

SHAKESPEARE WEEK 2022: SHAKESPEARE IN LONDON

Pavis Questionnaire

1. Interpretation of the play in performance

- a. What kind of dramaturgical choices have been made? (consider changes in order of scenes, cut or added scenes, characters cut, fused, or brought to the forth,...)
- b. What are ambiguities in performance and what are points of explanation?
- c. What do you find disturbing about the production? Strong/weak moments?
- d. Aesthetic principles of the production?
- e. What elements hold the performance together?

2. Text in performance

- a. Main features of translation? (original text or modernized? complete or (heavily) abridged? Did you notice any specific textual cuts, changes, or additions?)
- b. What role is given to dramatic text in production?
- c. Relationship between text and image?
- d. How is the Shakespearean text acted – rather formally or rather naturalistically? Are any features of the text given significant prominence because of the way in which they were spoken or pronounced?

3. Casting

- a. Who is cast in which role?
- b. Cross-gender casting, cross-racial casting? All-male or all-female cast?
- c. Doubling of roles? If roles are doubled, what is the impact?

4. Scenography

- a. What kind of acting space / stage?
- b. Use of stage space (front/back, centre/margin, 'above', 'within', onstage/offstage...)?
- c. Relationship between audience space and acting space?
- d. What does the set look like? Think of system of colours and their connotations.

5. Stage properties

- a. What are the most important props?
- b. Consider their type, function, relationship to space and actors' bodies.

6. Lighting System and Sound

- a. Is lighting used? How?
- b. Are there any sound effects?
- c. What is most noticeable about their use, and how do they impact the way the performance interprets the play?

7. Costumes and cosmetics

- a. How do they work?
- b. Historical or modern?
- c. Relationship to actors' bodies?
- d. Semiotic function of costumes (e.g. colour coding)

8. Actors' Performances

- a. Individual or conventionalized style of acting?
- b. Relation between individual actors and group?
- c. Relation between text and body, role and actor?
- d. Quality of gestures and mime?
- e. Quality of voices?
- f. How do dialogues develop?

9. Pace of Performance

- a. What is the performance's overall pace? steady or broken?
- b. Pauses, silences, moments of hesitation?
- c. Pace of certain signifying systems (lighting, costumes, gestures,...)

10. Audience

- a. How did the audience react to or interact with the performance?
- b. What is the role of the spectator in the production of meaning? Is this a performance in which everything is spelled out, or do the spectators have to make connections and draw conclusions?

(adapted from Patrice Pavis, "Theatre Analysis: Some Questions and a Questionnaire", *New Theatre Quarterly* 1-2, 1985: 208-12)