

Watching Hamlet in the Pacific
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In June and July 2015, The Globe Theatre (UK) presented *Hamlet* in a number of Pacific islands as part of its bid to stage Shakespeare's play in every country in the world over the course of a two-year tour. In this paper, I draw on my experience of watching the performance in Australia, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in order to reflect on the meanings of the enterprise. The paper focuses on three areas.

First, since the production represents the latest in a long line of highly performative Pacific encounters, I am particularly interested in how the performances are located and received. Second, while the rhetoric from the Globe has tended – rather problematically, of course – to focus on the benefit that the production can bring to its host countries, I will explore what meanings the play itself takes on in the context of its new presentations. And third, I think through the meanings that arise as I track the production across a number of different island settings and environments.

Taken together, I hope these reflections will provide some insight into the dynamics of contemporary theatrical touring in the context of globalization, with a special focus on the significance of staging Shakespeare in the Pacific cultural and geopolitical contexts.

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