devices' approach.

If it is true that the audience had difficulty to hear the actors' lines in this storm, then I agree with Holland and Taylor on its extravagance, and think that the device could have been better developed (that is, in a way that would not prevent or disturb the delivery of the lines). The next figures show Apollo's storm—first, when it is approaching, and then when it has arrived:



Fig. 4. Before the storm (RSC)



Fig. 5. The violence of the storm (RSC)



Yet, the device of the storm is significant to the production, not only for the sense of spectacle it brings, but also because it visually suggests themes and interpretation of the plot's events at stake in the scene and in the story so far. With the storm, Noble possibly portrays Leontes' own state of mind at the loss of his son, as well as his submission to forces stronger than him—nature and the gods/heavens. The fact that Leontes as well as all other characters are thrown to the floor and the gauze box goes down as if it could suffocate all (as shown in fig. 5) possibly indicates that the king is not superior to the heavens, and that he (and the entire kingdom) is to be punished for his injustices and wrongs. Further, it is significant that this storm is a creation by Noble, i.e. it is not cited in the playtext (the only storm written by Shakespeare for *The Winter's Tale* occurs at the disposal of the baby in the wilderness). Hence, it could be argued that the storm has been deliberately conceived as a theatricalizing device (exaggerated, extravagant, with the idea of spectacle) to reinforce the themes of despair, loss of control, and confusion at this point of the story.

Next, the bear scene is another moment in which theatricalizing devices are used. Sadly, there are no photographs of this scene to facilitate understanding and illustration, and the discussion recurs to Rutter's able description, as well as to Noble himself (from the interview aforementioned). Rutter describes the scene as follows:

In the theater, this enigmatic suggestion that Hermione tropes the Bear has been realized at least once—and magically, in Noble's *The Winter's Tale* (1992). A 'real' animal, shaggy, brown, and bulky padded on stage left as Antigonus, downstage, crouching, tucked more warmth around the baby. Feeling the monster's breath on his neck, the courtier turned, leaped away, lunged back to the child, then stood frozen. The Bear was already straddling the baby, nosing her. Three things happened simultaneously to align incongruity and make spectators 'see' the Bear as maternal avatar: from the flies dropped billowing white silk, the phantasm of Hermione; the baby cried, as if giving her first birth-cry; and the Bear's sniff became a kiss, the rugged animal, swinging *her* head side to side (for spectators saw her as a *she*-Bear) as if perplexed by the sound, or bidding farewell, gently backing off before turning on Antigonus. (149, emphasis in the original)

Noble, in turn, says that he wanted the result of the bear scene to be “as amazing, fabulous, and extraordinary as possible” (169). It is interesting to note that this position fits perfectly the director’s conception of the story as a fantasy (fantasies are, by definition, amazing and fabulous). Further, the concern with staging that scene in such “extraordinary” manner offers room to the use of theatricalizing devices that work beautifully in the theater. Noble comments that “[t]here’s no question at all that the saving of Perdita is a miracle. Her life is saved through divine intervention. *That bear should eat the baby. [...] I’ve made that very clear.* I’ve had the bear sniffing around the baby, pawing the baby, looking at the baby and not killing the baby. Someone is looking after her” (175, emphasis added).

Shakespeare’s text simply says that Antigonus exits, “pursued by a bear.” In the RSC’s staging of the scene, the bear appears on stage, moves around and gets close to the baby, and unexpectedly caresses it, at the sight of Hermione’s apparition, before finally pursuing Antigonus. It seems to me that this staging ensures theatricalizing device by a “magical” connection between the bear and the queen, in which the bear acts like a mother protective of the baby, just like Hermione would do, had she not been set apart from her daughter. This connection illustrates the miracle Noble mentions (of the bear not eating the baby), and the staging of this magical sense of miracle, with its touch of the fantastic, works as one of those devices I am investigating. The ghost-like appearance of Hermione reinforces the fantasy touch, and, as put forth by Susan Snyder and Deborah T. Curren-Aquino, plays “a diversionary role that caused the bear to move from the baby toward Antigonus” (32). It is this magical bear-queen connection, made clearer by Hermione’s ghost-like appearance, that saves the baby.

It is significant that the bear scene is treated under this atmosphere of miracle and magic (in alignment with the conception of the story being a fantasy) specifically due to the relations this atmosphere shares with themes at stake in this moment of the story. The bear scene touches on the issues of hope and faith: since the baby is not eaten, after all, there is hope that it will be rescued (as it later is) and that the Oracle’s message can still be fulfilled (which also happens). This emphasis on the theme of hope relates then to the theme of faith: it is required that the spectators keep their faith awake so as to believe that their hopes will be met. In this sense, the far-fetched mood of the scene is consistent with the themes addressed by the staging here. In other words, the device of a miraculous and magical atmosphere matches, and

perhaps visually endorses, the concerns with hope and faith behind the story at this moment. It is valid to remember, also, that such issue of hope could be connected to the context outside the production, that is, that of a country under recession and in need for recovery and better days.

Next, in Noble's Bohemia, the dance of satyrs is "performed by men each holding two red balloons as testicles of various sizes and an erect mop" (Holland 127). Holland considers the phallic association a "cheap gag," but what is significant is that these balloons recall the earlier balloons, present in Mamillius' birthday party and at the awakening of Leontes' sexual jealousy and tragic accusations of promiscuity. Hence, the balloons are a theatricalizing device that emphasizes that all is a planned fiction and spectacle, as they purposefully establish connections to other moments in the performance, working as visual elements to *unify* it: by recalling Mamillius' party, they inevitably recall the child's loss, and such loss was caused by sexual jealousy (it seems that the child dies of a grief that emerged from his sadness concerning the troubles between his parents). In this sense, the phallic association reminds that the developments of the story began due to issues of sexuality and fidelity. In other words, while they may seem a "cheap gag," the phallic imagery of the balloons is relevant in that it connects to the precise themes of sexuality and jealousy that caused the troubles (losses, separations, deaths) in Leontes' kingdom.

Finally, let us look at some devices in Noble's staging of the statue scene. Many of the devices used in this scene are suggested by Shakespeare's text itself (e.g. that Paulina commands the scene as a theater director; that music is used to "awake" the statue; and that a character poses as a statue being actually alive, emphasizing the fictionality of the staging). Yet, there are some other specific arrangements designed by the RSC as additional devices. Hermione is back-turned to the audience and at the center of the stage, while all others face her (and are faced by the audience). Such blocking makes the spectators see "Leontes' reaction as *he* gradually comes to life" (Coursen 227, emphasis in the original). Additionally, all characters freeze when both Hermione and Leontes "come to life" with her body movement. This blocking and freezing are examples of theatricalizing devices for visually emphasizing artificiality and for creating a ceremony within the play, and in this sense these techniques also recall the production's conception of a fantasy. The figure below portrays the scene:



Fig. 6. The statue of Hermione (RSC)

The statue scene, like the bear one discussed before, powerfully touches on the issues of hope and faith. As Paulina states, it is required that people awake their faith (for the miracle of Hermione's alleged resurrection). This claim is directed not only to Leontes and the characters on stage, but also to the audience. In my view, the audience needs to awake their faith to the staging itself, "buying" the fictional game of the production, but equally important is the possibility that this call for the *audience's* hope and faith can be connected to England's context in early 1990s, in which, as we have seen, a serious recession, loss of jobs and public dissatisfaction very likely resulted in a wishful feeling for revitalization. In this sense, then, the awake for faith could work as a thematic construct sent by the company to the audience in terms of them not giving up on their hopes for better days.

Additionally, the statue scene, with the blocking and freezing devices, is related to the issue of Time being the father of Truth. It is after the passage of a wide gap of time, sixteen wintery years, that the truth of Hermione being alive finally arises; and this only happens because the truth of the Oracle (that the lost baby *could* be recovered) is fulfilled, as is the penitence of Leontes. Noble's blocking device, therefore, frames at the center the character which, with her *wrinkled* face, suggests the time lost apart; and her "resurrection" and later embrace of her husband and daughter point to the future of a happily

reunited family. The freezing device also used in the scene, likewise, centralizes Hermione, as well as Leontes (the two who move), pointing to the fact that now that all truths have emerged and the lost ones (i.e. the queen and her daughter) have been recovered, it is time for the revelation of Hermione being alive and for a happy reconciliation within the royal family.

The reception of the RSC's staging has been mixed. Most critics and theater reviewers were pleased by the creativity and imagination presented on stage, and a few found that there were some unnecessary exaggerations. Among the pleased reviewers, Sheridan Morley asserts that the director could "freshen up" an old text, particularly in the Bohemian sequence, which became "a vast celebration of the British countryside." Mel Gussow, similarly, thinks the production "plays free" with imagination, becoming "a magical retelling of one of Shakespeare's most disturbing plays." It is interesting to note that Gussow's reference to "magical" possibly aligns with the conception of the story being a fantasy, discussed before. Additionally, Gussow thinks the production portrays "a cycle of transformations: good king into mad tyrant, lost princess into shepardess [sic], stone sculpture restored to life" in a beautiful manner.

Herbert C. Coursen (1995) collects more positive opinions on Noble's production, stated by several reviewers. Among them, Malcolm Rutherford says it "comes close to perfection;" while Nicholas de Jongh thinks it is "enthraling, eccentric;" and Charles Spencer enjoys its "wonderful freshness of approach." Michael Billington, in turn, thinks it is thematically unified under the vision of a fantasy; and Robert Hewison's opinion is that "Noble has created an imaginative world one warms to." Additionally, Michael Davies thinks it develops "flawlessly" in what is "by some way the best RSC production this season;" while Richard Williamson says it is "gloriously entertaining [and] imaginative;" and Paul Lapworth says it is "marvelous" and thinks that "Noble walked the high-wire between realism and fantasy with supreme confidence" (all cited in Coursen 228-229). All this positive criticism seems to validate the creativity, eccentricity, and freshness employed by Noble to the staging of *The Winter's Tale*, and these points of appraisal, in my opinion, are often associated with the devices I have discussed.

Among the less pleased criticism, Coursen himself complains about some "exaggerations" that are "unbelievable even in a play that insists on suspension of disbelief" (227). This complaint is exemplified with the device of Time's choric speech being read by Camillo from a

balloon. I see Coursen's point that such device could be too much for more skeptical viewers, but I tend to think that the balloon with Time's speech clearly connects with other moments in the production that contain balloons (such as Mamillius' birthday party and the sheep-shearing feast), and it therefore helps to unify the production under themes such as that of loss and of the healing passage of time. Another example of Coursen's complaint refers to the Bohemian sequence, which, in his opinion, "became, as it is always in danger of doing, the play itself, and did not integrate with Sicily, except through Polixenes" (227).

Paul Taylor, similarly, shows some discontent with the staging. He claims that it is a "spirited but external production" (*Novelty Shop*), which probably means that the interpretation and approach to the text are intelligent, but that often there is a mere display of the visual (external) appeal. In fact, Taylor states that the production is "[o]ften pictorially arresting" (*Novelty Shop*). However, I do not believe that all is mere "pictorial display." At least regarding the devices discussed in this production, the creative elements are clearly more than just external appeal, as they do connect to different subject matters of the story. This is the case of the gauze box, for instance, which implies claustrophobia under Leontes' tyranny, and his submission to forces stronger than himself (see fig. 5). It is also the case of the bear scene, with the magical connection between the bear and Hermione, that touches on the theme of hope (hope that the baby can be saved).

Taking into account the scenes that I could analyze from the registers available, I am strongly inclined to mostly praise the production, particularly in terms of validating its uses of theatricalizing devices. This is so because the specific devices discussed here are important not only to remind the audience of the fictionality on stage and to explore and play with conventions and specificities of the theater medium. In addition to that, as we have seen, these devices connect to relevant themes dealt with in the story, such as those of time, truth, loss, hope, faith, and sexual jealousy. Particularly the issues of hope and faith seem to me even more significant, in that these can more easily be related to the outside context of the production, possibly developing a thematic construct to the spectators that there shall be hope for recovery (given that the country, as discussed before, was under a serious recession that brought a widespread feeling of fear and dissatisfaction). In this sense, then, I believe that the theatricalizing devices used in this production explore their two-fold purpose, by both commenting on the

theater medium and its conventions, in ways that are thematically important, and also commenting on issues pertaining to the spectators' selves and real world.

#### 4.2 Théâtre de la Complicité

Complicité were founded in 1983 by Simon McBurney, Annabel Arden and Marcello Magni (all of which acted in the performance under analysis). Complicité are known for making a highly physical theater, influenced by the French school of Jacques Lecoq, which was attended by several members of the group. The company have experience with opera, radio production, multi-disciplinary installations (e.g. in Trafalgar Square, London), theatrical adaptations (in which there is a prior text to be adapted), and entirely devised stage work. These varied experiences help one understand why McBurney prefers to call the group an “art organization” rather than a “theater company” (though I shall keep the latter terminology).

Following the company's own website, Complicité are always “seeking what is most alive, integrating text, music, image and action to create surprising, disruptive theater.” Additionally, they explain that “everything changes” from one production to the next, and there is not a permanent group of creatives, actors or technicians, for “each production is cast according to its content.” Still, “[s]ome things can be identified as being more or less constant. There's the principle of working collaboratively<sup>2</sup>, and in particular having designers involved right from the start of any production. There's a strong emphasis on the performer's body [...], and finally there's a commitment to the huge amount of research and background work that goes into every production.”

Their productions include an adaptation of Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* (2009), a performance inspired by the life and fictions of writer Bruno Schulz (*Street of Crocodiles*, 1991-1992), and another performance (*The Three Lives of Lucie Cabrol*, 1994), based on a novel by John Berger. Most of their repertoire, however, is made of works devised by the company, and they have staged more than 20 different productions. Complicité's 1992 *Winter's Tale* was their first attempt at producing Shakespeare. After that, they co-produced with the National

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<sup>2</sup> A principle which aligns with the group's name, since the French word “complicité” means “togetherness.”

Theatre (London) *Measure for Measure* in 2004 (and revived it in 2005-2006).

Annabel Arden, the director of Complicité's *Winter's Tale*, once said that "[a]n actor is a master storyteller," and that "[a]cting and theater are a means of coming together and examining what it means to be human" (qtd. in Luckhurst and Veltman 8). These words suggest Arden's awareness (not only in *The Winter's Tale*, but as a theater director in general) of art's ability to communicate with its audiences and discuss with them issues related to human nature and the real world. Besides, Arden seems to know how powerful theater can be to tell stories (as actors are "*master* storyteller[s]," emphasis added), and to share ideas with its spectators. Hence, Arden's works as a director are probably interested in being more than entertainment, and be also efficacious in proposing reflections on matters of the real world and of human beings, matters, therefore, of everybody's interest and possibly related to the outside context, too. This position seems to echo, in a way, Noble's aforementioned declarations regarding the morality lesson he sees behind the text of *The Winter's Tale* and how this story discusses human flaws that pertain to all beings. Possibly, then, these two directors understand the power of theater in a similar way.

Arden started the work on Complicité's *Winter's Tale* by inviting actors to a four-day workshop to get acquainted with the text and its possibilities. In an informative package sent to the invited actors (to which I had access), it is stated that because *The Winter's Tale* is taken as "only a tale," "the impossible can happen and often does." In this way, Arden approaches the text as "a very personal choice for Complicité. It offers us fabulous opportunities for all the thing[s] we do best: creation of startling images; sudden changes of space; the exploitation of comic play; conflicts between reality and fantasy; exploration of inner states of mind through physical play; music, dance, clowning, magic." These statements glimpse at the possibility for several startling uses of theatricalizing devices in this production. Indeed, as Arden declares, the "primary aim is to transform reality onstage, to make the most ordinary and basic aspects of life marvelous - to find the poetic in the unpoetic."

Further, concerning the play's themes, Arden states that "[t]his play deals with internal values which are, in fact, the laws of the universe—faith, honor, promises, jealousy" (qtd. in Curtis), and declares (in that informative package) that the group is "concerned with touching our audience where they are most vulnerable—the fact that they share



with our characters the experiences of failure, frustration, inability to act.” It is possible to connect this concern of Complicité’s *Winter’s Tale* to the overall context at stake, from the production’s preparation phase to its development and reception. As discussed before, England in the early 1990s was somewhat depressed due to a strong economic recession that affected areas such as employment, housing, and life costs. In this way, it is very likely that the population was experiencing feelings of frustration as well as of some hope for recovery, and Arden explicitly states the interest in producing a staging that addresses these kinds of feeling.

References to “creation of startling images,” the exploration of the “conflicts between reality and fantasy,” and the finding of “the poetic in the unpoetic” and making the ordinary marvelous, suggest that the conception developed by the group carries the flavor for a production full of magic,<sup>3</sup> in which the impossible happens. Connected to that, references to the characters’ experiences of failure and frustration indicate the concern about talking to the audience (in a mostly comic way, as Arden says: “my aim is to make it a real comedy with a tragic and a formal dimension”), about problems that can be overcome with hope, faith and, possibly, the passage of time. After all, Arden declares that “*The Winter’s Tale* is a nightmare which turns into a new kind of waking dream. It is the *hope* we all share and need of a *miracle* being possible” (emphasis added). This implies the tentative thematic construct of keeping one’s faith alive and believing in the healing powers of Time, a theme that interests me here.

The production develops its themes and concerns exploring great oppositions. Actress Kathryn Hunter (who plays Mamillius, Paulina, Old Shepherd, and Time), for instance, says that the production “is about great extremes—total despair, and then a miraculous reconciliation; great darkness and then fantastic light and joy” (“Theater,” *City Limits*). Simon McBurney (co-founder of the company and responsible for playing Leontes and Clown), adds that “*The Winter’s Tale* is a wonderful mix of the comic and the horrific, the grand and the pathetic, and it’s those opposite extremes that have always attracted us” (qtd. in Curtis). In short, it seems that the group wanted to offer a thematic construct which reinforces that after the storm there shall be sunlight again (by emphasizing the oppositions between despair

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<sup>3</sup> Actress Gabrielle Reidy (Complicité’s Hermione and Dorcas) even makes it explicit that in *The Winter’s Tale* the group was “entering a world of make-believe. We don’t hide the fact that we are in a play” (qtd. in Edwardes).

and joy), and that problems can be healed, by miracle and/or by human action.

In light of this early discussion, and by observing the advertising material of the staging, it may be said that Complicité's conception is that *The Winter's Tale* is a saga of faith, which focuses on the comic and the idea of renewal (rather than destruction<sup>4</sup>) that emerges with the passage of time, since this saga is developed in cycles (believing, disbelieving, and awakening the belief again). Another statement by Arden (in the advertising material) that suggests this focus on faith reads: "*The Winter's Tale* [has] an urgent relevance for today: the only way forward is to make the impossible possible." Here it is clearly implied the thematic construct of never giving up and of having faith that what is deemed impossible can actually be made possible. Also, from the director's view, such a saga of faith is something that the world (or at least England in the early 1990s) *urgently* needs.

Still regarding the conception as a saga of faith, I observed that some lines from the original playtext are quoted throughout the advertising material of Complicité, but it is remarkable that one particular line is repeated and displayed more frequently (in different posters), perhaps to point towards the group's conception. This line is, precisely, Paulina's "it is required you do awake your faith." Every time this line is used in the advertising material, it is placed between the title *The Winter's Tale* and the company's name. In this way, the advertising material *centers* this phrase, several times, with the very likely effect of leading the viewer to keep remembering those words, and even to watch the theatrical performance with those words in mind. This reinforces my reading of the conception of the production as a saga of faith, which is developed in a comic world of magical make-believe, extreme opposites and startling images.

The phrase "awake your faith" refers to at least two things. One, that the spectator should make an effort to "buy" the production's fictionality and "startling images," reflecting upon its themes and, at the same time, its theatrical techniques. In this way, the phrase refers to awakening the audience's faith on the theater medium and its powers. The other possible reference of the phrase has to do with the very thematic constructs the group wants to advance. I think that the advertising material and the repeated and centralized sentence aim at

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<sup>4</sup> "I realized a lot of our shows ended in death and destruction—which I love—but I wanted to do something else" (Arden).

making the spectator watch the production awakening his/her faith in the human being as an entity, that is, by watching the developments of the play and reflecting on the power of forgiveness, repentance, justice, honor, and faith itself. Hence, my point is that *Complicité* conceived *The Winter's Tale* as an act of faith and wanted the audience to examine “what it means to be human” (to recall Arden’s statement), so as to reinforce their faith that humans can be good and forgiven for their flaws and errors.

Bearing in mind this conception developed in that context, it is time to analyze specific uses of theatricalizing devices in the production and how they relate to the interpretation of the text and the themes *Complicité* are interested in. It is valid to remember that a saga of faith can be related to what I approach as theatricalizing devices: for those who have faith, anything is possible, be it a miracle or something considered “impossible.” Hence, devices that derive from exaggerations, the emphasis on fictionality, the idea of an extraordinary spectacle, the use of fantastic elements, and the use of imagination, for example, are all easily accepted once one can awake his/her faith.

One use of the devices can be noticed drawing on Holland’s reference to the production’s gestures—the focus on gestures makes sense considering that *Complicité* are known for their highly physical theater. More specifically, Holland recalls Leontes’ exaggerated and mimetic gestures to Camillo, when the king talks about his suspicion of adultery. Arden’s production makes Camillo “a comic stooge, not following the argument” (124), and as a result Leontes makes “the images graphic and [...] comically exaggerated: ‘slippery’ (275), ‘hobby-horse’ (278), even ‘inside lip’ (288) were held up for Camillo’s—and the audience’s—regard but by being acted they became parodied” (124). For Holland, then, this Leontes is “unashamedly theatrical” (125). Theater critic Robert Hewison states that the group “shows no fear of the words,” but he explicitly disapproves of what he calls the king’s “semaphoring” of the text in the early speeches (from this criticism comes the reference presented in this chapter’s title). Critics Michael Billington and Paul Taylor, likewise, regard as unnecessary Leontes’ mimetic demonstration of his words (in fact, the king’s miming is the “empty gestures” referred to in the title of Taylor’s review). Still, I think that such “semaphoring,” which constitutes a theatricalizing device, is significant due to its thematic implications to the story as highlighted by the production.

The exaggerated, graphic acting by Complicité's Leontes is such kind of device in the sense of a character's self-display to another, and also in the idea of flamboyance (and theatricality) inherent to such a behavior. More importantly, it is remarkable that this simple device relates to the issue of belief, which is absolutely central to this production: do the spectators believe in Leontes or does his showy behavior make them suspicious of the events reported by the king? In other words, do the graphic and exaggerated gestures challenge the audience's capacity to believe?

By reading Holland it seems to me that this flamboyant mimicry aims at leading the audience to believe that Leontes is overreacting *and* wrong in his accusations. Further, it seems that his gestures aim at generating laughs (Holland classifies them as "comically exaggerated"), at the same time as reducing the weight of Leontes' words, since the adultery he talks about is *not* true, after all. In this sense, then, the gestures should help the audience to believe in the truth of Hermione's good character, and not in the flamboyant and (later explicitly) *unreasonable* jealousy of Leontes. Hence, it may be stated that the fictionality of Leontes' behavior, expressed by the "semaphoring" device, connects to the theme of Time-Truth relationship: the passage of time proves, later, that Leontes' beliefs are incorrect, so the truth of Leontes' misunderstanding emerges from the deliberate fictionality of the device of exaggerating his suspicions with flamboyant gestures. This paradox that truth emerges from fictionality is fascinating for proving that the devices under debate are not a "charm" on stage, but actually effective tools to contribute to the telling of the story.

Another device noted in Holland's account refers to the costumes worn by Leontes and Polixenes. As Holland puts it, these characters are powerful and potentially dangerous for being kings, and their power is "suggested in the robes [...], strange coats made by stitching together half-a-dozen jackets so that the monarchs seemed to be trailing their subjects behind them" (124). These particular costumes, in my view, employ theatricalizing devices for suggesting a "staged reality," i.e. the implication that the characters "wear" all their subjects (or perhaps roles) possibly refreshes in the audience the sense that what is being watched is theater. Moreover, it is not surprising that this implication is conveyed precisely by the outfit of the kings, since they

are the two characters to have furious outbursts<sup>5</sup> (Leontes regarding Hermione's alleged adultery, and Polixenes regarding the relationship between his son Florizel and Perdita). In other words, the two characters who most vividly show (as predicted in Shakespeare's text) opposing sides of their constitution (both loving and aggressive sides) are the ones to wear such kind of costume.

Further, this device can be related to the issue of Time as father of Truth. This may be observed in that people normally change, at least in minimal ways, as time passes, and in this process, and given the circumstances, they may develop several "sides" of their personality, and thus also develop, so to speak, many other "subjects" or "characters." That Leontes and Polixenes wear costumes that suggest different subjects in one single person is, therefore, a visual reminder to the fact that all people have good and bad characteristics, qualities and flaws, and different sides. With the passage of time, then, it is likely that "truths" about a person's character be constructed and revealed. As an example, let us take Polixenes (in light of Shakespeare's own text): the loving friend of the Sicilian royal couple speaks tenderly of his son Florizel (in Act I), but years later, at the discovery of Florizel's relationship with Perdita (in Act IV), he acts motivated by great hate and in a way that does not resemble the loving person seen before. Yet, it is the same Polixenes, only seen from different sides and at different times. In short, then, one may claim that *Complicité's* costume device pointed out by Holland relates to the issue of Time revealing Truths—in this case, the truth about a person's complex and perhaps plural identities.

Next, Benedict Nightingale, in his review of the staging, mentions real-life references to Stevie Wonder's audio cassettes and Rice Krispies (a possible sponsor of the production), and these references are theatricalizing devices for being a variation of metatheater (as discussed in the previous chapter) that put the real *into* the fictional world. The critic Robert Gore-Langton, similarly, comments on the Stevie Wonder tapes of *Autolycus*, confirming the interplay between reality and fictionality. What these references more significantly perform is a connection between the theater and its insertion into the so-called real world. My point, particularly concerning Rice Krispies, is

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<sup>5</sup> One could claim that Paulina has an outburst as well, when she brings the baby to Leontes and defends the infant and the queen in Act II scene iii. In the performance by Atores de Laura, at least, the actress who plays Paulina acts this scene with impressive anger and fervour. I would like to thank professors Marlene Soares dos Santos and José Roberto O'Shea for this precious observation.

that *Complicité's* real-life reference may have been advertisement (perhaps mandatory by contract) of a sponsor of the production but, simultaneously, it could have been a criticism of the fact that much of the world today is subjected to a capitalist ideology, and even the arts need corporate sponsoring. In other words, I believe that a real-life reference to a sponsor could be a theatricalizing device that communicates on the real world, establishing a critique to a certain situation (that of arts being subjected to capitalism).

Theater critic Charles Spencer considers these real-life references “significant liberties [taken] with the text,” and Robert Hewison explicitly praises these “liberties,” adding that the company can offer “a new approach to an old play.” Michael Billington, however, criticizes the frequent “sacrificing” of the text’s meanings “to *Complicité's* self-delighting cleverness,” being this sacrifice exemplified precisely with those real-life references. To illustrate, Billington argues that at the finding of the baby by the Old Shepherd “jokes *about sponsors* obscure[ed] the lines that are the play’s leitmotif: ‘Thou met’st with things dying, I with things new-born’” (emphasis added). As already stated, I think the real-life references (in jokes or not) can be a clever criticism of a capitalist system, but let me be clear that I would *not* enjoy these jokes at the sacrifice of delivery of crucial lines, especially if the added references distracted the audience and diminished the focus on thematic aspects of the production.

Next, other uses of the devices occur when Mamillius tells his sad tale. Mamillius clearly acts as narrator (conducting a role-playing within his role), not only in the sense predicted by Shakespeare, in which the boy says a line that starts to tell a story (“there was a man...”), but also given the blocking developed by the company, i.e. the visual organization of the characters involved in his storytelling, and the way this blocking creates an on-stage audience to Mamillius’ presentation. The boy is placed at the center of a semi-circle, being surrounded by other characters (his mother Hermione, and her ladies), who act as his listeners, attending Mamillius’ storytelling as much as those actual spectators who face the stage outside the fictional realm of the production. The next figure illustrates the scene:



Fig. 7. Mamillius tells a sad tale (*Complicité*)

The scene is interrupted by Leontes' entrance to accuse Hermione of adultery, and the child's tale telling seems therefore to anticipate to the audience the fact that there is a "sad tale" going on, since the events in the Sicilian court *are* tragic. However, connecting this tale telling to the theme of Time and the goals of the director (discussed before, concerning making the production comic with an emphasis on love and not on destruction), this expectation for tragedy is not fulfilled. This is so because in this scene shown in fig. 7, and in the following scene (in which Leontes exposes his thoughts and accuses the queen), the spectators are led to believe that the performance is going to be a sad tale in itself, but with the passage of time in the story *and* the passage of the production itself (exploring its playful manner and comic inventiveness), the emphasis on developing the tragedy in a comic way, aimed at by Arden, is revealed. In other words, the sad tale is concretized only in the sense that terrible things do happen, but this nomenclature "sad tale" does not apply to the production itself (nor even to the story's resolution). Unfortunately, the fact that I could not watch this staging limits my ability to offer further examples of how Arden makes the story comic, and I can only simply rely on her statements of intention and other written registers.

Let us now look at the “exit, pursued by a bear” scene. Complicité’s bear carries the taste of a spectacle and the sense of flamboyance, thus constituting a device that explores and emphasizes specific theatrical means and the fictionality of the production. In other words, Complicité’s bear scene celebrates theater and its liberties and possibilities, through the development of the complicated stage direction in such a *spectacular* manner. Holland even describes the bear as “huge” and “vampiric” (125). Further, the *way* the bear appears, emerging from the floorcloth and with the “help” of the other actors, reinforces the use of theatricalizing devices in terms of the artificiality of the scene. The figure below shows the famous stage direction played by Complicité:

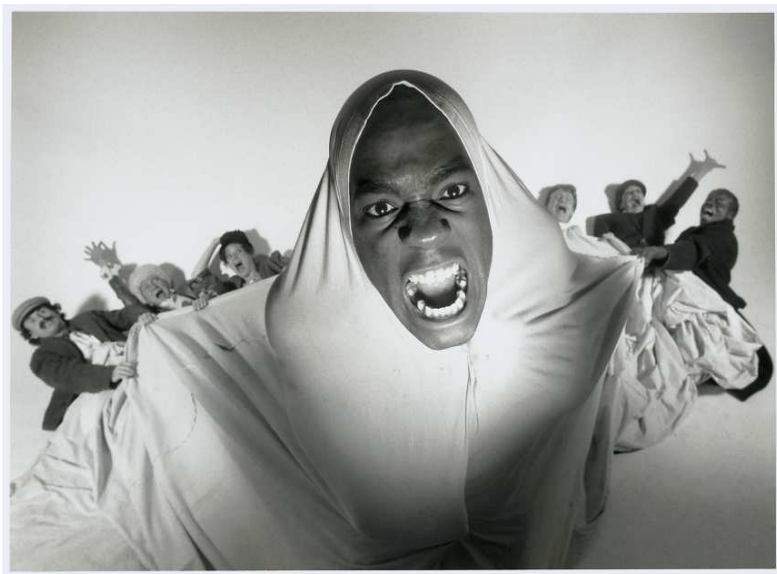


Fig. 8. “Exit, pursued by a bear” (Complicité)

The bear, in being an element representative of nature and its wilderness that kills some (the ship crew and Antigonus) while it hosts and saves others (the baby Perdita), is also related to the Time-Truth scheme. To be clear, nature is destroyer (e.g. when represented by the winter season and the bear), and it is also healer (when represented by the spring time). In addition, it seems that such truth of *nature*’s character is revealed with the passage of time. To be clear, first there is a sad winter, marked by tragic events in the Sicilian court, and a winter



which culminates with the savage bear destroying Antigonus and with the deaths of the mariners—that is, those people who work as “agents” for the tyrannous Leontes, obeying the king’s *destructive* orders. Then, as time passes, nature is revealed to be an agent of healing and renewal as well: with the passage of sixteen years, there comes an especial spring time that inspires the story’s final happy reconciliations, which are possible after this long gap of time in which the former tyrannous king is now penitent and regretful, while the queen is ready to forgive her husband and be restored to her family. In short, time reveals the truth of nature’s cycles: after a period of destruction, nature (aligned with the passage of time itself) shall enable a period of healing.

Finally, there is theatricalizing device use at the first entrance of the Old Shepherd, when he is looking for his lost sheep. Holland comments that in this entrance there is “the accompaniment of the rest of the cast baa-ing away as lost sheep, pursued by a human sheepdog”<sup>6</sup> (125). In my view, this scene uses theatricalizing devices by its unashamed artificiality. Besides, it clearly (though respectfully) mocks the classic problem of staging animals. “Clearly” because *Complicité*’s lost sheep and sheepdog do not even *look* like real animals and do not even *attempt* to do so; the actors merely get down on all fours and wear masks, in such a way as to suggest that *for that moment* they are animals. “Respectfully” because at the same time that there is a clear attempt at *not* looking like real animals, the simple “dressing up” with masks can be understood as a celebration of a theatrical means, in which little is needed, visually, to play a new role (in this case, an animal) and move on with the production.

In short, then, the entrance of the Old Shepherd in *Complicité*’s production is a scene that makes use of the devices I am discussing precisely for its playful approach to a hard issue in theater, in which the actors’ mere wearing of masks enables them to stage animals, and also somehow shows to the audience how theater works and how fictions are developed (the staging of the bear, likewise, celebrates the means of theater). The entrance of the sheep and sheepdog is illustrated in the figure that follows (the Old Shepherd himself does not appear in the image):

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<sup>6</sup> The entrance of the Old Shepherd in Atores de Laura’s production is, likewise, noteworthy: the Old Shepherd enters humorously calling his lost sheep—“Ofélia! Desdêmona! Miranda!”—making a literary reference to well-known Shakespearean characters.



Fig. 9. The lost sheep (Complicité)

The scene of the sheep, sheepdog and Old Shepherd looking for lost animals (before finding the baby Perdita), can be associated with two important themes of the story: one is that of loss, and the other that of hope. The connection to loss is quite clear: the subjects in fig. 9 are looking for something that is lost (two sheep), and the story addresses the loss of people who are separated from their beloved ones (Mamillius and Antigonus, who die, Perdita, who is abandoned, and Hermione, allegedly dead too) and the sad consequences that loss brings (Leontes, for instance, seems to *lose* also the pleasure for life, and lives to pay penitence). Furthermore, the scene connects to the theme of hope because there is not only loss, but the chance to look for that which is missing. In other words, it is evident that the shepherd and his animals hope to find the lost animals, and make the necessary efforts that are available to see if they accomplish this task. In this sense, then, the scene suggests persistency and attitude towards the issue of loss, and keeping one's hope that such losses can be found and recovered.

Many reviewers received Complicité's performance remarkably well. Jan Sewell claims that Complicité's staging is "[p]erhaps the most admired production [of *The Winter's Tale*] of modern times" (140). Ian Shuttleworth, equally pleased, exalts that "[r]arely is theater so wondrous," and states that "[t]he Complicité style of high theatricality is here employed to marvelous effect across an entire spectrum of emotion." Jane Edwards adds that the group's "gushing enthusiasm and commitment is overwhelming," and believes that "Complicité have proved the point that they can deal with classical texts in their own way." Emma Lilly, in turn, praises the ensemble scenes, "Complicité's forte, when they move together as if they'd been separated at birth." Victoria Smith classifies the production as joyful and says that "the tragedy of the tale is never neglected," and this is so particularly due to the "passionate" acting of Simon McBurney's Leontes.

Still among positive comments, Paul Taylor (who was highly critical of the RSC's production) enjoys the group's dynamism, exuberance, and "vividly physicalized theater" (*Gestures*), while Benedict Nightingale says that "[t]he energy, commitment, theatricality, and inventiveness are as strong as ever." Charles Spencer deems the production as "magical" and thinks it "honors this great play while doing full justice to Complicité's distinctive eccentricity." Additionally, Spencer praises the way movement and body language, in the group's distinctive physical theater, "brilliantly illuminates the text, and almost every scene has a vitality that forces you to consider the play afresh." At last, Spencer concludes that this production reinforces Complicité's "power to astonish."

With less excited opinions, Michael Arditti and Robert Gore-Langton seem to share a dislike for the devices that in their view go too far or seem gratuitous to the themes and developments of the story. More specifically, Arditti criticizes that there is too much "extravaganza" and a frequent focus on individual moments that damages the idea of a whole. In Gore-Langton's view, the production displays "the self-conscious inventiveness of Annabel Arden's direction" but lacks neatness ("[it] is an inspired mess, but a mess all the same"), and the reviewer laments that among its alleged confusion, "the cold, penitential grace and tragic ebb have gone missing." In a similar tone, Paul Taylor, apart from some compliments aforementioned, criticizes that Complicité are, at times, more concerned with exhibiting themselves and their inventiveness than with exploring the possibilities of a Shakespearean text. As he puts it, Taylor dislikes some business

which he thinks are added simply “in order to get a quick, local titter” from the audience.

To sum up, while many critics endorse and enjoy *Complicité*'s liberties, creativity and surprising effects, a few consider that some of the added business have the counterproductive effect of erasing the focus on relevant themes and end up instead simply celebrating the company's style and imagination. On this note, I reiterate my position that the added business to a production, including the use of theatricalizing devices, should be used with responsibility, in order to *contribute* to the production and its goals and attempted meanings, being *always* related to specific themes and motivations of the staging. In other words, the devices should *enhance* the treatment of specific themes that the artists want to convey, instead of erasing, obscuring, and diminishing these themes to favor mere self-display.

Further, as much as theatricalizing devices, given my approach to them, work to celebrate the art of theater and the medium's potentialities and beauties (and here lies the *risk* of losing the bigger focus), the devices are equally useful and necessary to facilitate the communication of certain attempted themes and ideas to the audience, which may refer more or less directly to concerns of human beings in general (their experiences and shared feelings, for example) and concerns of the given context involved, in particular. It is required, then, that when the companies employ theatricalizing devices, they mind the risk of falling into the trap of narcissistic self-display, and actually guarantee the two-fold purpose of such devices, that is, that they both pay homage to the theater medium, and help establish themes and meanings that communicate to the spectators and their real world and concerns, being in this way much more meaningful.

## Chapter 5 Snowflakes & Sunflowers: Folger Theatre

“And thereby hangs a tale.”<sup>1</sup>

I attended live a production of *The Winter's Tale* in February 2009, at the Folger Theatre, in the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC. On that occasion I collected the program and the invitation leaflet, and took notes during the interval and right after the end of the production. A few months later, I requested and received a generous selection of photographs and published reviews, as well as a copy of the final script. In other words, my analysis of this production takes place through both performance analysis and theater historiography.

The invitation leaflet of this production offers a glimpse of what the spectator can expect when attending the theatrical performance: “Love at first sight. Parted families reunited. Promises broken, hope found. With all the magic of a fairy tale, Shakespeare’s late romance resonates with nature’s perpetual powers of renewal.” The excerpt clearly indicates the production’s concern with restoration, reunion, and renewal, as well as the finding of hope. In other words, the Folger production does not seem to focus so much on the destructive part (like *Complicité*’s), but instead on how destruction can be reversed to more joyful days. In this way, it seems that director Blake Robison had the word “hope” in mind.

In light of the general context of the Folger production opening in the same week *and* city in which Barack Obama was inaugurated as the United States’ President, one wonders about the possible relations between this political context and the Folger apparent focus on the idea of finding hope. The Capitol (where Obama took his presidential oath) and the Folger Shakespeare Library (which hosts the Folger Theatre and their performances) are separated by two blocks only, in the central area of DC. Therefore, one may argue that the selection and interpretation of Shakespeare’s *The Winter's Tale* by Folger is very likely to have been marked by the “Obamania” and its slogans of hope and change.<sup>2</sup> The following brief review of the American context soon before Obama’s

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<sup>1</sup> Jaques’ line in *As You Like It* (Act II scene vii).

<sup>2</sup> The Folger first complete rehearsal of the production dates of 29<sup>th</sup> December 2008 (according to the final script made available to me), which means Obama had already been elected, but not yet inaugurated.

election attempts to offer insights on the possible relations between this context and the Folger playtext selection, interpretation, and conception.

James Carville argues that in the context of the American Presidential elections of 2008 people were concerned with an on-going general decline of the nation: “Americans [were] seeing their standard of living starting to slip away. They [were seeing] their national prestige decline. They [were seeing] the budget deficit growing” (82). This excerpt indicates an overall dissatisfaction of many Americans with the routes the country was taking. Indeed, David Gergen recalls that under the government of George W. Bush the U.S. had faced records of *lowest* economic growth and job increases (in fact, the economic decline and loss of jobs were serious). Gergen says also that in Bush’s years, while poverty went up, the average income went down significantly, and this “has left a lot of scars” in the population (95). Hence, Gergen holds that many considered Bush “a huge disappointment” (94), and claims that issues such as the economic troubles and the wars led to a widespread feeling that some changes would do the country good.

Christopher Arterton and William Greener, in turn, argue that Obama was successfully elected for conducting his campaign precisely under the themes of hope and change in the light of domestic policy matters regarding jobs, health care, taxes and the economy in general. As Arterton and Greener put it, Obama “himself embodied change,” while the president at the time, Bush, as well as the other candidates, Hillary Clinton and John McCain, “were all part of the [old] package” (176). Further, Arterton and Greener report that in polls a significant number of the electorate considered that “the candidate quality that mattered most [...] was ‘can bring change’” (176). This, again, clearly signals that things were not going well in the U.S., and for that reason change was desirable.

Something else that contributed to the feeling that it was a time for change was that in 2008 the American economic crisis developed much more deeply and a great world recession emerged. The crisis hit the U.S. in September that year, when the mega financial corporation Lehman Brothers filed for bankruptcy; the stock market started to descend, and the credit market froze. It is easily understandable, then, how the election was later won by the candidate considered the most apt to bring change. In fact, as Dennis W. Johnson puts it, 2008 was a year of a “transformational election” (2), motivated by the concern with the economy and jobs, the urge to change, and the hope that the country could get a second chance to recover from Bush’s era. Johnson offers a

broad perception of the context of 2008 U.S., worth to be quoted at length:

The Iraq war was still costing American and Iraqi lives and money; the war on terror was heating up in Afghanistan. The economy was in the doldrums, the subprime mortgage market hurt many, depressed home values, and frightened many more. The bruises of government incompetence had still not healed from the Katrina catastrophe. Month after month, the reputation and approval rating of President Bush plummeted, and his administration could not catch a break as bad news piled on top of bad news. Nearly nine out of ten Americans felt that the country was heading in the wrong direction, a sure indicator of profound discontent. (23)

Thus, there seems to be agreement among the authors that the U.S. in 2008 was in the mood for change, given the mostly unsatisfying results at the end of eight years of Bush's administration. The Wall Street meltdown and the wars were some of the factors that led the American people to look for new representation, new proposals, and allegedly different approaches. The decrease of other nations' regard for the U.S., aligned with the country's poor performance when it came to economy, health care, taxes, housing, and jobs, caused the emergence of hope: hope that past mistakes (from Bush's years) might be redeemed and that bad situations might be recovered; hope, also, that the country might have a new chance to get on a right track. Hope, in short, for restoration and renewal. And it is within this very context that Folger decided to stage *The Winter's Tale*. Inserted in this perspective of hope, it seems to me that the company interpreted the playtext as a way to develop a thematic construct focused on regeneration and renewal, or, in other words, as a way to, using theater, tell the American people that it was time for change and that a new generation can make things right.

In light of the country's general context and the possible relationship between this context and the Folger choice for and interpretation of *The Winter's Tale*, the conception the company developed to perform the playtext evidently aligns and continues with the perspective on faith, hope and optimism. I argue that the Folger production develops the conception of an *adult fairy tale* told in the form of a *bedtime storytelling* between a father and a son, the former telling the latter the story of *The Winter's Tale* itself (though sometimes it is the kid who reads from the book), in a sort of play-within-the-play

frame (this point is further explained later). Also, such a bedtime tale holds the feeling of a happy ending, as typical of fairy tales, and as desired by the audience in the American context to keep faith and hope alive. From this claim, the Folger conception of Shakespeare's text centers on the fictionality of a tale that, even though full of improbabilities, still deals with real feelings and themes.

The program's front cover features the image of a male figure with his back to the viewer, walking through a wintry path, under the words "Pray you sit by us, and tell 's a tale," words actually written by Shakespeare to be spoken by Hermione to Mamillius (the program's front cover is included in the Appendixes). The choice of this saying to appear on the cover of the program hints at the conception of the playtext developed by Folger as a story regarded as fiction, a tale for distraction, "a story to be told or read in front of a fire on a long winter's night" (Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine qtd. in the Folger program 16-17). Indeed, the program reprints a passage from the Folger Shakespeare Library's edition of *The Winter's Tale*, edited by Mowat and Werstine, worth quoting at length:

One of Shakespeare's very late plays, *The Winter's Tale* puts onstage a story so filled with improbabilities that the play occasionally seems amused at its own audacity. Near the story's end, as incredible details accumulate, one character says, 'This news which is called true is so like an old tale that the verity [i.e. the truth] of it is in strong suspicion.' He has just exclaimed, 'Such a deal of wonder is broken out within this hour that ballad makers [the tabloid writers of Shakespeare's day] cannot be able to express it.' As the 'old tale' spins to its remarkable conclusion, another character tells us that what we are about to see, 'Were it but told you, should be hooted at/Like an old tale.' The sense of the incredible and the wonderful seems built into the design of the play, as its title indicates. And the play's dialogue forces upon us an awareness of that title's significance. (qtd. in the Folger program 15, explanatory notes in the original)

Even though the Folger conception highlights the fictionality aspect in the shape of a bedtime story (emphasizing the words "tell us a tale" in the program's front cover), the performance's program cites Mowat and Werstine's work once more, saying that "[y]et the story the play tells is at the same time solidly grounded in the everyday [...]. The monstrous jealousy that descends upon Leontes [...] seems not



unfamiliar as an emotional state that can threaten anyone who loves someone else and who is thus vulnerable to loss and betrayal” (the Folger program 15-16). Hence, it seems that this *The Winter’s Tale* is simultaneously a way to get someone distracted from routine problems, i.e. a tale for leisure “in front of a fire,” and a reflection on mundane problems and issues specific to human relationships and emotions, which refer to each spectator, outside the theater event. Moreover, by presenting a story that shows errors being made and unmade, the production gives hope for the possibility of regeneration and renewal—in alignment with the overall feeling in the U.S. context.

Director Robison’s notes offered in the production’s program clearly indicate his view of Shakespeare’s playtext as a fairy tale (staged as a bedtime story): “I’ve wanted to direct *The Winter’s Tale* for some time, because it strikes me as the most mature of the problem plays. It’s an *adult fairy tale* of emotional depth, extreme behavior, and complex relationships” (6, emphasis added). While this citation confirms my claim about the conception being focused on fictionality, the rest of the director’s speech points to the themes of interest in the given circumstances. Robison says: “[t]he story is one of promise lost and hope found. *Change is in the air today. The Winter’s Tale* is Shakespeare’s most mature examination of that subject: from loss to hope, from sin to redemption, *from one generation to the next*” (6, emphasis added). This latter citation significantly shows that the director himself acknowledges the craving for renewal and the hope for change in the context at stake. This acknowledgment is highly significant in helping support my claim that there was strong influence of the context experienced by the U.S. at that time in the group’s choice, interpretation, and conception of *The Winter’s Tale*.

Finally, the dramaturg Michele Osherow also provides important remarks that hint at the company’s conception of *The Winter’s Tale* and the possible reasons and motivations behind it (i.e. in light of the context involved). According to Osherow, Robison’s conception “highlights the fairy-tale nature of this story” (6). Moreover, the dramaturg supports the claim that *The Winter’s Tale* by Folger is specifically an *adult* tale, which “underscores the difference between adult and children’s fairy tales. In adult fairy tales the true magic lies in human possibility” (7). So, having Folger conceive the playtext as a bedtime storytelling, Osherow hints that it is not a child’s bedtime story (only), but also a tale for adults, especially those who need to be hopeful and to remember that there shall be light at the end of the path—in other

words, a bedtime story told by adults to adults with real-world concerns, particularly in the given context described.

To be clear, the tale for adults framed as a bedtime storytelling (which presents a father and his child in pajamas, reading *The Winter's Tale* from a book) connects to the overall context of Obama's election in the sense that, for many Americans dissatisfied with the country's problematic situation at the time, it was time for change, as if leaving a sort of nightmare behind (that of the world recession and all its consequences, and the poor performance of the country in many matters after eight years of Bush's administration), and dreaming a new dream. In this sense, the Folger conception of a bedtime storytelling might aim at motivating such new dreams and hopes, and point to a new beginning or a new chapter in the country's history. Further, it indicates that time can heal errors and is, therefore, an important element in the production.

Several theater critics praised the conception of an adult fairy tale told in the form of a bedtime storytelling. Jane Horwitz, for instance, thinks that this conception enables the final restorations of the story, because fairy tales are supposed to end happily. Barbara Mackay, in turn, says that, with the conception developed, the director "suggest[s] that in fairy tales, improbable things happen and that fantasy can be easily mingled with fact." David Cannon's opinion is that the Folger production is an adult fairy tale *updated for modern audiences*, and its framing device of bedtime storytelling helps to handle the story's shifts in mood. As he puts it, the device "emphasizes the fairy tale aspect of this script and simplifies some of the action."

Susan Berlin, in turn, states that Shakespeare's original strong reliance on an atmosphere of fantasy and emotions in *The Winter's Tale* is enhanced by director Robison's device of producing it as a play-within-a-play, with the father-child prologue device. Finally, David Siegel defends that the adult bedtime storytelling developed by Folger creates a "modern dress production without pomp and circumstance [...], suffused with rich visual cues that give a delicate hand to the audience's appreciation of the road to salvation." He cites as relevant visual cues a child's stuffed bear "tenderly sitting on a wooden chair," and a fairy tale book that father and child handle throughout the production.

Glen Weldon, however, is less receptive to the conception and the father and child device. Weldon describes the creation of an outer play as "a framing device that ties the evening up in a pat little bow with the unintended effect of lowering the stakes rather precipitously." Weldon's reference to an unintended effect suggests he partly validates

the father and child frame. As for the conception of adult fairy tale (told in bedtime storytelling), he says:

I'm still not sold on the fairytale device, which robs the evening of a favorite bit (Time doesn't get the speaking part Shakespeare wrote for him/her/it), and as for the play's famous stage direction ("Exit, pursued by a bear"), it's still here, although the pivotal and tragic scene in which it features has been tweaked to align it more squarely with the bright Bohemian Rhapsody of the play's latter half. Cleverly tweaked, yes—but if you enjoy the first half's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, you won't be prepared for such a drastic key change.

My own view is that the conception works in effective alignment with a story full of “magical” improbabilities, with the themes it addresses, and with the stage decisions made by Folger, in that many of the devices developed by the company match their interpretation of Shakespeare's text as an adult fairy tale. In order to see this claim better, let us look at the stage production in more detail, observing and discussing selected scenes. Let us do so bearing in mind the overall context behind the production and the conception developed by the company, so as to analyze how the theatricalizing devices used by Folger enhance the effective communication of the company's conception and attempted thematic constructs of hope and renewal.

According to Mowat and Werstine (qtd. in the Folger program), *The Winter's Tale* “calls for some of Shakespeare's most daring pieces of stagecraft and pulls out all the stops at the end with a remarkable piece of theatrical artistry” (17). The inclusion of this note in the program signals the Folger interest not in avoiding, but quite on the contrary, in *exploring* the text's alleged improbabilities in a creative fashion. This point indicates the likelihood of foregrounding the kind of devices that interests me in this stage performance and research.

One of the most remarkable theatricalizing devices in the Folger staging is, precisely, the bedtime storytelling frame in a prologue not foreseen in the Bard's playtext. As mentioned before, the frame of an adult fairy tale, with the anticipation of a happy ending, matches the overall feeling of keeping hope alive, being thus relevant to the context of the staging. Additionally, the bedtime storytelling frame gives the production a play-within-the-play structure, being that the outer play consists of a father and his child sharing a bedtime story while the inner

play is the plot of *The Winter's Tale* itself. Director Robison uses the actors who play Antigonus and Mamillius to double these new roles. The father and child open the production in this prologue, with the child in his pajamas asking his father to tell a tale—anticipating a famous line of the text, in which Mamillius' mother, queen Hermione, asks her son to tell a story, and the child replies that a sad one is supposed to be best for winter. The visual hints that point to a bedtime storytelling are, apart from the pajamas, a teddy bear and a fairy tale book on stage, not to mention the boy's specific request to his father. The figure below portrays the device:



Fig. 10. The prologue (Folger)

It is interesting to note that the child actor (who is actually a girl) wears the blue pajamas shown above when playing the child from the outer play, and a blood-red costume when playing Mamillius. The visual difference in the young actor's costumes helps the spectator to avoid confusion and better to follow and understand this doubling. Unlike child/Mamillius, the actor playing the father and Antigonus wears the same black outfit for both characters, and this strategy allows him to "enter" the play-within-the-play easily; that is, in one moment the actor plays the father telling the story to the child, holding the fairy tale book, and without leaving the stage for a second he can stand up and

become/act as Antigonus. This happens, for example, in the staging of Antigonus' death. Regarding this scene, theater critic David Cannon says that "the famous 'Exit, pursued by a bear' stage direction is wonderfully pulled off." The next figure partly shows the Folger solution to such a famously troublesome yet marvelous stage direction:



Fig. 11. "Exit, pursued by a bear" (Folger)

The adult actor is next to the baby's basket, as Antigonus, but since his outfit is the same as that of the father from the outer play, what happens in the production is a quick merging of the two stories, the one told by a father at bedtime, and the one known as *The Winter's Tale*. The boy in his pajamas holds his teddy bear, and looks at the scene as if watching the story being narrated by his father, about a character alone in the wilderness with a basket containing a baby to be abandoned. Then, the child suddenly jumps and stands up, at the sound of a thunderstorm, and playfully chases his father/Antigonus with the teddy bear—this chasing stages the death of Antigonus, certainly in a less tragic and non-horrific way, and at the same time it suggests the interaction between father-narrator and son-listener of the bedtime story. After that chase the boy and the father (no longer Antigonus) sit again and take up the fairy tale book once more, so as to continue the reading. They act to be reading (with mimics) during the dialogue between the

Old Shepherd and the Clown, and at the end of the scene the father kisses the boy goodnight and the lights fade for the interval of the production. After the interval they reappear, and the father opens the book and reads out loud the passage of sixteen years being passed.

In the sequence just described, the actors perform the reading of the playtext (outer play) *and* the events that happen in the story being read (inner play)—as I see it, this is a theatricalizing device as it reminds the audience that all on stage is fictional, especially because two layers of fiction are staged and merge with each other, making the audience see double. Further, this merging between Robison’s added layer of story (father and son’s bedtime storytelling) with the events of *The Winter’s Tale* itself carries the sense of an “acted out” reality. What I mean is that the father could simply report to his son what happens, but since this is theater, the company decided to act out the moment with extensive use of theatrical gestures and artifice—after all, the actor (Antigonus/father) *acts* to be eaten by a bear only to, immediately after, sit down again and continue reading from a book.

The bear stage direction, written in such a concise way by Shakespeare, is broadly open to varied types of staging; that is, it can be presented in a violent manner, in a comic way, or in a “cute” way, for instance. In the case of Folger, it seems that the latter was the option, since the playful chase looks inconsequential precisely for being playful, and the Folger staging of it seems to diminish the horror of the situation (in which a fictional person *is* devoured to death by a wild animal). The decision to stage the bear scene in this way is significant in light of the thematic constructs focused on hope and optimism attempted by the Folger production. To be clear, the terror of the scene is reduced by it being staged in a charming, even sweet way. Hence, the way Folger stages the scene aligns with the production’s overall reduced focus on destruction—as discussed before, the production seems to aim at hope and renewal, so a horrific staging of the bear scene could disturb this attempted goal.

The next sequence to be discussed is Hermione’s trial. Arguably, Shakespeare himself offers the possibility for theatricalizing devices in this scene, in at least two ways. First, in creating a sort of ceremony within the play (a variation of metatheater, following Hornby, which constitutes the devices I approach, as discussed in the third chapter). Second, in Hermione’s speech about her own situation, she cries that such predicament “is more/Than history can pattern, though *devised/And played to take spectators*. For behold me,/[...] a great king’s

daughter./[...]/To prate and talk for life and honor *fore/Who please to come and hear*” (citation from the Folger final script). The added italics show the references to theatrical metaphors and to a “staged” reality in the story, implying Hermione’s awareness of her position as a subject being gazed by others (in a ceremony within the play). These elements, predicted in Shakespeare’s text, do appear as such in the staging by Folger, and constitute theatricalizing devices, but I am more interested in discussing the devices entirely designed by the company.

First, it is interesting to observe that Hermione is dressed as a prisoner in a modern costume, and such a visual decision probably has the effect on the audience of resonating familiar images of imprisoned people. One may go even further and claim that such familiar image can possibly enhance the spectators’ sympathetic attitude towards the wrongly accused queen, and urge in the audience the desire for justice. The visual decision of a modern dress costume for Hermione (and in fact, for the whole Sicilian cast) may work as a theatricalizing device precisely by the estrangement it causes in the spectator—the costumes are *so* real-life like and yet, shown on stage in a fictional world, they cause a sort of estrangement in the spectators, who face a staging so real and at the same time so fictional. Another interesting feature is the tied hands of Hermione, which limit her movements, and force her to place the strength of the defense on her own words, since she has difficulty in expressing herself in ways other than through speech. Again, this may enhance the feeling of sympathy (and uneasiness) on behalf of the spectators. The figure below shows the innocent queen in her trial:



Fig. 12. Hermione's trial (Folger)

Further on the trial scene, the most striking device used by Folger is the participation of the father—narrator of bedtime stories—and his son. When Leontes says “Break up the seals [of the Oracle] and read” it is neither Cleomenes nor Dion who read the message (as happens in the playtext), but rather it is the father involved in bedtime storytelling. The father reads the Oracle’s message from his fairy tale book, a prop from the outer play used in a scene of the inner play. Because he reads *from this object*, particularly, it is clear that the one reading the message is the father, not Antigonus himself (who, as we have seen, is played by the same actor with the same costume), nor the messengers written by Shakespeare or anyone from the inner play.

As the father reads that “Hermione is chaste, Polixenes blameless, Camillo a true subject, Leontes a jealous tyrant, his innocent babe truly begotten; and the King shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found,” the child from the prologue reacts, by screaming “The great Apollo!” To this, the child receives a tender smile by his father, in a scene aligned with the company’s conception of a bedtime



storytelling. It is interesting to notice that father and child are simultaneously *unacknowledged* by the Sicilian court, that is, Shakespeare's original characters do not interact with them, but obviously hear them, since the reading of the Oracle interferes in the trial itself and in the events that follow. In this way, this particular device is a theatricalizing one in its exploration of the theater medium itself, i.e. through the emphasis given on the theatrical quality of the staging, by merging the outer with the inner plays, by means of the insertion of two characters from the outer in the inner story.

The use made by Folger of the prologue's father and son in the trial scene is important also in terms of its meaning to the story—specifically concerning the themes of loss and reunion. On this note, let us first observe what theater reviewer Georgina Petronella says. Petronella praises the father-son's bedtime storytelling and participation throughout the production as an “ingenious” way to solve most of the alleged problems of the text, saying: “[t]he strange twists of the plot make sense, somehow, when dreamed into existence by an imaginative child during story-time.” More importantly, Petronella thinks that the double-casting of Zophia Pryzby as Mamillius and child and of Lawrence Redmond as Antigonus and father is intelligent, for “Antigonus and Mamillius, after all, are the only characters not to get a happy ending. [...] So it is somehow fitting that these two dead ones, these two lost ones, are the ones who wait and watch, flitting like ghosts among the living. The device works beautifully.”

Petronella is right to see this connection between Mamillius and Antigonus as being the only ones who do not participate in the joyful reunion and regeneration of the story's happy ending. The reviewer is then equally insightful to argue that it makes sense, then, that the actors who play these two characters double the father and child from the outer play. As I see it, Mamillius and Antigonus' participation in the inner play of *The Winter's Tale* does not end well, for they both die unexpectedly, and the fact that they “become” (double) the characters from the outer play can be seen as a paradigm of the whole issue of restoration and happy ending versus losses that cannot be recovered. To be clear, those who are lost and gone forever double the father and child who tell a story about other people who, in turn, do get reunited and end happily. Hence, the device of father (also Antigonus) and child (also Mamillius) reading the events that happen in the inner story (as in the trial, for example) is significant for its thematic implications concerning loss and reunion—the two who cannot be reunited are in the outer play,

unacknowledged by the others, telling the story of those who *can* be reunited.

Let us now move to the Folger opening of the Bohemian part. It is a whole new place and time (sixteen years later), which severely contrasts with Sicilia: in mood, more joyful, musical, and relaxed; in setting, less dark, with brighter skies and elements from nature; and in costume, not dark and white only, but extravagantly colorful. On this note, theater critic Barbara Mackay validates the contrasts, observing that lighting, set, costume, and music align with the play's moods (and changes of mood), contributing to the delivery of a "delicate, complicated text about trust, faith, redemption and reconciliation." Another critic, Susan Berlin, similarly praises these differences, arguing that sets, costumes and lighting effectively bridge the shifts between Sicilia and Bohemia. Critic Missy Frederick, in a similar tone, claims that the Folger production does "an excellent job of playing up the play's duality," exemplifying the claim with the visual contrasts between Sicilia ("appropriately atmospheric, with a dark, snow-flecked set") and Bohemia ("marked by sprouting sunflowers, brighter skies"). Figs. 13 and 14 show the contrasts:



Fig. 13. Sicilia (Folger)



Fig. 14. Bohemia (Folger)

The devices I am interested in are at stake in the Folger transition from Sicilia to Bohemia soon after the narrator/father reads this transition from the book. This kind of device can be noticed in the fact that the actors themselves transform the setting from a dark, somber Sicilia to a more lively and colorful Bohemia, in the opening of the sequence. They operate this transformation by entering the stage dancing and singing, with their colorful costumes of shepherds and shepherdesses, and displaying body movements that are noticeably less “angular” and more expansive than those shown in the tragic part. Then, these characters bring props to the stage (such as picnic and fruit baskets), and turn the columns of the auditorium from a black glass with stylized snowflakes to wallpaper that imitates a blue sky with clouds. They also throw flower’s petals on the floor.

That the actors themselves change the setting, explicitly to the gaze of the spectators, clearly reminds the audience members that they are attending a theatrical performance, in which settings need to change and somebody needs to perform the changes. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that the device of actors themselves changing the setting is somewhat common in modern Western theater, and in this sense it may not be a very startling technique. Still, I think that this fact does not invalidate this moment’s relevance in this production, especially

because the changing of sets as it is done by Folger suggests that *human agency* can play a role in issues of regeneration and healing times (that is, people, represented by the actors, can make things change!). The moment is also important because the differences between Sicilia and Bohemia are an issue connected to the Time-Truth relationship that I pay particular attention to. Let us take a look at this in more detail.

The sets in Sicilia are dark and black. The stage columns mime snowflakes, symbolizing winter. Meanwhile, the sets in Bohemia are bright, and the columns represent a clear sky in a bright day. Objects in Bohemia are colourful, and there is nature in the form of sunflowers in the background. The contrasting sets suggest the truth of the story itself: first it is a winter tragedy, and later, with the passage of time, it becomes a spring comedy with restoration, renewal, forgiveness, and ultimate happy ending (though with some losses not recovered). In this way, the visual elements used suggest that the passage of time, from wintry Sicilia to spring-like Bohemia, sixteen years later, holds the truth of the Folger staging, i.e. that after a tragedy, comedy and restoration shall take place. It is important that this truth arises from deliberate explorations of fictionality (regarding those devices in the changes of set, props and costumes), because this implies that the referred devices help tell the story and suggest its themes. Finally, this truth of the Folger production is relevant if we recall, again, that the group aimed at optimism and hope: hope that after the storm there shall be brighter days, a feeling shared in the real world of the American audience, as we recall, given the context of the U.S. at the time.

The next scene to be discussed is the reporting of Perdita's recovery as the lost baby and her reunion with Leontes. The Folger production stages this scene with the father and child from the outer play in a conversation with Autolycus. In this dialogue, these three characters discuss the revelation of Perdita's identity, while in Shakespeare's text such dialogue is assigned to three gentlemen. Autolycus asks the father about Leontes' reunion with Perdita, and the father, holding the fairy tale book from the prologue, tells about the Old Shepherd's adoption of the girl in the past. The father then acknowledges he does not know more about the events, and calls the child from the outer play to give more details. The boy enters and reads Shakespeare's lines from that fairy tale book: "The oracle is fulfilled: the King's daughter is found! Such a deal of wonder is broken out within this hour that story-makers cannot be able to express it." Next, the father, also referring to the book, now held by the child, reads more about the Oracle's fulfillment: "The

King, being ready to leap out of himself for joy of his found daughter, as if that joy were now become a loss, cries ‘O, thy mother, thy mother!’ then asks Bohemia forgiveness, then embraces his son-in-law, then he thanks the Old Shepherd, who stands by like a weather-bitten conduit of many kings’ reigns.” The next figure shows this dialogue:



Fig. 15. The reporting of Perdita’s recognition (Folger)

The entire interaction between Autolycus, from the inner play, with the father and child, who are devised by Folger and pertain to the outer play, as framed by the company, is a theatricalizing device exactly because these characters belong to different fictional worlds and merge these worlds for a moment. The interaction between characters from different fictions or different levels of staged reality is achievable only because the production itself addresses fictionality in its own conception (by being a bedtime storytelling). In this sense, the audience faces two levels of reality (that is, it sees double), and faces, moreover, the merging of the boundaries between these fictions. This clearly calls attention to the fictionality on stage, and to the theatrical medium in itself. Besides, the whole interaction between characters from the inner and outer plays suggests that the Folger performance further theatricalizes a text that in its original is already highly theatrical, with many references to its fictionality and improbability.

This reporting scene is connected to the themes of recovery of losses, since Perdita is found again, and of hope, in the sense that the Oracle gives hope, earlier, that the baby would be recovered, and because that recovery actually happens, the worth of keeping hope alive is proved valid, at least in the case of the baby. Further, the fact that this narration is made by the father and child is in alignment with the conception of a bedtime storytelling, as those who read the reporting from the book are the narrator of the bedtime story and his listener, who also becomes a narrator in the end. Considering that these father and child, as discussed before, double those two lost characters that cannot be recovered, it is telling that they narrate at this point the recovery of the baby, with its associated idea that one must always have hope. In other words, while Mamillius and Antigonus are really lost forever, the father and child are the ones to read the excerpt that some of the lost ones can be found. Finally, it is possible, once more, to connect this discussion to the context of the U.S., in that Folger seem to try to communicate that brighter days are ahead, and that people must believe and have hope for a better future.

Next, let us observe the statue scene as staged by Folger. Keeping her back to the audience, Hermione is at the center of the scene, and seems to be simultaneously guided by Paulina's words and in control of all the others' expectation and marvel. Until the "awakening" of the statue, the spectators face the expressions of all other characters but Hermione, and while she remains "statued," Leontes moves around, gazing at her, and goes to the floor, kneeling to the queen as if begging her to awake and forgive him. This clearly contrasts with the earlier trial scene, in which Leontes has his back to the audience and remains sitting, unmoving, while Hermione moves around (though with tied hands) and kneels. The figure below depicts the overall blocking of the characters in the beginning of the scene:



Fig. 16. The statue scene (Folger)

The statue scene by Folger presents a theatricalizing device in the constitution of an on-stage audience (something suggested in Shakespeare's playtext) witnessing a sort of "show" conducted by Paulina. Several characters play the role of audience, while Paulina directs the scene and Hermione has the leading role (even though she is back-turned to the regular, off-stage audience). Also, the whole scene has a sense of acted-out reality, not only by the fact that a fictional character *acts* to be a statue, but also due to several lines spoken in the scene (written by Shakespeare and maintained in the staging). For instance, Paulina introduces the statue with the words: "But here it is. Prepare/To see the life as lively mocked as ever/Still sleep mocked death," and this saying shows that Folger are aware of their production's own fictionality—as an actor plays a character who plays a statue, this character does more than life mocking sleep or death; it is art mocking art itself (i.e. Paulina's art mocking the art of the play as a whole). Moreover, the sense of theatricalizing devices in this scene is reinforced by Paulina's awareness of the on-stage audience and its expectations, telling them to awake their faith and to be patient, and by her call for music to "awake" Hermione.

The restoration of Hermione in the statue scene highlights the character's connection with the Time-Truth relationship that I am

interested in. Early in the story the queen is accused of adultery, is humiliated and exposed by her husband to the rest of the court, and is finally judged in a trial that holds no justice (since the accuser and judge are not only the same person, but also a person immediately affected by the events related to the accusation). Then, as time passes, the truth of Hermione's character is revealed: the Oracle's message teaches to all, at the end of the trial scene, that she is chaste, good, and innocent. In the Folger production, particularly, Hermione kneels down when being publicly accused by her husband, and does so once more at the trial. Later, as truth emerges and time passes, it is Leontes who appears kneeling on the floor when in penitence, accompanied by Paulina, and again at the statue scene, in which he kneels down but this time *to* Hermione, asking for her forgiveness and acknowledging her chastity and his errors. In this sense, the development of the story, aligned with the blocking itself provided by the Folger staging, help to portray and further highlight the fact that Hermione is good and innocent—and the passage of time is required for this truth of Hermione's character to emerge and be confirmed.

In the playtext, the story finishes as the reunited characters happily depart from Paulina's chapel. Yet, in the Folger theatrical performance, there is an extra scene fully created by the company, right after this departure. This very last image of the performance by Folger is moving and successful for many critics (some have even argued that it is more moving than the statue scene). After the characters leave, Leontes returns to the place where the statue was, maybe to close the chapel's door. He then encounters Mamillius, who has been dead for sixteen years at this time. Since the young actor appears with the same red costume in which Mamillius was last seen alive, we know it is Mamillius, not the child from the outer play. Kneeling on the floor, the kid offers his hand to his father. Leontes, visibly moved, approaches the boy, kneels down, and they embrace each other. Finally, with watery eyes, Leontes turns his back and leaves the stage, and the lights fade out. He cannot take Mamillius with him.

This visual interpolation by Folger can be seen to employ theatricalizing devices by exploring an artistic means, i.e. the fact that a character is actually able to see, touch and embrace a loved one long gone. In other words, Leontes not merely remembers his son in his mind: because this is theater, Leontes is actually able to reach out to his son for a last moment of tenderness and embrace. Thus, the scene explores the theater medium which enables such kind of multiple-



sensory memory of the character, something that does not happen as such in real life. The scene has been well-received by critics like Cannon, who says it gives the “often forgotten Mamillius” the chance for a final and “touching” appearance. Fig. 17 shows this last encounter:



Fig. 17. The final embrace between Leontes and Mamillius (Folger)

This final creation by the company is highly significant in terms of the themes discussed in the story. Mamillius is the personification of the loss, the sweet child who dies unexpectedly after a mysterious disease (probably motivated by the unhappiness concerning the terrible events that were happening in his family). He should not be seen again, and yet the Folger production places him as *the* last image before the final fading of lights. This appearance does two important things: one, it recalls the audience members that some losses cannot be unmade, and two, it tells that, in any case, regardless of the losses, problems, and pain, life must go on.

In this sense, it is possible to connect Mamillius’ final appearance to the context of the U.S. In the context surrounding Folger and their *The Winter’s Tale*, most people were looking forward to change and were dissatisfied with the routes the country was taking, as discussed before. From this perspective, it seems that Folger wanted to convey the idea that even though the recent past resulted in severe pains (in the case of the U.S., wars, loss of jobs, economic recession, frozen

credit market, etc.), the problems shall not be forgotten (like Mamillius is not forgotten), but it is necessary to move on and have hope that things will turn out better. In short, then, even though the re-appearance of Mamillius sadly recalls a loss that cannot be recovered, it also suggests that one must continue one's way, after one finds reconciliation with the past (being this reconciliation symbolized by the embrace between Mamillius and Leontes).

The production by Folger has been mostly well-received by the specialized audience. Cannon, for instance, thinks it is "a very satisfying production [...], [that] proves that fairy tales are not just for kids, and old tales can still speak to modern audiences." It is implied from this criticism that if this old tale does speak to the audience a story of restoration, it may develop a thematic construct beyond the artistic boundaries, thus addressing the spectators in their feelings for hope and better days. In other words, Cannon's opinion implies that Folger were probably successful in communicating their attempted thematic constructs to the American audience.

In a similar perspective, Jayne Blanchard states that the production highlights "the dreamy, fairy-tale aspects of the play," and that "[b]y the play's end, you find yourself warmed by *The Winter's Tale* and the idea that with belief and forgiveness, happy endings are plausible indeed." So, in spite of disliking what she thinks is a "less convincing" Bohemian part, Blanchard indicates that the "warmth" offered can be related not only to the production's themes but to the audience's own feelings regarding their contextual reality. In this case, again, it seems that the production's overall attempted thematic constructs and goals would have been achieved, causing effects on the real world through artistic means.

As I watched the Folger staging live *and* experienced first-hand the context of their performance (by being in the U.S. at the time of Obama's inauguration), I argue that the staging successfully connects the company's overall contextual circumstances and motivations to their decision of staging a story full of improbabilities (as a fairy tale) and also full of very real problems and feelings (such as loss and anxiety), suggesting hope and renewal through the frame of a magical tale. The fact that the company develop a fairy tale in the form of a bedtime storytelling being read to a child, but which is directed to adults (an "adult fairy tale," as stated by the company's dramaturg), signals the coexistence of the improbable and the real in the specific interpretation developed for the performance, and signals too, once again, the

optimistic perspectives aimed at being sent. In short, it seems to me that the conception and the way the performance unfolds (with the devices discussed) match and reinforce each other.

Further, I believe that the Folger production testifies in favor of the importance that the outside context can directly play on artistic decisions. To be clear, it was seen in the previous chapter that the English context did not seem to play such a strong role in the selected stagings by the RSC and Complicité. The discussion on *The Winter's Tale* by Folger, on the other hand, seems to be much more strongly tied to the outside circumstances at stake, as argued throughout this chapter. Thus, the analysis of the Folger production confirms the importance of looking at a production's given context, and it validates, also, the structure used in this study for the analysis of the performances—a structure centered on the notion of performance text, which simultaneously looks into the stage elements and the outside contextual factors.

**Chapter 6**  
**“Viro a Ampulheta e Salto a Minha Cena”<sup>1</sup>:**  
**Companhia Atores de Laura**

“We are time’s subjects.”<sup>2</sup>

Atores de Laura were formed in the city of Rio de Janeiro, in 1992, after an actors’ workshop at a cultural center named Laura Alvim (hence the name of the company). The directors at that time were Daniel Herz and Susanna Kruger (the former still directs the group which, since June 2009, has become a cooperative of gathered artists). Following their website, the group’s repertoire contains 15 productions, and they have always been dedicated to collective work and to centering on the actors as the vital components of the performances. According to Marlene Soares dos Santos (2006), the company have acquired prestige over the years and have accumulated “unanimous success and praise, many awards, and, sometimes, even rewarding box-office receipts” (“Tropics” 5). Still following Santos, their productions vary between collectively written plays and “universal classics” (“Tropics” 5) that include Mozart, Molière, Fernando Pessoa (fragments), and Shakespeare.

Specifically as regards Shakespeare, Atores de Laura first performed a collection of fragments from several of the Bard’s texts, titled *Sonhos Shakespearianos de uma Noite de Inverno ou Juliet’s Birthday* [*Shakespearean Dreams of a Winter’s Night or Juliet’s Birthday*] in 1995. Kruger says, in a testimony in the DVD of *O Conto do Inverno*, that staging these fragments left the group with a “craving” for a full Shakespearean playtext, and wondering if they would ever “have enough breath” for such endeavor (my translation). That endeavor came eventually, with their performance of *O Conto do Inverno*, which was conducted using the annotated translation<sup>3</sup> by José Roberto O’Shea.

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<sup>1</sup> Time’s line in *The Winter’s Tale* (Act IV scene i): “I turn my glass and give my scene such growing.” I have chosen to cite this verse as it appears in the translation by José Roberto O’Shea and as it is uttered in Atores de Laura’s staging (i.e. in Portuguese), in an attempt to honour both the awarded translation and the only non-English speaking performance under analysis. Even though I do not analyze the language translation issues (see note 3), I acknowledge the difficulties of approaching and appropriating such an eloquent text as Shakespeare’s in yet another language and context, and for this reason I praise both the translator and the company’s successful and valuable efforts.

<sup>2</sup> Hastings’ line in *Henry IV part 2* (Act I scene iii).

<sup>3</sup> *O Conto do Inverno*. Trans. José Roberto O’Shea. São Paulo: Iluminuras, 2006. Even though the production by Atores de Laura was performed in Brazilian Portuguese, I have decided not

*O Conto do Inverno* by Atores de Laura is the first professional theatrical performance of this text on the Brazilian stage, and the first staging of a full Shakespearean text by the referred company. According to Santos (the company's dramaturg for this production), the actors initially felt lost with the lack of previous references of stagings of *The Winter's Tale* in Brazil, and later this feeling actually turned into an advantage: "it was entirely possible to imprint the company's own mark on the first staging of the play in Brazil, as one actor remarked from the top of his youthful enthusiasm: 'We are making history!'" (Santos "Tropics" 8).

Atores de Laura's production is the last one discussed, in spite of the fact that, chronologically, the last production is actually the Folger one. The main reason to leave the Brazilian production to the end is the unique experience I have had with this particular performance: I did not watch it live in 2004-2005, but I had the opportunity to watch live a revived<sup>4</sup> production in July 2008 (with minor changes in the original casting). Moreover, I had access to a video recording of the original production (from 2004, with director's and actors' commentary), and Atores de Laura's is the only of the four productions that allowed me such mediatized resource. Besides, as with all the other performances selected, I could collect reviews and photographs, and like the Folger production I could rely on the final script too; but in addition to all that, with Atores de Laura I also had the chance to interview and interact with the cast, attend a rehearsal (for the revived staging of

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to address translation issues, first because the focus of my analysis has been the performance as a whole, and second because, surely, an adequate analysis of the translation would merit a study on its own. However, for my purpose here, I can say that O'Shea's annotated, verse translation, seeking as it does the construction of a text that is not unduly simplified or naturalized and that aims at a poetic register, reinforces the company's fairy-tale, non-life-like, if I may, theatricalized conception. O'Shea spells out such concerns about translation in "Dessacralizando o 'Verbo' Shakespeariano: Tradução Linguística e Cultural"; "Impossibilidades e Possibilidades: Análise da Performance Dramática"; "Performance e Inserção Cultural: *Antony and Cleopatra* e *Cymbeline, King of Britain* em Português"; and "Preface" (see References). Furthermore, O'Shea sent an e-mail letter to Atores de Laura (included in the Appendixes), discussing the challenges of appropriating a "classic" text in another language, time, place, and context. He also met with the director of the performance, Daniel Herz, to offer assistance with the preparation of the final (and shorter) text to be uttered on stage. In those meetings, Herz and O'Shea took into account both the fairy-tale conception developed for the staging and O'Shea's "stylized" translation. As a matter of fact, I am currently working on a study specifically focused on the performance by Atores de Laura vis-à-vis the translation by O'Shea.

<sup>4</sup> The analysis that follows is based on the original 2004 production, which I watched mediatized, because I am interested in the *original* circumstances, goals and motivations of the group to choose to stage this text in particular.

2008), and interview the co-director of the company at the time, Susanna Kruger (who also acts as Paulina).

In order to understand the conception and possible goals of this performance, it is valid to briefly look at the Brazilian contextual moment in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The period immediately before the opening of Atores de Laura's *O Conto do Inverno* in 2004 was remarkable to Brazil's own history, specifically as regards its political administration and leadership. The reason for that is the election, in October 2002, of the first Brazilian president "who can claim to be [a] genuine [member] of the working class" (Love 305). The period of interest to be contextualized in light of Atores de Laura's production involves the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (hereafter Lula) and his first eighteen months as president (2003-2004), before *O Conto do Inverno* opened in mid-2004.

One may claim that Lula's election signaled the urge for transformation in the country: "the population invested in the hope of changing due to the deterioration of employment and income, and to the subalternity that the social policies of the previous government were relegated" (Cavalcanti 14, my translation). It seems that people wanted change so deeply that Lula, the candidate previously defeated three times (1989, 1994, and 1998) finally succeeded in being elected. Indeed, Richard Bourne (2008) describes the rise of Lula in enthusiastic terms: "there was a carnival in Brasília; the poor, workers, students, and members of the social movements crowded the area around Congress [...] in a show of unity and celebration" (102). This saying suggests a context of high expectations for change, particularly for those of a poorer origin similar to the elected president's own. In addition, after being inaugurated, Lula explicitly stated that he had been elected to bring changes (Viana 42).

Cavalcanti reiterates that Lula's government (at least in the first term, the period of interest here), had a dual face: conservative in economic matters, and reformative in the political area. The conservative feature relates to the maintenance of economic stability, control of inflation rates, and flexible currency; whereas the reformative feature relates to the project of advancing social politics regarding redistribution of income, the valuing of citizenship, and the fight against social inequalities (through programs such as *Luz Para Todos*, *Bolsa Família*, *Fome Zero*, and others, implemented later in Lula's presidency). Yet, as Cavalcanti puts it, the initial times of Lula's government were more successful in terms of economy than of social

changes (the latter only effectively started to arise after the second year of Lula's term, i.e. in 2004).

While a mostly positive consensus was developed in favor of the worker president in his first year of government (Sader *et al* 80), the population's patience to wait for improvements in social fields soon reached its limit, and the high popularity of the government suffered some damage. It was difficult for the government to enable the country's growth given the still high (though controlled) inflation rate, and the rise of the country's debts and expenses, and at the same time guarantee priority to the social projects. Meanwhile, it was also hard for the population to see that a year after electing the president who came from the popular masses and who had said to have been elected in order to bring changes, real social change had not taken place yet. In fact, the workers' income was lower and the number of unemployed people was higher (Viana 21). As Bourne summarizes, "[o]ne of the difficulties for Lula was that, after his long struggle to the presidency, so much had been expected" (152). To put it shortly, the context in which Atores de Laura selected, prepared and staged *O Conto do Inverno* was marked by a feeling of expectations related to a strong desire for changes, mostly in the social area, and by the anxiety to see such changes happen.

In my interview with a few members of Atores de Laura, I specifically asked about the production's connections with the Brazilian socio-political context, and in general the answers were that the group was not much concerned about commenting on such things. Still, it seems that Atores de Laura were somehow influenced by the context in their choice of producing *O Conto do Inverno*. Even though the company disregarded making strong statements of this kind, my claim is that their production actually served as a moment of escape and relief (particularly to the poor performance of the social indexes), and this could be connected with the very conception developed (which I explore in the sequence). As observed, social indicators were going down before Lula took office, and continued this undesirable performance soon after that too, in the context of the company preparing their production.

In this sense, the production by Atores de Laura reached people at a moment of anxious wait for the improvements and changes promised by Lula, which did not seem to arrive soon. Hence, my claim is that whether it was planned or not, the production in mid-2004 brought, at a time of frustration and lack of patience, a staging with the thematic construct that with time problems are solved and change comes (for instance, a change from a tragedy to a comedy). Thus, *O Conto do*

*Inverno* demonstrates how after long suffering there shall be a happy ending; and in this sense, therefore, one may claim that this production in this specific context could work as a sort of painkiller to those spectators eager for and in need of the promised changes.

From this perspective, I hold that the conception developed by the company is to be understood as one that helps the spectators escape their reality and temporarily forget about their own problems. More specifically, the conception of *O Conto do Inverno* is that the story belongs to the realm of fairy tales, told by Atores de Laura to their audience *and to their actors themselves*. That is, the Shakespearean text is here conceived as a fable, an escape from reality, a fairy tale that one hears or sees with an awareness of its impossibility. Several hints suggest such a conception. Among the most important ones there are the statements of the directors and actors (found in the production's reviews or in personal talks with me). For instance, theater critic Bianca Tinoco quotes director Daniel Herz's own words, and he describes the performance as "a homage to the arrival of winter [and] to the pleasure of listening to and sharing stories" (my translation).

Other features that suggest the conception of *O Conto do Inverno* as a fairy tale are the make-up, the arena stage, and the way that the character Time is used throughout the production. On the first item, the make-up worn by most of the characters seems to imitate masks, in the sense that it denaturalizes the actors' physical appearance. Hence, the make-up, aligned with the costumes, distances the actors from real-world associations, and connects them instead with an atmosphere of fantasy, suggesting that the characters portrayed by those actors are not people from the ordinary world as the audience is, but actually are characters in a fairy tale. The two following figures (Paulina in fig. 18, Hermione and Polixenes in fig. 19) illustrate this "unlike real-life" make-up:





Fig. 18. The make-up of Paulina (A. de Laura)



Fig. 19. The make-up of Hermione and Polixenes (A. de Laura)

Further, it is important to remark that the make-up is used in the production to help the telling of the fairy tale, precisely by visually portraying the characters' social positioning in the plot. The nobles (kings Leontes and Polixenes, queen Hermione, and princes Mamillius and Florizel) have their faces fully painted in white (as shown in fig. 19), whereas their servants (Camillo, Paulina, Hermione's ladies, Antigonus) have only half the face painted in white (from the eyes up, as shown in fig. 18). Finally, the shepherds, Autolycus and the jailor do not have this kind of make-up at all. In short, the use of make-up facilitates for a spectator to see the relationships between the characters. Interestingly, the character Time has half the face painted in white, as if he too is or acts like one of the servants. Perdita, in turn, being a princess raised as shepherdess, has a very light painting on the whole face, and this simultaneously disguises her noble identity not known by herself and the shepherds, and implies (to the audience, perhaps), her royal birth in the middle of the rural people. Be that as it may, my point is that the make-up ranks the characters' social positioning, and helps to suggest the fairy tale conception by approximating the actors to an atmosphere of a fantastic and fable-like reality.

It is important to state that the two worlds that we know Perdita inhabits (rural and royal), which are suggested by the way her make-up is worn, as explored above, give the character a duality that asks for further commentary. Perdita's duality and personal trajectory in *O Conto do Inverno* are connected to the relationship between Time and Truth that interests me. As is known, this character, when a baby, is abandoned in the wilderness and rescued by an Old Shepherd, who raises her as a shepherdess. Sixteen years later, with the events developed in Bohemia and Perdita and Florizel's trip to the Sicilian court of Leontes, the truth of Perdita's identity is revealed, and the former shepherdess is restored to her royal family, being thus acknowledged as a princess. Clearly, then, Perdita's path in the story is connected to the idea that Truth is the daughter of Time, as her trajectory demonstrates the well-known old news that truth "always" emerges, sooner or later. Finally, the device of Perdita's make-up, while emphasizing fictionality and fantasy, paradoxically connects with the character's truth in the story; that is, Perdita's truth is suggested by the deliberate fictional make-up worn by the character, which creatively accommodates the character's duality.

The other feature that suggests the conception of a fairy-tale storytelling is the arena stage. With this kind of stage, *O Conto do*

*Inverno* places the audience on three “sides” of the acting area, whereas the fourth “side” that closes the circle is used by the actors themselves, and all (actors and audience) are on the same floor level. On this note, director Herz says (in Tinoco’s review) that the fact that the audience is all the time around the actors in the acting area increases the proximity between actors and spectators and motivates the spectators’ involvement with the story. I claim, therefore, that with the use of an arena stage it all becomes a highly theatricalized fairy tale storytelling that *both* actors and audience members attend to.

Further, Kruger says in her interview with me that the arena stage calls the actors into question the whole time, and makes actors and spectators fully participate in the event—not only the theater event, but also the event of a storytelling, at all times during the performance. Concerning the stage design chosen by the company, theater critic Macksen Luiz validates the placing of the spectators on the same level of the actors and on three “sides” of the arena, because this design enhances the “atmosphere of fantasy.” His claim, therefore, supports the performance’s conception. The next figure shows the arena stage used. Note the actors on the fourth “side” of the area, as if they too were spectators of the fairy tale storytelling:



Fig. 20. The arena acting area (Atores de Laura)

Those members of the company who do not participate in any given scene remain in the area designed for the actors, most of the times sitting, just like the audience members (as shown in fig. 20). This strongly suggests that when the actors are not in a scene they too listen to the fairy tale being told. Hence, the way the arena stage is used by Atores de Laura implies, once again, that the production is itself a fairy tale storytelling time (attended even by the actors, on specific occasions). The fact that actors are at times acting and at other times they seem to be just attending the storytelling is connected with the other aspect I mentioned that helps illuminate the fairy tale conception developed by Atores de Laura, namely, the use of the character Time. It is interesting to recall that theater critic Macksen Luiz claims that Time remains on a secondary level in the production, but I certainly disagree with such a claim. My view is that the treatment given to Time by Atores de Laura shows him as permeating the *whole* story, even before it begins, and at its end, too. Time is the “owner” and narrator of the story, the one who controls the storytelling event. In this way, Time is absolutely central, not secondary.

In Shakespeare’s text Time only “officially” appears (with an entrance stage direction), in the beginning of the fourth act, to deliver his speech as chorus. On this note, it is worth remembering that scholars like Ewbank (seen in chapter two) argue that the *theme* of Time and its developments is present all along the text, a point that I agree with. In any case, in Herz’s *O Conto do Inverno*, Time appears as a character *throughout* the production, and even before the first scene. Before the first scene, when spectators and cast are sitting in their designated areas, Time stands up from his chair, walks around the acting area holding a book, opens the book and exhibits it to all, as if announcing the beginning of the story and suggesting, simultaneously, that it is he, Time, who narrates<sup>5</sup> the story, creating a play-within-the-play. This invention by Atores de Laura reinforces that what is performed next is the telling of a fairy tale. It also highlights that the action of Time is crucial to the development of the tale, because Time *is* the storyteller, since he even holds the book. Figure 21 shows this narrator of *O Conto do Inverno*:

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<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to note that while Atores de Laura’s narrator is Time, in the performance by the RSC the story told is Mamillius’ darkling fantasy, and in the Folger production it is narrated by a father and his son in a bedtime storytelling frame, with a similar play-within-the-play structure, and the presence of a book, too.



Fig. 21. Time as narrator of the story (Atores de Laura)

To sum up, the conception developed by Atores de Laura is of a fairy tale storytelling, which both audience and actors attend to, and which is narrated by Time. This conception has been verified by statements of the company's directors, as well as by the uses of make-up, the arena stage and the character Time in the production. In light of this conception, let us see the uses of theatricalizing devices in the production, and their thematic significance and effects.

In the announcement of Mamillius' death, Atores de Laura use such devices by "fictionalizing" the staging that is *already* highly fictional (as a performance framed as a fairy tale distanced from real life). Hermione and Leontes are at the center, downstage, facing each other, whereas all other characters remain standing up in the background (their sitting area). Then, one of Hermione's ladies yells the news of Mamillius' death. As she yells this news, all actors remain "frozen" in the same positions described, and the young actor playing Mamillius leaves the back of the arena (where most of the cast is), and silently walks towards the opposite side of the stage area. In his walk, the boy silently passes through the space between the king and queen, his parents, and then through the audience members, until he leaves the arena completely, indicating in this way that he is gone forever (i.e. dead). Mamillius' death may even suggest that the boy has become a

ghost, literally passing through the living ones, as if leaving the (fictional) life and world.



Fig. 22. The death of Mamillius (Atores de Laura)



Fig. 23. The suffering at the death of Mamillius (Atores de Laura)

As I see it, in this scene the production's fictionality is made *more* fictional: such a farewell walk of a deceased person among the living reminds the audience that this *is* theater, not life (in a similar way as the final embrace between Leontes and Mamillius in the Folger production). Hence, the fiction of *O Conto do Inverno*, which is already distanced from real life due to the atmosphere of fairy tale, is further fictionalized by a visual interpolation that cannot actually happen in the real world. Besides, after Mamillius walks, Leontes and Hermione turn in slow motion to the boy's back and raise their arms as if to reach him; they do so without ever leaving their spot at the center of the stage (as demonstrated in fig. 23). These exaggerated gestures and the slow motion movement also highlight the theatricality of the moment, again suggesting the use of theatricalizing devices. Finally, the fact that all other characters remain "frozen" to see this walk and that the sound of an emphatic drum's beat reigns on stage are other indicators that the scene is theatrically distanced from real life.

At the same time, one may claim that the scene is very moving, in the sense that it seems able to cause a strong (and *real*) emotion in the audience members, in spite of it being fictional and highly theatrical. The referred devices, in making the scene "more fictional," and especially *in visually displaying that which is lost* (the child, ghost-like walking among the living), may be, precisely, the responsible agents for the emergence of this strong emotion. In other words, the highly fictional staging of the scene makes the spectator pause and actually *see* that which is being lost, and thus one may argue that those devices make the audience sense more strongly the feelings that such a loss can bring.

This, in fact, is an interesting paradox: theatricalizing devices, while enhancing *fictionality*, also cause *real* emotions and effects on the beholders. Such a paradox connects to the two-fold purpose of the devices, explored in chapters one and three, i.e. that these devices both celebrate the artistic means and medium of theater, *and* are able to comment on issues of the real world of the spectators. To be clear, specifically in the scene under debate, it is the use of this kind of devices that which enables the commentary on the suffering from losses. As Mamillius walks and "cannot" be reached nor stopped, and as his parents raise their arms to embrace him but "cannot" leave their spots (because they cannot prevent the child from dying, since the servant announces that the boy is already dead), the devices used in the scene enhance not only the fictionality but also the misery of those parents who lose a child—feelings of pain and suffering from the death of a

family member that may be known to many in the audience. In this sense, the scene simultaneously celebrates its medium (staging a death in a theatrical way) and comments on an issue that pertains to the spectators' real experiences and feelings.

The next use of the devices to be discussed involves the interval of the performance. Time appears holding his book and announces a clever interval of sixteen minutes (in which each minute, of course, represents a year passed in the plot). He then lies down on the floor and sleeps with his head on the *open* book, which perhaps indicates that the story keeps developing as he sleeps. Meanwhile, all the other members of the cast interact with the Brazilian spectators, offering them food and glasses of wine, and explaining what sheep-shearing is, in a cheerful atmosphere. This is a way to prepare the spectators for what comes next, in two senses. One is by signaling a change in the production's overall tone, which is about to become more relaxed and comic. The other is by offering background information on sheep-shearing: the Brazilian audience, especially in tropical Rio de Janeiro, where the show was staged, might not be familiar with it and, with this informative talk during the interval, the audience might better follow and appreciate the second half of the production. When the sixteen minutes are over, the cast and the regular spectators return to their seats, and Time "awakes." Time gets his book and walks in circles around the acting area, as if indicating its passage in the story. Finally, he stops at the center of the acting area and delivers his speech as chorus. The next figure shows Time in the interval:





Fig. 24. Time sleeps during the interval (Atores de Laura)

From Time's announcement of the interval to his delivery of the speech as chorus theatricalizing devices are employed in several ways. One is that the cast momentarily leaves aside their fairy tale roles as penitent king, wronged queen, servants and others, and chat with the spectators about the sheep-shearing. This shows that the real world of the audience and the fictional world of the characters are separated by the spectators' willing suspension of disbelief only. In other words, the interval with the informational talk about the production uses the device of exploring the convention of the audience's "buying the game" of the fictionality. In this sense, the interval reminds the spectators that behind the theater event there is a set up agreement between those who act and those who watch, and the way this interval is developed reminds all that what is taking place is, after all, a theatrical event. In addition, since the actors talk with the audience *precisely* about what is to happen on stage, they develop the technique of self-reference (described in chapter three), a variation of metatheater that makes theatricalizing devices emerge. By addressing the production itself, the actors recall its fictionality yet one more time, for the sheep-shearing relates strictly to the staged world, not to the spectators' reality at all.

Still another possibility of seeing the employment of the devices in this moment is that the announcement of the interval is made by a

character (Time): this announcement blurs the boundaries between fiction and non-fiction, since a character who exists in the *fictional* reality makes a statement that has an immediate effect on the *real* spectators in their real lives—that they can leave the auditorium space, go to the restroom, have a drink and chat with others for a while. Further, the fact that the actor pretends to sleep during the sixteen minutes, and delivers his lines (announcing the interval and later his own chorus) dressed in his costume as Time, and also places the open book as a pillow and displays it to the spectators at the end of the interval, reinforces the idea that it is not the actor who announces the interval, but Time himself. Hence, fictional and non-fictional realities meet and merge, with a fictional statement implying effects in the nonfictional world.

Further, these uses of Time in the interval are thematically significant. The fact that Time sleeps with the book open suggests that the story does not stop during the interval, and more importantly, that time itself never stops to pass and to act (since the story continues), even if he seems to be sleeping. This is in alignment with the conception of a fairy tale being told in storytelling and with Time as its narrator and “owner:” when the narrator sleeps, there is an interval, for the storytelling is interrupted (though the story itself is not). Additionally, the interval as developed by the company relates to the important theme of Truth being the daughter of Time. The “solutions” of the story and its developments towards those solutions are not revealed while Time sleeps; that is, the story does continue as he sleeps, but the truth of *O Conto do Inverno* is subjected to the fact that Time awakes and reveals what has passed (in his choric speech) and what comes next (in the staging itself, “controlled” by him).

Let us now look at the beginning of the sheep-shearing feast of *O Conto do Inverno*. A remarkable device used in the scene is the freezing of characters at their entrance to the feast. All participants of the sheep-shearing celebration (Perdita, Florizel, Clown, Old Shepherd, and other shepherds and shepherdesses) enter the acting area dancing to the sound of music and exhibiting themselves and their outfits to the audience, greeting one another and the spectators at the same time. Suddenly, the music stops and all characters freeze, in the middle of the arena stage, except for Perdita and Florizel, who dialogue and move about them. This technique resembles the one used several times in the RSC’s production previously analyzed, in which some characters freeze so that others are given emphasis.

It is telling that the only two characters who do not stop (freeze) are precisely Perdita and Florizel. I believe this happens not only because they are the ones who have the first lines to be delivered in the scene, but also because these two are somehow symbols of a new generation that emerges after sixteen years (Perdita is even the queen of the feast, a fact that suggests her potential to stand as a sort of leader). More importantly, the young couple embodies not only a new generation, but also the potential for *regeneration* from the tragedy developed before. That is to say, they represent a healing time, in which past errors are finally to be unmade and troubles solved. In this sense, the staging of the scene does not freeze those two characters that can, in a way, bring or represent a time for change—change from tragic developments to more joyful ones, as is indeed confirmed by the end of the story.

Next, as is known to the reader of *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare makes the reunion between Perdita and Leontes take place off stage. Atores de Laura keep this proposal, and use the same devices of Time as narrator and the freezing technique, again, for the reporting of this reunion. The cast is sitting in the actors' reserved area in the arena, and Time appears with his open book and turns a few pages, indicating that the story goes on off stage. As he does so, the cast repositions itself in the chairs, with Perdita in the center, holding hands with Paulina and Florizel, to the gaze of Leontes and in the presence of Polixenes, Camillo, lords, Clown and the Old Shepherd. All of them smile, signaling a happy reunion and resolution of problems (such as the recovery of the lost baby and of the friendship between the kings), and then they all freeze in this new blocking.

Time leaves the acting area, and Autolycus enters. He asks Cleomenes (who is in the freezing frame), about the events at court. Cleomenes leaves the frozen position to join the rogue and report the news, teaching Autolycus (as well as the audience) about the developments of the story. Cleomenes then calls Dion to participate in the dialogue (and the latter also leaves the frozen position). Time returns to the stage, and Dion reads *from Time's book* that Antigonus has been killed by a bear (this is a device that Folger developed too, with the father from the outer play of this production reading from a fairy tale book the Oracle's message). Finally, Cleomenes and Dion talk about the statue of Hermione and decide to see it, returning to the freezing frame. The two figures below illustrate this sequence—fig. 25 shows the lords

reporting the events in the foreground (with part of the cast seen frozen in the background); and fig. 26 depicts the freezing of the cast itself:



Fig. 25. Cleomenes and Dion report the events (Atores de Laura)



Fig. 26. The freezing technique (Atores de Laura)

In this scene, the presence of Time telling the story (by turning pages of the book and by showing Dion the excerpt in his book that tells about Antigonus), the freezing of part of the cast and the fact that two characters easily change from being in that frozen frame to interacting with Autolycus constitute theatricalizing devices in that these techniques remind the audience that what happens in the arena is not like real life, but instead a theatrical performance full of theatricality and emphasis on its fictionality. More importantly, the whole passage just described has thematic implications concerning the theme of the emergence of truth: the truths about the events that happened to Antigonus, of the real identity of Perdita, of the sincere apology of Leontes to Polixenes and the restoration of their friendship, etc. Thus, truth paradoxically arises from the fictionality of the scene.

This paradox is not only interesting but also helpful, particularly considering that it indicates that the devices I am investigating here can contribute to the development of attempted thematic constructs and meanings in the story and, consequently, contribute as well to the effects these meanings can have on the spectators and their attitudes, reasoning and ultimately lives and world. In short, then, the paradox that truth arises from deliberate fiction and fictionality, seen in the scene just discussed, validates the two-fold purpose I ascribed earlier to my approach to the devices, concerning both their celebration and exploration of the theater, its conventions and potentialities, and the communication to issues of the real world—as long as the devices connect to significant themes and meanings attempted to be generated by the production. In the reporting of some truths described above, the theatricalizing devices connect to the theme of Time helping to heal problems and reveal truths, and eventually restore and correct things, a theme that can be helpful for the audience members in their real world, especially in a context of anxious wait for promised changes, which was the case in Brazil (as discussed in the beginning of the chapter).

Theatricalizing devices are used also in the statue scene. First, as predicted in Shakespeare's text, there is the performance staged by Paulina, orchestrating the "resurrection" of Hermione, which puts the other actors as spectators in a sort of ceremony within the play. In Atores de Laura's staging, the actors are placed *as* audience members, sitting on the floor in front of the regular audience, as if joining them. Moreover, they whisper to each other about what they are watching, as if they (the actors) do not know what to expect. Also, they turn to the

regular spectators at times, and pretend to whisper to the real spectators too (not only to the fellow actors). In so doing, they reinforce the conception that the storytelling is attended to by all, actors and spectators. In short, these features develop a second level of fictionality, in which actors play characters who play the role of spectators, by attending a performance just like the ordinary spectators do. The next figure shows the statue, which is exposed to the gaze of real and fictional audiences (who, unfortunately, do not appear in the figure), and Paulina, the “director” of this performance (or ceremony within the play), giving directions for the awakening:



Fig. 27. The statue scene (Atores de Laura)

Another fine example of use of theatricalizing device in the statue scene takes place with a visual interpolation between Paulina and Time. The statue of Hermione (that is, Hermione herself, pretending to be a statue) is sitting in a chair covered with a curtain. The curtain is

removed by Paulina and put back again throughout the dialogue. At last, after Hermione finally displays herself as alive, Time appears in the scene and Paulina puts the curtain around him, and they embrace each other. Paulina then reads from the book Time holds that Hermione has been kept alive during the whole time. She and Time stare at each other as she says “*se vos contassem que ela estava viva, como de um velho conto zombarieis*” [“if you were told that she was alive, you would mock it as an old tale”], making a self-reference to the fact that the theatrical production itself *is* a fable (accordingly to the conception developed by the company).

Time, the narrator of the fictional story, belongs to another level of fictionality, as if he were outside the story, merely narrating it (i.e. as if Time belonged to an outer play whereas *O Conto do Inverno* itself were an inner play within the outer one, in a device similar to the one developed by the Folger performance). However, when Time and Paulina embrace each other, they blur the boundaries between the fictionality of Time’s telling the tale and the fictionality of the tale told itself. In this way, Time and Paulina cause the audience to see double and acknowledge a displacement of the fictional realities perceived—which could be seen as being two and then as becoming only one. Further, this blurring explores double levels of fictionality and consequently reminds the spectators of the artificiality of what they are attending to. In fact, other earlier instances in which Time interacts with the characters (e.g. when he hands his book for Mamillius to tell the sad tale; or when he uses his book as a tray for Camillo to put the cup with the poison that should be used to kill Polixenes) are also exemplary of the blurring of these different fictional levels.

Thematically, one may claim that the embrace between Paulina and Time signals the happy resolutions and the joyful and reconciliatory atmosphere at the close of the story. This is so because there is a fictional character (Paulina) and the fictional narrator of the story (Time) telling what happens in harmony—looking and smiling at each other, and collaboratively advancing the final events, as one holds the book for the other to read from it. Following this perspective, the embrace between Paulina and Time suggests that after a lot of trouble, suffering and years of separation, the characters finally find a reconciliatory time, that is, they are likely to enjoy the final developments of the story, which are brought about by its narrator. To be clear, this reconciliation is demonstrated by the happy embrace between one of those who are subjected to Time and Time himself.

At last, given the conception of the story as a fairy tale told in a storytelling event by the character Time, who holds his book and helps the actors throughout the production (as if helping them to tell *his* own story), the ending prepared by Atores de Laura necessarily involves their narrator, once again. After all characters leave the acting area, happily reunited, the actors go to the background of the arena, and stand there. Then, in the middle of the arena stands the character Time, alone with his book. He bows to the audience, being followed by the bowing of the cast in the background. After bowing, Time finally closes the book, while the audience applauds. The following figures depict this closing moment:



Fig. 28. The cast bows (Atores de Laura)





Fig. 29. Time closes the book (Atores de Laura)

That this ending presents theatricalizing devices should be evident by now, since the uses of Time in Atores de Laura's production have been discussed at length with other examples of his appearances. In any case, to be clear, Time signals that the fictional fable has reached its end, by closing his book and bowing for applause. This attitude clearly recalls the fact that the event attended is a theatrical one. Further, it is as if all, audience members and actors, can finally leave the storytelling and return to the real world, after Time closes its book, because the storytelling as well as the performance have finished.

Additionally, the character Time in Atores de Laura's performance is clearly connected to the issue of Truth: since the character is the narrator of the fable, and holds a book throughout the story, opening it in the beginning and closing it in the very last scene of the staging, it is strongly implied that such character knows the truths of the story—and in fact he shares them with the spectators, but the sharing is always under Time's own control. For instance, Time himself determines the beginning and ending of the interval, and he also assists the characters throughout the staging. Let me give some examples of this: at times, there are objects in the scenes that Time brings to or holds for the characters, and at other times, he helps the actors change their costumes. In this sense, Time helps the actors tell *his* own story, and consequently Time himself helps to advance the ultimate resolutions and

the truths behind it. So, in a way similar to what was stated by Nevill Coghill (chapter two), it seems that, indeed, if Time were not a character in the text, it would be necessary to invent him. In short, Time *is* central to the Brazilian production too, and his crucial role is aligned with the conception and the choices made by Atores de Laura throughout the staging.

The critical reception of the performance was highly favorable. Lionel Fischer exalts Atores de Laura for their “extreme care with everything that has to do with the spectacle.” According to Fischer, this care is inherent to the company, as their previous works, awards and gained prestige confirm. Fischer describes and compliments the visual appearance of the production as sober and creative, and values the director’s “intelligent” approach to “the opposed atmospheres” present in the story. Macksen Luiz, in turn, says that the playtext has tragic, farcical, and comic situations tied together, constituting a saga “rich in poetry and romance, with touches of the fantastic,” and in his opinion Atores de Laura value the “adventurous character” of the text. Bianca Tinoco, similarly, explicitly values the “magical” aspects of the production, and sees it as a fable “full of lyricism.”

Barbara Heliadora, however, presents a mixed review. She thinks that the actors understand the play and that Atores de Laura are committed to deal with the text’s “difficult charms.” Yet, while Heliadora praises the care with which the group approaches the story, she feels that the direction errs in framing it through artificiality. Apparently, for her, the conception of a fairy tale is faulty due to what she considers “troublesome artificial blocking” of the characters and “faces gratuitously painted in white” (*Cuidado*). Heliadora implies that the characters’ movements and make-up treated in this artificial way are problematic for distancing the characters from the worldly and believable. She says she would prefer “more humanized” characters, despite “the arbitrariness of the events” (*Cuidado*).

In short, Heliadora seems to disapprove of the conception developed by the group, and seems to miss some form of realism in the staging. I myself strongly disagree with this view. I think that there *is* realism, especially in the way certain *realistic* subject matters are *emphasized* in the performance—for instance, the focus on loss, at the staging of Mamillius’ death, in which all (spectators and characters) visually see that which is being lost. As for the fairy tale frame, specifically, I think the company’s conception is consistently aligned with the choices made on stage (such as the make-up, therefore *not*

“gratuitous;” the blocking, therefore *not* “troublesome artificial;” the uses of the character Time; the freezing technique; and the other many uses of theatricalizing devices).

Finally, I believe that Atores de Laura do a fine job in staging a playtext so full of improbabilities, precisely through the perspective of artificiality and the idea of the fantastic, with their fairy tale storytelling conception. This is so because, to me, this conception and approach make the alleged “improbabilities” more believable (within the context of a fantasy), and therefore they make the story communicate more efficiently to the audience on issues and themes that are important in addressing human nature and feelings, regardless of being told under a fictional frame.

## Chapter 7 Conclusion

“My words fly up, my thoughts remain below;  
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.”<sup>1</sup>

### 7.1 Four Plays at Play

As established in the introductory chapter, this research has been structured based on what Marco de Marinis calls “performance text.” More specifically, I have looked at general contextual facts that surround the selected theatrical productions, paying special attention to the political moments and specific concerns pertaining to the economy and the social life at those times and places, which I believe are all integrated in the shaping of a context’s overall atmosphere. At the same time, I have also concentrated on exploring specific stage elements used in the productions (which de Marinis calls co-textual features, *Semiotics* 80), observing matters such as the uses of make-up, gestures, settings, props, and characters’ interactions with one another and with the audience, as well as their blocking on stage.

My main purpose in establishing this kind of configuration (i.e. centered on both context and co-text) for the research has been to attempt to provide the most comprehensive picture and analysis of the productions possible. By looking at both what the productions did on stage *and* the circumstances in which these performances were designed and performed, I expect to have enhanced the understanding and analysis of the productions themselves and of why and how theatricalizing devices were used in each stage performance.

Concerning the issue of context, Susan Bassnett once said: “productions of Shakespeare today are translations of our own time” (66). Endorsing her claim, I believe that any playtext chosen to be performed has, in the very reason of its choice, something to say about its given time and context. Whether it has to do with themes dealt with in the text or with specific tastes and inclinations of a target audience, my view is that a text is never selected to be performed just because it is “nice.” I think there is always something more behind the choice, and it is the researcher’s role to investigate the possible connections between the text’s choice and its context, since they “translate” each other.

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<sup>1</sup> Claudius’ line in *Hamlet* (Act III scene iii).

Further, I agree that “part of the entertainment value of theater is its capacity to engage thought as well as feeling, to give life to the play of ideas” (Dawson “Secular” 85). This implies that the researcher must also pursue an understanding of the ideas that a company aims to give life to, and to research the thematic constructs attempted to be developed by a given performance within the circumstances of its overall atmosphere, feelings, tastes and concerns.

Even though *The Winter's Tale* is *not* regarded as one of the most politicized texts by Shakespeare<sup>2</sup>, still the stage performances analyzed here do relate to the feelings and concerns of their particular contexts, and therefore constitute “translations” of those given times (England in early 1990s, U.S. in late 2008 and early 2009, and Brazil around 2004). The English productions (by RSC and Complicité) were surrounded by a context of deep economic recession, acknowledged to have started in 1991. In a similar situation, the Folger production opened in early 2009 just a few months after a world recession, which emerged in September 2008. While the three productions themselves do not make explicit statements about/against the recessions or the reasons that led to them, still such a profound problem (and its consequences in daily life) is important to be taken into consideration due to the very likely impact it can have on the artists and spectators. In this sense, and given that the Bard's story in case can be read as one of keeping hope alive concerning the eventual restoration and regeneration for past errors, it makes sense that such a text as *The Winter's Tale* is staged at those specific contexts of England and U.S.

While the Brazilian performance was not developed in a context of a recession, the referred context was also a time of high expectations and hope for better days for many Brazilians, with the recent election of the first president come from popular masses (that is, from the working class), and after a full year of not seeing significant social improvements under this president's government. In this sense, one may argue that all four productions are concerned with hope and with establishing positive constructs about things getting fixed with time and that better days are ahead, in light of the specific economic and socio-political concerns

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<sup>2</sup> Even though *The Winter's Tale* touches on issues of class and social rank, for example, in the relationship between Polixenes and Perdita, or gender issues concerning the way Leontes and Antigonus speak of Paulina, amongst others instances and concerns, the label of “politicized texts” is usually ascribed to the Bard's historical plays and tragedies (see Leggatt, Alexander. *Shakespeare's Political Drama: The History Plays and the Roman Plays*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London, New York: Routledge, 2005).

experienced (this broad way of looking at the productions can surely be shared by other contexts and places). It is my claim, therefore, that the four companies are *not* interested in looking for Shakespeare's "original" or "essential" meanings—instead, they appropriate the playtext to *their* own objectives and interpretations, concerning the specific circumstances and overall feelings and atmospheres at stake, thus attempting to make the story meaningful to the audiences of their times.

Further, it must be observed that not all productions relate to their contexts in the same degrees: the Folger production is the only of the four stagings in which the performance's possible motivations and goals can more easily be connected to the outside circumstances. In this regard, I believe that the possibility of discussing with a production's director, dramaturg and actors about the group's motivations and objectives is an important tool to help see and establish these kinds of connections and their degree of relevance to the decisions regarding the performance. I think future research in the field should attempt to make these contacts and exchanges as much as possible. This, in fact, remains as a point of limitation for the present study: the only company with which I have succeeded in discussing these issues was the Brazilian one, and it would be important to have the same opportunity with the other groups, but unfortunately that was not possible.

Apart from contextual issues, the four productions seem to develop similar conceptions of the same text, in spite of the fact that they are located in different places and times. Atores de Laura organize their performance with an explicit focus on fictionality, framing it as a *fairy tale storytelling*, which is *told by Time* (with characters like Mamillius, Dion and Paulina reading passages from Time's book), and Folger, in a similar way, frame the production as a *bedtime storytelling* between a father (narrator) and his son, who belong to the outer play, whereas *The Winter's Tale* itself becomes an inner play. The RSC, in turn, design their production as a *child's fantasy*, i.e. also a conception associated with fictionality. As for Complicité, they provide an imaginative *saga of faith* that focuses on the *improbable* (as declared by director Arden), also presenting a fictional world that, at least at times, can be seen as strongly distanced from the real world (remember, for example, the bear image in this production, shown in fig. 8, p. 72).

Thus, with slighter or bigger differences between their conceptions, all four stagings explore *The Winter's Tale* as a tale separate from reality, i.e. as a fictional means which, however fictional,

also discusses themes that refer to any human being (such as feelings and relationships, like the feeling of loss, one's acknowledgment of one's own errors to others, and the hope for things to be set correctly). In short, the productions manage to both explore artificiality (starting from their conceptions and considering also the devices used), and address issues pertaining to the spectators' reality. In this regard, one may claim that the emphasis on fictionality and fantasy can also work as a turning away from the real context and the economic concerns, and that turning away depends only on how each spectator approaches the staging—after all, the stagings hold both artificiality and connections with the reality of the spectators.

Finally, it is important to state that the fictionality explored in the four performances does not impeach the presence of realistic traits; on the contrary, fictionality and realistic traits coexist and collaborate with each other so as to favor the thematic development of the productions. All four stagings show such realistic traits (in greater or smaller degrees), which can be found in the visual elements on the scene (e.g. the costumes in the RSC's and in the Folger productions), in the strong emphasis on a certain emotion and feeling (like the death of Mamillius in Atores de Laura's production), or in the themes the productions seem to advance (such as those of hope and renewal).

It seems, however, that the performances by Atores de Laura and *Complicité* explore their own fictionality in more explicit ways, whereas the productions by the RSC and Folger tend to look more realistic, visually speaking. While the RSC's use of a gauze box is highly fictional, just as the omnipresence in the Folger production of the father and child from the outer play in the inner play is fictional, my claim is that Atores de Laura, visually speaking, resemble a fantasy more than the other productions, and *Complicité*, likewise (and judging by the bear scene and the search for the lost sheep, shown in figs. 8 and 9, p. 72 and p. 74, respectively), also seem to acknowledge and play more comfortably with the self-confessed fictionality of their way of doing theater.

Unfortunately, I cannot go further in detailing the ways in which the RSC's production looks more real-life like and *Complicité*'s looks more theatrical, due to the fact that I could only rely on photographs and descriptions, since I have not been able to watch those performances. At the same time, I feel comfortable to state that Atores de Laura explore their production's own fictionality a lot more than the Folger production does (in that the Folger staging tends to look more

real-life like), because I did watch these two performances (the Brazilian one in video recording, and also live but in a revived version).

This fact constitutes another issue to be addressed at this time: the analysis of theatrical performances can be problematic at times, since it is always subjected to the records available, and occasionally a given performance may have significantly fewer registers available than another staging. The fact that in the present study two productions were analyzed drawing *only* on photographs and written registers (interviews, prompt book, critic reviews) certainly limits my ability to further explore and comment on those performances *in comparison* with the two others that I *could* watch live. At the same time, it is important to celebrate the fact that, with all the efforts and limitations taken into consideration, still the two kinds of work defined by Pavis were successfully conducted in this research, that is, study of stagings both by performance analysis and by theater historiography.

## 7.2 Theatricalizing Devices

As described before, my approach considers that theatricalizing devices emerge from or are generated by elements pertaining to *theatricality* and *metatheater* (and the latter's variations, established by Hornby as the play-within-the-play, the ceremony within the play, the role-playing within the role, literary and real-life references, and self-references). I have acknowledged that *other* areas of study such as allegory, mimesis, parody, and symbolism, for instance, could also generate the referred devices. Yet, it has been my decision to limit the scope (to theatricality and metatheater only), in order to gain focus and so as to avoid superficiality in the treatment of these other areas that deserve much more attention. Within the scope defined, I investigated the literatures on theatricality and metatheater (in chapter three) and indicated the specific elements from these issues that I see as generating or constituting the devices under debate.

This study has established that theatricalizing devices draw attention to the fictionality and artificiality of what is displayed on stage. The devices, in other words, work as reminders to the audience that what the spectators attend to is theater, not real life. Hence, they are tools or strategies developed on stage that highlight or refer to a quality or convention of the theatrical medium, a kind of strategy that can be developed through specific interactions between actors or among actors and spectators; by certain uses of props, blocking, gestures, and make-up; by lines spoken (such as “no one dies halfway through the last act,”



cited by Hornby 104), amongst others. Further, from this perspective that the devices emphasize the fictionality on stage, it follows that productions considered “realistic” shall employ fewer theatricalizing devices, whereas productions that appear more distanced from ordinary life, perhaps with a sort of “magic aura” or a fairy-tale kind of aspect in the setting and overall appearance and approach to the text, are likely to employ and explore theatricalizing devices more.

In light of these insights on the meaning and uses of the devices proposed, I believe that the playtexts written by Shakespeare are in themselves (and in stage productions) great sources for possible explorations of this kind of device. I hold this claim recalling what theater critic Barbara Heliadora once said: “[t]he main reason why I cannot admit this distinction between a literary and a theatrical Shakespeare is that he never wrote but for the stage” (“Reasons” 229). It is my understanding that, if all of Shakespeare’s drama was really intended for the stage, as is acknowledged by Heliadora and other scholars of the Bard’s legacy and life, then all his playtexts offer room for theatricalizing devices that bring into play specificities of the theater medium itself and that explore a story’s and a staging’s own fictionality. The extent to which the devices are explored or not in subsequent theatrical productions of the Bard’s texts will, of course, vary and depend on the purposes of each company. Still, it seems to me that Shakespeare’s texts are extremely inviting to be approached in terms of theatricalizing devices. To me, it is almost an inevitable temptation to look at Shakespeare from this angle.

Another relevant point to be discussed regarding my approach is that, as exposed earlier, these devices have a two-fold purpose: they can be useful both for a celebration/exploration of the medium of theater *and* for a commentary on real world issues and issues pertaining to human beings’ existence and constitution. Regarding the theater part, what I mean is that the devices can explore and comment on the specificities of the theater medium as well as on its qualities, beauty, conventions, and powers. Such potential of the devices can be seen, for example, in the new characters of father and child from the Folger production. The use of that father and child in bedtime storytelling (from an outer play) throughout the staging of the inner play (i.e. *The Winter’s Tale* itself), in which these characters participate in events from the inner play, explores the theatrical means of different levels of fictionality that blur each other. This happens, for instance, at the end of Hermione’s trial, when the father reads the Oracle’s message from the

fairy tale book, and the reading has consequences to the characters of the inner play. It happens again when the father acts as a narrator, and soon after impersonates Antigonus disposing the baby Perdita, being then immediately chased by the child's teddy bear and returning to the role of father. In short, these two characters created by Folger and the way they are used in this production explore the theater quality and capacity to accommodate different levels of story on the same stage, and merge them at will, thus commenting on the medium of theater.

Another example of the devices commenting on the art of theater is the use of the character Time in Atores de Laura's production. Time contributes to the advancement of the plot (by bringing the story's book for other characters to read from it what has happened, for example), and also works as a helper to the fellow actors. He helps the other actors change costumes, and brings and takes away certain props as needed. Time also announces the interval of sixteen minutes/years and marks the beginning and ending of both the interval and the production itself. In this way, this character seems to comment on the fact that theater is made live (with intervals), and made by real people who help one another for the success of the event. The fact that the actors in Atores de Laura's production interact with the spectators during the interval, offering wine and explaining what a sheep-shearing feast is, is also a commentary on the art of theater given that such moves highlight the complicity required between actors and audience for the theatrical event to work.

Next, regarding the devices and their other purpose of helping communicate on issues pertaining to the real world of the spectators, it is valid to recall Hornby. Following Hornby, "[p]lays never *directly* cause anything. They do, however, provide the means for examining the ideologies by which we live" (64, emphasis in the original). From this view, theater is a means not only to entertain but also to indirectly and/or subtly cause effects of the real, precisely by making the audience *reason* and *reflect* on matters that pertain to the reality outside the theater building (a claim that echoes Schechner's ideas on theater's entertainment and efficacy potentials). Besides, as claimed by Hornby, the theater medium itself makes the audience re-examine not a famous playtext or the themes at stake in it, but, rather, re-examine "the way in which [the spectators] perceive those issues" (45). From this perspective, theater has to do with real life and with every human being that lives in the world: "all plays, however 'unrealistic,' are semiological devices for categorizing and measuring life indirectly" (Hornby 14).

In this way, while theatricalizing devices distance the staging from the notion of realism, by emphasizing fictionality and artificiality (as if saying that “this is theater, *not* life”), I submit that such devices are still able to deeply communicate with and express the real world in the manner implied by my reading of Hornby. In the production by the RSC, for instance, Peter Holland recalls that one of the items Autolycus steals from the Clown is a condom, which is then exhibited to the audience. This quick moment works as a theatricalizing device in its interruption of the fictional world with the exhibition of an element usually associated to real, contemporary life only (that is, it causes estrangement on the audience). More importantly, this may have been a serious reference by the RSC to the emergent awareness of the AIDS problem, if we take into account the report by David Childs on England at that time: “[f]ear of the rising tide of deaths from AIDS in the 1980s forced the government to initiate an educational campaign on television in 1988. The condom was praised nightly in a variety of ways as a way of ensuring ‘safe sex’” (245). Hence, the campaign initiated on television in 1988 may have found reinforcement on theater a few years later (1992), with the RSC’s *Winter’s Tale*. In short, I see this as an example of devices working to comment on the real world and its concerns.

Another example can be drawn from *Complicité*’s production. Theater critic Michael Billington complains that the line expressing the theme of “things dying” and “things new-born” (designed to be said by the Old Shepherd holding the baby found, while listening to the Clown’s account of the death of Antigonus and the mariners) is obscured by a sort of entertainment routine (“vaudevillian shtick”) and “jokes about the sponsors” (Billington’s expressions). Those jokes constitute theatricalizing device in that they make a real-life reference in the fictional world presented on stage (that is, a variation of metatheater), and in this sense they blur, in a way, the audience’s reality and the fictional reality of the characters. Also, in my view, such jokes about the production’s sponsors exemplify the fact that the devices can be used to address the real world in the sense that the references may be a commentary on the fact that all is business in today’s world (not only in the arts, of course), and even theater cannot escape capitalism in order to survive.

To be clear, the point is that theater, like other forms of art, needs the accompaniment of investors’ money in the form of sponsorship, so that the production itself (with its necessary expenses

with setting, costumes, make-up, training and rehearsal period, etc), its advertisement and marketing campaign, and even the income of the members of the company and the costs for the production's tour to other places are dependent on this kind of funds. In this sense, references to sponsors may be a mocking commentary on this reality (a reality that the artists would probably wish were different). In addition, the fact that a production (like *Complicité's*) has sponsors behind it may even alter the production itself—for example, with the quick inclusion of explicit advertising in the shape of such jokes, a sort of “necessary evil”. In the end, my point is that *Complicité's* jokes about their sponsors are theatricalizing devices that possibly serve the purpose of referring to the real world of the spectators, by making a sort of mocking criticism of the monetary demands that inevitably accompany an artistic work.

Next, looking at the approach proposed in this study, one could criticize the fact that some devices should better be called “*anti-theatricalizing devices*.” This possible criticism has to do with the fact that, if theatricalizing devices highlight fictionality, then those moments in which the characters blur the boundaries between real and fictional worlds could be considered anti-theatricalizing, in that they do the *opposite* of emphasizing fictionality and artificiality. Rather, one could claim, the blurring of these worlds, as observed in Atores de Laura's interval, for instance, in which actors and spectators chat (about an event to come in the production), can actually approximate the fictional characters to their real selves *as actors*, thus suggesting the actors' *reality* (*not* their fictionality).

I understand such possible criticism to the approach, but I want to argue that even moments that could be read as anti-theatricalizing still work to theatricalize anyway. This is so because when (allegedly) anti-theatricalizing moments are at stake, they relate to reality itself (the reality experienced by the audience), at the same time as *still belonging* to the realm of fiction. I mean, even when a supposedly anti-theatricalizing device distances the staging from its artificiality (instead of distancing it from realism), it continues to be *within* the fictional world, as a part of that work of art that *is* theater, not life. Hence, the *anti-theatricalizing* can actually be understood as theatricalizing too, in the sense that it touches on the reality while *not being reality itself*, but still part of a fiction. Finally, the audience knows, or at least expects that such interruption of the fictional, or the blurring between fictional and real world is to be ceased soon, because the fictional plot needs to continue its path.

Another possible criticism to the approach developed in this study could be related to the limited scope of theories that generate the devices, since I focused only on metatheater (and its variations) and theatricality. It is certainly true that the approach would benefit from an investigation of which elements from allegorical studies, mimesis, symbolism and other areas also make the referred devices emerge. In fact, I believe that the theatricalizing devices approach as proposed in this study can be developed in a more encompassing way, and this remains as a suggestion for future research: the further development of the approach could be achieved by taking into consideration more possibilities than just metatheater and theatricality.

### **7.3 Time, Truth, and the Fictionality Paradox**

The final topic to be discussed in this conclusion section has to do with the theme of Time as father of Truth, and the paradox that truth emerges by means of the fictionality of the theatricalizing devices. Even though the playtext and its stage productions can be read from several points of view, still, I believe that the theme of Time as father of Truth is one of the most relevant concerns that can emerge. In my view, Time is absolutely vital in the advancement of the plot of *The Winter's Tale* and some of the themes that the story can touch on, such as those of the truth of a person's character, regeneration, renewal, things dying and being reborn, penitence, regret, the power of forgiveness, and the continuing faith and hope, to name a few. From this perspective, one may claim that the Time-Truth factor can be connected with specific concerns expressed by the selected companies' contexts and possible goals with producing *The Winter's Tale*. One example of this is the development of an optimistic perspective that time heals all and that things will eventually be sorted out.

In the same way as Time can be so central to the plot and to the possible thematic constructs the playtext and its performances can create, I hold that Time is crucial, too, to the development of the stage productions themselves. This is so given that the surrounding circumstances and contexts that inform those productions and that are informed by them are *also* subjected to the Time factor. To be clear, according to a context at a given time and place, a stage production aims at certain goals and is motivated by specific issues; and after time passes, other productions may have different perspectives and other interests in their stagings of the same text (or of other texts that emerge as more relevant or useful). In this sense, I propose that nothing resists

Time: the story of *The Winter's Tale* itself is open to the reading that Time reaches everyone and everything, and that Time is related to several different themes of the plot; and the theatrical productions of this (and any) text also depend on and are marked by specificities of their own times of production.

Finally, I want to focus on the paradox that, in the stagings by the RSC, Folger, Complicité and Atores de Laura, the Truths of the story emerge, many times, precisely from the deliberate fiction of the devices I have investigated. In other words, the fictionality enhanced by the use of those devices and the fact that those on stage are actors following a rehearsed scheme and with specific objectives in mind work together to develop and advance the themes of the story and its revelations (that Hermione is chaste, that Perdita is actually of royal birth, that the tragedy needs time to be reversed into a happy ending, that the Oracle's hopeful message that the lost one can be recovered is eventually fulfilled, etc.). It is clever that in the productions analyzed truths emerge *precisely* from premeditated and intentional fiction because this confirms that the devices, when used appropriately and intelligently (that is, not merely as a "charming" technique that does not add anything, thematically speaking), can connect with the conception and interpretation given by the company to the text, and, therefore, can significantly contribute to the telling of a story.

#### **7.4 A Final Word**

*The Winter's Tale* as a playtext and in the specific stage performances analyzed in this study really makes one think about real-life themes and themes related to the human subject. In this way, I believe that it is a highly relevant text for today's audiences in general, who seem to be in need of more reflection and evaluation of human behavior and society. At the same time, I agree with Marlene Soares dos Santos, who claims that the story of *The Winter's Tale* is "about the universe of fiction" ("Introdução" 20, my translation). In my view, ultimately, *The Winter's Tale* is theater *about* theater, and the stage performances of this text discussed in the present research testify to this point, precisely given their extensive employment of theatricalizing devices. Yet, these performances, to reiterate once again, also significantly address human reality and real life, by use of those devices, as well as concerns that are relevant to any human being who experiences feelings such as those of loss and hope, extensively treated in the productions analyzed.

All in all, I should like to recall Luigi Pirandello's words that start this dissertation: "This is the theater! Our motto is: truth up to a certain point!" (101). It seems that Pirandello's fictional director, who utters this line in *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, knows that theater is always a fiction, even if it vehemently expresses reality. Further, Pirandello's fictional director also seems familiar with the devices I here name as "theatricalizing," in that these devices are used to discuss issues of the real world and truths about it and about the story itself, but such truths go only up to a certain point, for there *always* exists artifice, theatricality and deliberate fiction behind the theater. I hope that the analysis conducted of four stage productions of *The Winter's Tale* was able to demonstrate this—we are mocked by the same art that refines our views of reality and of our very selves.

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**APPENDIX A**

Royal Shakespeare Company, *The Winter's Tale*, 1992

Production team:

Director: Adrian Noble

Designer: Anthony Ward

Lighting designer: Chris Parry

Music: Shaun Davey

Costume designer: Anthony Ward

Movement: Sue Lefton

Assistant director: Piers Ibbotson

Stage manager: Michael Dembowicz

Assistant stage manager: Chris Savage

Deputy stage manager: Sheonagh Darby

Design assistant: Rob Howell

Music director: John Woolf

Sound: Paul Slocombe

Company voice work: Cicely Berry, Andrew Wade

Dialect coach: Charmian Hoare

Cast (in alphabetical order):

Samantha Bond (Hermione)

John Bott (Archidamus)

Alan Cox (Florizel)

Jeffery Dench (Old Shepherd)

Marc Elliott (Mamillius)

Roger Frost (Gaoler)

Phyllida Hancock (Perdita)

John Hodgkinson (Lord)

Stephanie Jacob (Mopsa)

Andrew Jarvis (Antigonus)

Paul Jesson (Polixenes)

Gemma Jones (Paulina)

Barnaby Kay (Servant)

Richard McCabe (Autolycus)

Catherine Mears (Lady)

John Nettles (Leontes)

Pearce Quigley (Cleomenes)

Jenna Russell (Dorcas)

Ian Taylor (Mariner / Lord)

Graham Turner (Young Shepherd)

Angela Vale (Emilia)

James Walker (Dion)

Stefan Weclawek (Mamillius)

Benjamin Whitrow (Camillo)

Guy Williams (Lord)

**APPENDIX B**

Théâtre de la Complicité, *The Winter's Tale*, 1992

Production team:

Director: Annabel Arden

Designer: Ariane Gastambide

Lighting designer: Ben Ormerod

Sound designer / Sound operator: Christopher Shutt

Movement research and training: Monika Pagneux

Associate director: Annie Castledine

Producer: Catherine Reiser

Assistant to the producer: Claudia Courtis

Assistant to the directors: Jennie Darnell

Assistant designer: Andrew Walsh

Assistant to the designer: Heidi Luker

Music research: Gerard McBurney

Scenic painter: Erin Sorenson

Set construction: Phil Seddon

Chandelier and props maker: Jesse Spencer

Stage management placements: Paul Flexton, Abby Jameson

Costumes: Willy Burt and the students of the London College of Fashion

Costume supervisors: Maria Maguire, Karen Schuck

Perdita's costume: Sarah Ford

Original design ideas: Rae Smith (jacket coats), Ceri Isaacs (Sicilia cloth)

Teeth designed by Haynes and Kulp

Projects co-ordinator: Julie Batty

Company stage manager: Tom Albu

Stage manager: Jo Edkins

Financial manager: Joy Schoenborn

Cast (in alphabetical order):

Lilo Baur (Perdita / Sicilian Lady)

Kathryn Hunter (Mamillius / Paulina / Time / Old Shepherd)

Mark Lewis Jones (Antigonus / Florizel)

Marcello Magni (Autolycus / Gaoler / Mariner / Bohemian Lord)

Simon McBurney (Leontes / Clown)

Dhobi Oparei (Polixenes / Cleomenes)

Vicki Pepperdine (Emilia / Mopsa)

Gabrielle Reidy (Hermione / Dorcas)

Leo Wringer (Camillo / Dion)

**APPENDIX C**

Folger Theatre, *The Winter's Tale*, 2009

Production team:

Director: Blake Robison

Resident dramaturg: Michele Osherow

Scenic designer: James Kronzer

Lighting designer: Kenton Yeager

Sound designer / Original music: Matthew M. Nielson

Costume designer: Kate Turner-Walker

Choreographer: Karma Camp

Artistic producer: Janet Alexander Griffin

Assistant artistic producer: Beth Emelson

General manager: Giuseppe DeBartolo

Theater production manager: Charles Flye

Associate director: Adam Knight

Assistant director: Jay D. Brock

Technical assistant: Andrew Payton

General management / Casting assistant: Lisa Forrest

Production stage manager: Che Wernsman

Assistant stage manager: Miriam Yoder

Production assistant: Brian Sekinger

Dance captain: Saskia de Vries

Scenic charge: Marissa “Za” Johns

Scenery construction / Installation: TSA, Inc

Wardrobe manager: Kate Turner-Walker

Costume assistant: Rachel Apatoff

Wardrobe: Amy Carr

Costume intern: Tracy Moyers

Stitcher: Brandee Mathies

Assistant lighting designer: Catherine Girardi

Electricians: Amber Meade (master electrician), Brain Allard, Dani Bae, Jessie Crain, Sarah Peterson, Paul Villalovos

Light board operator: Sarah Peterson

Properties mistress: Michelle Elwyn

Sound consultant: Brian Keating

Sound board operator: Miguel Hermann

Cast (in alphabetical order):

Kirsten Benjamin (Nancy / Dorcas)

Anthony Cochrane (Autolycus / Ensemble)

Dane Crane (Florizel)

Saskia de Vries (Emilia / Mopsa)

Drew Eshelman (Old Shepherd / Ensemble)

Laura C. Harris (Perdita)

Naomi Jacobson (Paulina)

Mark Krawczyk (Cleomenes / Ensemble)

Connan Morrissey (Hermione)

Zophia Pryzby (Mamillius / Boy)

Lawrence Redmond (Antigonus / Father)

Jon Reynolds (Shepherd's son / Ensemble)

Daniel Stewart (Leontes)

Jesse Terrill (Dion / Ensemble)

David Whalen (Polixenes)

Frank X (Camillo)



**APPENDIX D**

Companhia Atores de Laura, *O Conto do Inverno*, 2004-2005

Production team:

Director: Daniel Herz

Dramaturg: Marlene Soares dos Santos

Translation: José Roberto O'Shea

Cenography: Ronald Teixeira

Lighting designer: Aurélio de Simoni

Soundtrack and music director: Carlos Cardoso

Costume designer: Heloisa Frederico

Artistic direction of the company: Susanna Kruger, Daniel Herz

Assistant director: Maíra Graber

Movement director: Marcia Rubin

Visual programming: Paula Mello

Assistant lighting designer: Luiz André Alvim

Assistant cenography: George Bravo

Costume assistant: Anna Nodari, Joana Passi de Moraes, Beth Passi de Moraes, Maria Lúcia Barreira

Light arrangement team: Luis Fernando Blau, Rodrigo Pivete, Juliana Moreira

Tapestry making team: Letícia da Hora, Tânia Dutra, Caroline Dutra, Soraya Izar, Maria da Penha, Pedro Izar, Rafael Romão, Tarcísio Firmino

Setting construction: Tapestry making team, cast and team of *O Conto do Inverno*

Stitcher: Lucia Lima

Executive production: Roberta Schneider, Maria Fonseca

Production director: Susanna Kruger

Project assistant: Márcia Dias

Cast (in alphabetical order):

Luis André Alvim (Sicilian Lord / Old shepherd)

Robert Carvalho (Gaoler / Mariner / Peasant)

Leandro Castilho (Florizel / Official / Mariner)

Márcia Cerqueira (Mopsa / Lady)

Vanessa Dantas (Dorcas / Lady)

Val Elias (Time)

Marcio Fonseca (Antigonus / Sheep-shearing servant)

Maec Francken (Mamillius)

Charles Fricks (Leontes)

Paulo Hamiltonn (Autolycus / Archidamus / Mariner)

Tiago Queiroz Herz (Mamillius)

Susanna Kruger (Paulina / Sheep-shearing boy)

Anderson Mello (Camillo)

João Marcelo Pallotino (Polixenes)

Verônica Reis (Hermione / Sheep-shearing old lady)

Ana Paula Secco (Perdita / Mamillius / Mariner)

## APPENDIX E

Letter sent to Companhia Atores de Laura by the translator of Shakespeare's playtext to Portuguese, José Roberto O'Shea

Dear Atores de Laura,

I have been thinking a lot about your work, more specifically, about the issues of language and delivery of language. It is certain that, in theatre, verbalization is always a crucial aspect. However, in dealing with "classic" texts (old texts), the matter is very complex. What takes place is a great challenge, actually, a paradox, because one is required to appropriate something that is not familiar.

Let me explain it. In old texts, language and reality are distant from our own. The supposedly well-known notion of the universality of the great art has expressed and served the interests of hegemonic cultures and classes and, therefore, many times, such notion is not noticed as universal by minorities. Actually, *data venia* Ian Kott, Shakespeare is not, exactly, our contemporary, in Brazil, or better, in Rio de Janeiro, in 2004. Shakespeare is a product of England, or better, of London, from the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, even if his work is being performed in Brazilian Portuguese.

Hence the challenge and the paradox: to take a text that is distant in terms of time and space, in terms of language and reality, a text at times strange, and make it meaningful for the Brazilian audience, carioca [from Rio], in 2004, it is indispensable that, in the work of delivery (enunciation), one develops an absolutely total appropriation of the language itself, yes, this different language – in terms of vocabulary, syntax, subject, verse, etc.

One possible way to reach such indispensable appropriation is to have a full understanding of each word delivered. Notice that I say *an* understanding, not *the* understanding. Just like the translator cannot translate something that he/she does not understand, the actor cannot speak (and mean), if he/she does not own the understanding of the word. By understanding the word, appropriating it, and enforcing technique (breathing, pitching, syllabication, projection), the actor will be ready to face, with the expected "naturalness," the meeting with the classic text.

The challenge is big, and it cannot be simplified. As it is said in English, “nobody said it was going to be easy.” Yet, if you have done so well with Molière, you will certainly win (and enjoy) the Shakespearean challenge.

And enough with the teaching.

Break your legs!

Exeter, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

JRO

## APPENDIX F

Folger Theatre, *The Winter's Tale* program's front cover, 2009

