

Oh that this too, too
solid flesh would melt,
thaw, and resolve itself
into a dew...

The production of Hamlet that you are about to see is the product of the joint creative effort of cast and director. I have never before placed so many decisions directly in the hands of the cast. Sometimes this has been very scary: at almost every stage the more extreme the reading, the more likely it was to meet with approval. One speech, in particular, has ended up being presented in a way I never intended for performance but only as a kind of exercise—but everyone who saw it loved it so much that it has stayed. Mostly, however, this process has worked in our favour: our Ghost, for example, has ended up no kindly father figure but a soul so conflicted by the legions of the damned that it is no wonder Hamlet doubts whether it is truly his father's spirit. It would be rash to claim this as a wholly original take, but I have certainly never seen it done quite like this before.

We never had any doubt that this would be a modern dress production. But what to make of Claudius, King of Denmark? We thought of making him the CEO of a multinational corporation (as in Michael Almercyda's recent movie) or a charismatic tele-evangelist. Tempting as they were, both of these approaches would have meant suppressing the play's political content and so weakening the ending. We soon settled on a kind of Euro-West Wing, with Claudius as a presidential-looking Danish king surrounded by suited palace staff and press officers. This seems to work surprisingly well and has the advantage that almost every character is immediately recognisable.

The text, of course, had to be edited—and seeing that there is no standard text of the original 'acting' version, as there is with *Macbeth* and most of the rest, it was a challenge and a pleasure to go back to the folio and quartos and distill a new version for *Shock Tactics*. Some scenes and speeches have had to go in the interest of keeping the production at a reasonable length, but we sincerely hope that what is left will speak clear and fresh to our audience, whether or not they are familiar with this extraordinary play.

JMS

PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS

THE LIFE OF GALILEO	Bertolt Brecht	Dec. 1975
ANDROCLES AND THE LION	Bernard Shaw	Mar. 1976
SWEENEY TODD	George Dibdin Pitt	Dec. 1976
OLIVER!	Lionel Bart	Mar. 1977
BIRDS	Aristophanes	Dec. 1977
TWELFTH NIGHT	Wm. Shakespeare	Feb. 1979
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST	Oscar Wilde	Dec. 1979
ANTONIO'S REVENGE	John Marston	Dec. 1980
THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE	Bernard Shaw	Dec. 1981
ENTER A FREE MAN (STAFF)	Tom Stoppard	Jul. 1982
CHIPS WITH EVERYTHING	Arnold Wesker	Dec. 1982
THE GOLDEN MASQUE OF AGAMEMNON	John Wiles	Feb. 1983
TOAD OF TOAD HALL	A. A. Milne	Jul. 1983
THE ROYAL HUNT OF THE SUN	Peter Shaffer	Dec. 1983
ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST (6th Form)	Dario Fo	Mar. 1984
THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND (Staff)	Tom Stoppard	Jul. 1984
BEYOND A JOKE (SIXTH FORM)	Derek Benfield	Nov. 1984
HUBERT AND THE FIREWORK	Martin Knight	Dec. 1984
MEDEA	Euripides	Mar. 1985
WHITE LIARS/BLACK COMEDY (Staff)	Peter Shaffer	Jul. 1985
MY FAIR LADY (SIXTH FORM)	Lerner & Lowe	May 1986
THE SPORT OF MY MAD MOTHER	Ann Jellicoe	Jul. 1986
JACK AND THE BEANSTALK (6th Form)		Dec. 1987
FROGS	Aristophanes	Mar. 1987
THE COMEDY OF ERRORS	Wm. Shakespeare	Dec. 1987
THE THWARTING OF BARON BOLLIGREW	Robert Bolt	Jul. 1988
CINDERELLA (Staff)	John Morley	Dec. 1988
THE INJUSTICE DONE TO TOU NGO & AFTER MAGRITTE (6th Form)	Kuan Han Ch'ing	Mar. 1989
OEDIPUS THE KING	Tom Stoppard	Mar. 1990
DRACULA SPECTACULA	Sophocles	Mar. 1990
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Gardiner & Parr	Dec. 1990
DOCTOR FAUSTUS	Wm. Shakespeare	Mar. 1992
CULTURE BEAT	Christopher Marlowe	Dec. 1992
HIAWATHA	Paul Gerrard	Mar. 1994
ALADDIN (Staff)	Michael Bogdanov	Dec. 1994
'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE	John Morley	Dec. 1995
GHETTO	John Ford	Feb. 1997
THE SEVEN SIDED DICE	Joshua Sobol	Feb. 1998
MACBETH	Phil Rean & Mike Smith	Jul. 1999
AMADEUS	Wm. Shakespeare	Feb. 2000
THE NATIVITY	Peter Shaffer	Dec. 2000
THE BACCHAE OF EURIPIDES	Tony Harrison	Dec. 2001
DICK WHITTINGTON (Staff)	Wole Soyinka	Dec. 2002
JOSEPH & HIS AMAZING... (Year 7)	John Morley	Dec. 2003
LORD OF THE FLIES	Andrew Lloyd Webber	Jul. 2004
TREASURE ISLAND (Year 7)	Nigel Williams	Dec. 2004
OLIVER!	Stephen Kingsbury	Jul. 2005
BUGSY MALONE (Year 7)	Lionel Bart	Dec. 2005
ENTER A FREE MAN	Alan Parker	Jul. 2006
THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS (Year 7)	Tom Stoppard	Dec. 2006
	Alan Bennett	Jul. 2007



Wilson's School presents
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HAMLET
by **William Shakespeare**
directed by **Jeff Shaw**

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www.shocktactics.org.uk

CAST in order of appearance

HAMLET
CLAUDIUS
GERTRUDE
POLONIUS
LAERTES
VOLTIMAND
CORNELIUS
HORATIO
MARCELLUS
BERNARDO
OPHELIA
GHOST
ROSENCRANTZ
GUILDENSTERN
'KING'
'QUEEN'
'VILLAIN'
FORTINBRAS
CAPTAIN
P.A.
OFFICE BOY
1st GRAVEDIGGER
2nd GRAVEDIGGER
PRIEST
OSRIC
AMBASSADOR

OTHER PARTS played by

Dan Smith
Declan Doyle
Izzy Watts
Adam Lawrence
Hadley Smith
Matthew Mitchell
James Marshall
James Lewis
David Parke
Simon Williams
Kez Lewis
James Booth
James Morgan
Joe Youll
Christian Leggett
Courtney Mortimer
James Ireland
James Booth
David Parke
Christian Leggett
Stephan Humphrey-Gaskin
Simon Williams
Matthew Taylor
James Marshall
Theo Botsford
James Ireland

Mac Alford-Sancto
Jack Carter
Jack Casey
Nishil Chandaria
Thomas Gower
Anthony Guy
Chris Reeds
Grace Ries
Thomas Springall
David Statter
Ben Watts-Stansfield

and members of the cast and crew

Directed by
Production Manager
Settings
Stage Manager
Lighting
Video Authoring
Video Operators

Sound Operator
Props
Special Effects
Fight arranger and coach
Wardrobe

Make-up
Stage Crew

We owe a great debt of gratitude to:

Nick James for the video monitors and cameras
A. Yeatman & Sons for the loan of the coffin
Ashburton Fencing Club
Alec ??????
Paul Gerrard

Lighting equipment provided by Point Source productions Ltd.

Jeff Shaw
Alan Smith
Kevin Hemmings
Mark Baker
Robert White
James Lewis
Tom Vella
Jake Marshall
Tom Vidler
Matt Hallett
Ahzaz Chowdhury
Mike Smith
Emma Waterhouse
Richard Bevis
Oscar Williams-Grut
Sally Carter-Esdale
Alan Michalak
Jon Hicks