

Shakespeare and Dance

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Shakespeare and Dance

Abstract: Alan Brissenden's 1981 *Shakespeare and the Dance* is the only full-length scholarly analysis of dance and dancing within Shakespeare's play texts. Despite considerable growth in interdisciplinary and intermedial studies – and the development of dance studies as an academic field of study – Shakespeare's employment of dance, and the reimagining of his writing as dance works, remain neglected as subjects for research. In recent years, however, a multidisciplinary community of scholars has, in collaboration with dance practitioners, developed the study of Shakespeare and dance from its disparate past and provided an important focus for discussion of the relationship between text and movement. This article examines the critical history of Shakespeare and dance, surveys key developments in the field and considers future directions for this diverse area of study.

On 10th April 2014, Christopher Wheeldon's *The Winter's Tale* premiered at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Although this was the Royal Ballet's first full-length Shakespearean adaptation since Kenneth MacMillan's acclaimed *Romeo and Juliet* in 1965, the Company's repertory has included many shorter reimaginings of Shakespeare's writings, including Robert Helpmann's *Hamlet*, Frederick Ashton's *The Dream* and MacMillan's own *Images of Love* – the latter based not on a single work but on extracts from several plays and sonnets.¹ *The Winter's Tale* is perhaps unusual in this context as the reworking of a lesser-known text. One of the benefits of adapting Shakespeare's drama into dance is the ubiquity of his most performed works; the lack of verbal cues is not an issue when the plot is so familiar to an audience. But to suggest that Shakespeare's plays form the basis of so many dance works because of their familiarity to the general spectator is to underestimate choreographers' genuine engagement with literature – whether as inspiration or provocation – and the enthusiasm of audiences for intermedial exchanges of this kind. And while there may be a cultural sympathy between a literary icon of Shakespeare's stature and a leading (and heavily subsidised) institution like the Royal Ballet, Shakespeare's relationship with dance is broader and more varied than this partnership might suggest. His works have been translated into multiple dance genres, from classical ballet to contemporary dance, jazz to physical theatre, folk dance to Hip hop. Adaptations have been diverse in origin, international in scope. Choreographers have reimagined Shakespeare's most famous plays – notably *Romeo and Juliet* – but, like Wheeldon, they have also mined Shakespeare's canon for lesser-known texts.² Shakespeare's drama is not simply a source for narrative dance either. Dance practitioners have extracted themes from Shakespeare's oeuvre for abstract pieces while others have constructed new narratives from Shakespeare's own literary abstractions.³ The adaptation of Shakespearean writing into dance form is – in other words – rich, diverse and powerfully unpredictable.

But the study of Shakespearean adaptation – so popular within academic discourse in recent years – is not the only means of examining the relationship between Shakespeare and dance. The dance that appears within literature is as absorbing as that which reimagines it. To return to the example of *The Winter's Tale*, the play – like much of Shakespeare's output – contains numerous references to dance. These include, most famously, a staged satyr dance during the play's Act 4 Bohemian interlude⁴ but Shakespeare also incorporates a dance of shepherds and shepherdesses in the same scene. Beyond these performed choreographies, the play exploits the figurative qualities of dance. For Alan Brissenden, Leontes' jealous response to the sight of his wife Hermione and oldest friend Polixenes conversing closely – 'I have *tremor cordis* on me; my heart dances' (1.2.122)⁵ – 'implies a savage lack of harmony at the centre of existence' (87). Dance here functions as a measure of cosmic discord, its movement a metaphor for Leontes' abnormal heart rate and his capacity for disrupting the stability of the state, and indeed the universe. But the play's broader interest in movement – culminating in the apparent animation of a statue of Hermione – suggests that motion,

like the passion invoked in Leontes' speech, has a potentially positive and even necessary application. Florizel's love for Perdita is also mediated through dance:

When you do dance, I wish you
A wave o'th' sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that – move still, still so,
And own no other function. (4.4.140–3)

Dance as a recurrent trope within Shakespeare's writings is certainly a productive area for scholarly work. As one of Shakespeare's late plays, *The Winter's Tale* also invites studies of the masque's influence on Jacobean drama, and the dancing contained within it; the satyr dance has much in common with the anti-masque of court tradition while the animated statuary of the final scene recalls Francis Bacon's description of 'statuas moving' (176) in masques of the period. The reconstruction of dances contained within the plays – again, the satyr performance and shepherd dancing in *The Winter's Tale* are good examples – is a key project for historical dance researchers and literary critics working in this field. Furthermore, issues of reconstruction feed into theatrical activity and production choices therein; whether movement directors choose to recreate early modern dances or create new movements for actors, an understanding of Shakespeare's dances is invaluable.

The example of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* suggests that the field of Shakespeare and dance has a fundamentally dual focus; it encompasses both dance *in* Shakespeare, and Shakespeare *as* dance. This bifocality has repercussions for the conduct of, and critical frame for, research. A study of dance *in* Shakespeare – in other words, the dance content that appears within Shakespeare's plays and poetry – might attract a historical or literary critical approach. You could also assume that research into Shakespeare *as* dance appears more often within a performance arts or dance studies framework, in addition to inviting important contributions from those working in adaptation or translation studies. In reality, however, theoretical positions and research methods vary within both sub-fields. Disparities in methodological approach are not drawn along disciplinary lines either. Scholars from history, dance history, performance studies, dance studies, adaptation studies, literary criticism and comparative literature take an interest in diverse aspects of the field and frequently collaborate with researchers from other subject areas. The study of Shakespeare and dance demands a significant level of cross-disciplinary mobility from its scholars. It also benefits greatly from the contributions of scholar-practitioners, typically experienced dancers and choreographers undertaking scholarly research, and active, career practitioners within dance and theatrical contexts.

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Despite substantial interest in the moving body within literary fields – and the recent success and expansion of dance studies – Shakespeare's employment of dance, and the reimagining of his writings as dance works, remain under-studied. Alan Brissenden's 1981 *Shakespeare and the Dance* is the seminal text, and remains one of the only book-length treatments of the subject. Articles published on Shakespeare and dance have also been few and it is only in very recent years that a community of scholars have emerged to develop research in this area.⁶ The lately formed Shakespeare and Dance Project – led by researchers Linda McJannet, Emily Winerock and Amy Rodgers – is a much-needed initiative dedicated to consolidating scholarship on the subject.⁷ The forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Dance* (edited by Lynsey McCulloch and Brandon Shaw) should also provide a focus for future discussions. Despite the relative patchiness of previous research, however, current projects remain indebted to the work of previous generations.

Early scholars are certainly comprehensive, if rather data-driven, in their efforts to understand Shakespeare's employment of dance. Gerda Prange counts twelve named dances in Shakespeare's works and fifty references to dance in general. Dance writer Walter Sorell's 1957 article on Shakespeare and dance takes a similarly quantitative approach in cataloguing the same

dances. However, Sorell expands his study to include a history of early modern dance culture. He also takes some pains to relate each dance to its dramatic context, although his motivation is essentially practical:

I was induced to investigate this subject by the prevalent misunderstanding and confusion which I, as a critic of the dance, found in most, if not all, performances of Shakespearian plays which ask for some dancing. (369)

Sorell's disappointment in the dances staged in productions of Shakespeare's plays may not take account of directorial and choreographic interpretations beyond the purely reconstructive but his archival research aligns him with dance historians and a late twentieth-century interest – at Shakespeare's Globe, for example – in recreating original theatrical practices. Jim Hoskins' 2005 *The Dances of Shakespeare* is an even more explicit guide for theatre practitioners to the techniques required for reconstructing early modern dance and includes the basic steps, indicative musical scores and comic illustrations for each dance. Hoskins – a dancer, choreographer and academic – offers little contextual material in his description of Shakespeare's dances but his approach does point towards the growth of practice-led and practice-based research in recent years. Dance reconstruction has moved from sedentary study to the fully embodied research of today's scholar-practitioners. Anne Daye's work for the Dolmetsch Historical Dance Society, including her 1994 *A Lively Shape of Dauncing: Dances of Shakespeare's Time*, provides a genuinely historicised account of early modern dance but is also enhanced by the practical application that Daye's experience of teaching dance has afforded.

Reconstructing early English dance practice has proved challenging, however. Dance historians, such as the late Julia Sutton, have closely studied contemporary European dance manuals – examples include Thoinot Arbeau's 1589 *Orchésographie* and Fabritio Caroso's 1600 *Nobiltà di dame* – and offer clues to the kind of theatrical dance practiced in the early modern period. French and Italian dancing traditions would certainly have influenced English culture but cross-continental currents can be difficult to pin down, a challenge made more problematic by the religious schism of the period. Extant English works on dance are dominated by Protestant anti-theatricality. Philip Stubbes' 1583 *The Anatomie of Abuses* strongly critiques the theatre amongst other morally dubious practices of the time, and the author's opprobrium towards 'lewde, wanton and lascivious dauncing in publique assemblies and conventicles, without respect either of sex, kind, time, place, person, or any thing els' (N8^R) confirms that dance was targeted as a sexualised activity, one conducted coarsely in public without conforming to appropriate social strictures. For many early modern commentators and polemicists, dance comes second only to transvestism in establishing the theatre as a focus for depravity within sixteenth- and seventeenth-century cultural life. Dance was also deemed to have infected early modern music; Joseph M. Ortiz cites satirist Stephen Gosson's definition of music as that which should be 'used in battaile, not to tickle the eare' (Gosson 4A4v – 5A4r). Gosson decries the proliferation of dance music, and bemoans the subsumption of 'music's semiotic capabilities' by dance's 'bodily manifestations' (Ortiz 21). Dance, as a somatic sphere of activity, was vulnerable to such reproach. The defence of dance by its early modern practitioners, performers like John Lowin and William Kemp, goes some way towards balancing attitudes but it wasn't (apparently) until 1651, with the publication of John Playford's *The English Dancing Master*, that an English dancing manual appears.⁸

Although the domination of anti-theatrical tracts within English dance history may have suppressed, or censored, more affirmative accounts of dance – and pushed scholars towards ever more excavatory and comparative approaches – their existence points us towards a better understanding of early modern dance and its function within Shakespeare's writing. Historian and Renaissance dance practitioner Emily Winerock has studied the parochial prosecution of 'irreverent dancing' (Winerock 236n13) in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century sacred spaces; her findings, although not applied to a dramatic context, have much to tell us about the complex status of dance in early modern environments. The criminalisation of dancing in churchyards set communities against local authorities and religious institutions. Winerock's analysis recalls for me

the graveyard scene in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Channelling the antic dance of masque tradition,⁹ the memory of Hamlet's 'antic disposition' (1.5.173) combines with the episode's singing clowns, choreographed funeral procession, dance of death imagery¹⁰ and the discovery of the jester Yorick's remains – 'your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment' (5.1.85–6) – to suggest a macabre kind of play within a churchyard setting. The discussion of the two gravediggers on the appropriate use of consecrated ground, and whether Ophelia's death by suicide qualifies her for a Christian burial, further echoes the contemporary debate over behaviour within churchyards.

While antic dancing lends itself easily to the analysis of social, political and religious disruption, the masque proper of early modern tradition is typically discussed in the context of restored order, gender normativity and Neoplatonic accord – even if it ultimately serves to undermine these cultural expectations. Jennifer Nevile has examined the role of (mainly Italian) dance within Renaissance humanism while Margaret M. McGowan has pioneered the study of French court dance. Mark Franko, openly indebted to McGowan, has concentrated also on the French example and is explicit in his movement away from reconstructive analyses; Franko instead favours a constructive approach, one that is interested less in steps and more in the kinetic force and political undercurrents of a dance. Again, the European focus of these writers causes a problem for scholars working on English dance but Franko's discussion of the relationship between dance and text within French court spectacle – and 'marked shifts in the formal balance' (Franko 2) between the two – has much to offer the field of Shakespeare and dance. The English masque has prompted numerous studies since Enid Welsford's *The Court Masque* in 1927 and scholarship has been buoyed in recent years by flourishing research into Caroline literature. However, despite the numbers of works published in this area, it was only with the appearance of Skiles Howard's 1998 *The Politics of Courtly Social Dancing in Early Modern England* and Barbara Ravelhofer's 2006 *The Early Stuart Masque* that dance within English court performance has been afforded the importance it deserves. Like Franko, Howard acknowledges the relationship of dance to the political, a key development given the treatment of staged dances within Shakespeare as non-essential interludes. Howard also recognises that, in the early modern period, dance is inseparable from text:

Courtly dancing was identified with formal speech as well as poetry, and was recruited to serve the same purposes. No longer a spontaneous response to sexual, seasonal, or religious impulse, dancing was conceived as a forensic oration whose purpose was to persuade, (Howard, 'Politics' 22)

An understanding of the rhetorical function of dance within Shakespearean performance would indeed be valuable and is long overdue.

Howard's reading of gender dynamics within masque performance – 'gentlemen "desire" the ladies to dance, ladies do not "desire" the gentlemen' (Howard, 'Politics' 37) – has encountered criticism from scholars such as Ravelhofer who see her understanding of elite patriarchal structures flying in the face of 'performance practice and historical fact' (Ravelhofer, 'Virgin Wax' 247). Ravelhofer's pragmatism and her understanding of the contingencies of performance – in which 'ideal' gender norms are subject to rather more realistic imaginings – could be usefully applied to Shakespeare's dances. Her argument that 'certainties gained from the safe distance of a text or image appear less evident once the practical implications of actual movement come into play' (Ravelhofer, 'Early Stuart Masque' 118) also invites a more practice-led approach to the study of Shakespeare and dance, one in which textual truths can be balanced against performative realities. More generally, the considerable work of masque scholars should be exploited by those studying Shakespeare and dance. Notwithstanding Shakespeare's outsider status within English masque culture – unlike many of his contemporaries, Shakespeare did not write for the genre – there is still too little discussion of the influence of courtly dancing on Shakespearean stagecraft. Ravelhofer has written illuminating essays on Ben Jonson and Thomas Middleton's utilisation of dance – both were prolific masque writers – but Shakespeare remains relatively untouched. There are rare examples, however. Sujata Iyengar has explored Shakespeare's collaboration with another prolific masque writer, John Fletcher; her analysis of morris (or rather Moorish) dancing within *The Two Noble*

Kinsmen is fascinating in its inclusion of non-European dance and its discussion of alterity in English culture. Skiles Howard has examined *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and does much to counter previously dominant notions within Shakespearean dance studies of the cosmic dance, 'a commonplace of elite culture that was invoked to dignify the social dancing of the courts as an imitation of heavenly motion' (Howard, 'Cosmic Dance' 325). Both the popular (or mechanical) and courtly dancing within the play serve 'not to naturalize an order but to reveal it as provisional and man-made' (342). In emphasising the text's own questioning of unity and reconciliation, via the staging of unruly and popular dance, Howard sets herself against the work of Alan Brissenden for whom dance in Shakespeare represents 'a symbol of harmony and concord' (Brissenden 3). She does, however, acknowledge – and I would reiterate this view – that 'Brissenden's work is a fine source of information on Renaissance dancing and a unique contribution to Shakespeare studies' (327n10).

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It seems clear that students of dance *in* Shakespeare are still reliant on a limited number of secondary sources and are indeed often pointed towards texts that make no mention of Shakespeare himself. The study of Shakespeare *as* dance may be even more limited in its critical literature although it is certainly a growth area within the field. Several factors have contributed to the recent advance of research into dance adaptations of Shakespearean texts. Firstly, dance studies itself has been subject to rapid growth within the academy. The emergence within academic discourse of scholars able to read and interpret movement has had a palpable effect on the field and will no doubt continue to do so. The promotion of interdisciplinary research within all fields of academic pursuit has, in turn, encouraged scholars of both literature and dance to look beyond their subject disciplines and consider the collaborative work that these fields undertake with other areas; how does movement become text, and how does text become movement? The growth of intermediality and interest in cultural forms that utilise more than one communicative channel has also impacted on the study of literature and dance although academic programmes in intermedial studies have often been dominated by fine art and media studies. Likewise, the classical model of adaptation studies has traditionally favoured film over other media. Within Shakespeare studies itself, the adaptation of the texts into dance forms has been frequently overlooked. Jonathan Bate's 1997 *The Genius of Shakespeare* examines the source of Shakespeare's reputation and cites a strong history of adaptation as one reason for his cultural longevity: 'Macbeth lives *because* he was reinvented as an icon of the Romantic imagination, Romeo and Juliet *because* they were immortalized anew in the music of Berlioz, Tchaikovsky, and Prokofiev' (286). Bate's acknowledgment of the importance of adaptation in literary history is important but it is notable that – in the extended discussion of Shakespeare and music that follows this comment – dance plays no part, despite references to music written specifically for the ballet. While the view of adaptation studies as parasitic to Shakespeare scholarship has, thankfully, subsided, dance may still be the poor relation in discussions of Shakespeare and appropriation. However, this year's special issue of *Shakespeare* – 'Adaptation and Early Modern Culture: Shakespeare and Beyond' – happily contains Elizabeth Klett's absorbing essay on José Limón's *The Moor's Pavane* and *Barren Sceptre*, balletic reinterpretations of *Othello* and *Macbeth* respectively. In addition to encouraging more research into work like Limón's, I would also advocate further study to better our understanding of the work of movement directors within Shakespearean theatrical production.

One of the challenges of writing about dance adaptations of Shakespearean texts is, of course, the level of knowledge and understanding required. Very few academics are specialists in both dance and literature and, without collaboration with an opposite number, issues can arise. English specialist Robin Wharton's 2005 article on Shakespeare in dance – focusing upon Russian ballet adaptations of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* – contains intriguing material on the 'citational procedure' (8) that dance performs in relation to literature and how an 'audience's cultural expectations – of both Shakespeare and ballet – become part of the material from which a

choreographer's interpretation is fabricated' (11). In this, she avoids one of the major pitfalls for literary scholars writing about dance in acknowledging that a dance work adapted from a text is as much about dance as it is about literature, if not more so. However, Wharton's unfairly reductive comments about the 'limited vocabulary of the dance form' (12) – contrasted with the widely deconstructive capabilities of the Shakespearean text – and her imperfect knowledge of Russian ballet inhibits her argument that Shakespeare is able to disrupt the conservative gender codes of dance.¹¹ Wharton is not alone in struggling with the demands of transmedial research and I count myself too among those literary scholars grappling with dance history and theory, and not always succeeding in representing the medium effectively. Part of the problem for literary scholars working in dance is a reliance on recordings, often poor, of specific performances of a choreographed work that has been subject to several revivals by different dance companies. Despite the recent lessons of textual criticism, researchers often underestimate the multiplicity of the cultural artefact. Performance specialists are, however, similarly hamstrung by ephemerality of dance. Benjamin Fultz, reviewing theatre specialist Camille Cole Howard's 1992 *The Staging of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet as a Ballet* – a rare book-length treatment of Shakespearean dance adaptation – laments the paucity of genuine engagement with choreography: 'there is little if anything here to show that Howard has ever seen this ballet in any version' (403). As partnerships between subject disciplines develop, it is to be hoped that issues of this kind will diminish.

While there is not the space here to do justice to the theoretical, and applied, discussions of adaptation and appropriation in recent years, it is worth saying that the study of Shakespeare and dance – particularly Shakespeare *as* dance – is indebted to the work of scholars such as Linda Hutcheon, Margaret Jane Kidnie and Jennifer Clement amongst many others. Issues of authorship are certainly integral to adaptation studies. In the example of dance adaptations of Shakespeare's texts, one of the elements that complicates this discussion is the role of music.¹² Dance rarely exists without music, at least not within the context of Shakespearean narrative dance. But, even if we acknowledge the influence of music on the choreographed work and its impact on authorship (and authority), there's always a danger that we will misread the complex relations between text, music and dance. Karen Bennett, in her 2003 essay on Rudolf Nureyev's 1977 *Romeo and Juliet*, provides a table in her appendix with columns cross-referencing the play's narrative development, the musical shifts and the danced action. The reader is thus able to delineate between Shakespeare's structure, Prokofiev's score and Nureyev's choreography. This is a useful reference tool but Bennett's instructions to the reader using the appendix that the 'score is treated as a "translation" of the play, and the ballet production as predominantly a "translation" of the score' (315) surely underestimates the choreographer's engagement with the source text. In suggesting that music influences movement, it also fails to acknowledge that movement also influences the way in which we hear, and respond to, music in a dance context. Furthermore, movement influences the way in which we respond to Shakespeare. As a literary specialist, I will always view dance adaptations of Shakespeare via my knowledge of the texts. But I have to concede that, for many of those attending these same performances, the dance is their only experience of the work.¹³

The relationship between Shakespeare and dance is set to be consolidated still further next year with the 400th anniversary of the poet's death. Major dance companies are planning retrospectives of their Shakespearean works. The Royal Ballet, for example, will revive Christopher Wheeldon's *The Winter's Tale*. In term of future development in this field, we might use one of the section headings from Ellen W. Goellner and Jacqueline Shea Murphy's ground-breaking *Bodies of the Text: Dance as Theory, Literature as Dance* – 'Reading Writing about Dance' – as our inspiration. Although we should be wary of diverting literary scholars from a full appreciation of the somatic implications of Shakespearean dance, more analysis of how dance is represented in language would be hugely valuable. Equally, further investigation of how choreographers translate text into movement is sorely needed. Although individual scholars are more than capable of tackling these subjects, prolonged collaboration between literary and dance specialists – and between researchers and practitioners – would enhance this emerging field and safeguard its future within scholarship.

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¹ These three works were, in fact, performed together at Covent Garden as part of a triple bill for the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s birth in April 1964. Ashton’s and MacMillan’s ballets were commissioned for the event; Helpmann’s *Hamlet* dates from 1942, when it was created for Sadler’s Wells Ballet. Of the three, Ashton’s adaptation of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* has been the most frequently performed, both by the Royal Ballet and other dance companies.

² John Farmanesh-Bocca’s 2009 *Pericles Redux* for LA-based ensemble Not Man Apart is one such recent example. I am grateful to Linda McJannet for drawing my attention to this work.

³ MacMillan’s *Images of Love*, a ballet in nine parts, contains abstract vignettes on the theme of love using several extracts from Shakespeare’s drama and poetry. Conversely, Nigel Charnock – a founding member of DV8 Physical Theatre – created L.O.V.E for Volcano Theatre Company in 1992, fashioning a theatrical narrative from several Shakespearean sonnets. I am grateful to James Hewison for drawing my attention to the latter work.

⁴ Editorial debate over whether the satyr dance was an interpolation missing from the original text, and a topical allusion to Ben Jonson’s 1611 masque *Oberon*, go to the heart of dance’s function within Shakespearean drama. The argument, here described by John Pitcher, that ‘the whole passage could be omitted without disturbing the dialogue around it’ (92) suggests a deep-seated disregard for dance from textual scholars.

⁵ All references to Shakespeare are drawn from *The Oxford Shakespeare* unless otherwise specified.

⁶ Workshops and seminars on Shakespeare and dance were held at the 2013 and 2014 Shakespeare Association of America annual meetings; ‘Dancing in Shakespeare: A Practical Introduction’ was led by Nona Monahin and Emily Winerock in 2013, and ‘Shakespeare and Dance’ by Lynsey McCulloch

and Brandon Shaw in 2014. Early modern literature and dance was also the focus of discussion at the 2010, 2012, 2013 and 2015 Renaissance Society of America conferences. Moreover, the 2014 joint Society of Dance History Scholars (SDHS) and Congress on Research in Dance (CORD) conference had as its theme 'Writing Dancing/Dancing Writing'.

⁷ Information on the project can be found at <http://shakespeareanddance.com>.

⁸ John Lowin, an actor with the King's Men, wrote a short treatise – *Brief Conclusions upon Dances, both of this age and of the olde* – in which he describes examples of dancing from the Bible. As a man of puritan sympathies, Lowin is careful to distinguish between dance as healthful exercise and puerile exhibitionism. See Barbara Wooding's *John Lowin and the English Theatre, 1603–1647: Acting and Cultural Politics on the Jacobean and Caroline Stage* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013). Actor and dancer Will Kemp's extraordinary morris dance from London to Norwich in 1600 – captured in his *Nine Daies Wonder* – suggests that he was less conflicted over the ethics of dance than Lowin. His infamous jig-making is also testament to Kemp's free use of dance (and song).

⁹ As Ingrid Pfandl-Buchegger and Gudrun Rottensteiner explain, 'Early masques were traditionally preceded by a dance of antics, a spectacle of acrobatic dancing and clowning (in the tradition of carnivalesque Misrule and foolery) performed by professional actors, that served as a liberating prelude to the serious allegory that was to follow in the masque. These "dances of antics" developed into "antic-masques", also spelt "ante-masques" (as preceding the main masque), or "anti-masques" (as providing a contrast to the main masque)' (473). For Pfandl-Buchegger and Rottensteiner, the antic- or anti-masque – a self-reflexive form that spans music, dance, literature and art – sits within the context of transmedial metareference.

¹⁰ Catherine Belsey has written eloquently on the influence of Holbein's dance of death iconography on the play. Holbein designed a series of woodcuts on the theme, designs that were available in England via low-cost print reproductions and which represent grinning, 'antic' skeletons selecting their next victims. For Belsey, *Hamlet* re-creates a dance of death and, like death, is able to 'retain its mystery, its a-thetic knowledge, its triumphant undecidability – and its corresponding power to seduce' (172).

¹¹ Wharton describes Vladimir Vasiliev's 1980 Bolshoi Ballet adaptation of *Macbeth*. Not only is the ballet incorrectly dated – Wharton states 1984 when that is, in fact, the date of the video recording she uses – but Wharton's comment that 'Vasilyev treats the audience to the extraordinary sight of a ballet stage full of men' (13) fails to acknowledge the very particular history of the Bolshoi and its celebration of the male dancer. Wharton also discusses the Bolshoi's 1994 *Hamlet* without being able to identify the choreographer. The work is, I believe, a Moscow State Theatre Ballet (otherwise known as Moscow Classical Ballet) production, not a Bolshoi work, choreographed by Svetlana Voskresenskaia.

¹² In dance history too, music is a key component of any discussion. Several high-profile dance historians are also music specialists. Historian Julia Sutton, for example, was both a dance scholar and musicologist. Jennifer Nevile also studies music, and the reciprocal relationship between music and dance. Roger Clegg and Lucie Skeaping's recent collaboration on the subject of the early modern jig points towards new partnerships between music and literary experts.

¹³ Lynsey McCulloch's 2013 essay, "'Here's that shall make you dance": Movement and Meaning in Bern: Ballett's *Julia und Romeo*', attempts to synthesize a discussion of a twenty-first century dance appropriation of Shakespeare's play – Cathy Marston's 2009 *Julia und Romeo* – with an analysis of the source text and its use of courtly *sprezzatura*. In doing so, 'it investigates the relationship between the radicalism of Marston's work and the origins of that radicalism in the text itself' (256).