JULIET (Kananu Kirimi) and **OLD CAPULET** (Bill Stewart) in the Globe's 2004 *Romeo and Juliet*, three performances of which were in original pronunciation. Photo Andy Bradshaw.

There's a great joke in *Troilus and Cressida*, but nobody ever gets it. It's when Thersites harangues Achilles about Ajax in Act 2: 'for whomsoever he be, he is Ajax'. It isn't noticed in modern pronunciation. Indeed, the line seems rather pointless. But in original pronunciation (OP) it would have raised a huge laugh among the groundlings. Because in Shakespeare's time, the name was pronounced like 'a jakes'—and a *jakes* was the word for a pisshouse!

This is just one of the many shafts of linguistic sunlight that illuminate a Shakespeare play, when it is done in OP. The sounds of Elizabethan English add a freshness and vitality to the text. The speech is much faster than it would be today. Hamlet recommended that the players 'speak the speech ... trippingly upon the tongue'. That's what you hear in an OP production. Certainly no 'mouthing'.

The speed of the speech gives some words a fresh character. Consonants are often dropped—so you'll hear *heavens* as 'henz' and *devil* as 'deel'. Vowels were often dropped too—so you'll hear *deliv'ry* and *magnan'mous*. And the 'little words' in English—such as *my* and *he*—are said very quickly. In the Folio and Quarto texts you can see some of them spelled with apostrophes—*I'th', a'*—a clear indication to say them trippingly. But even without the apostrophe, they were said colloquially. Listen to Troilus's opening words: *Call here my varlet*—the rapid 'mi' is typical of the style of the times, and these shortened forms are one of the most distinctive features of OP.

Several of the pronunciations will remind you of modern regional accents. *Mi varlet*, for instance, might make you think of the north of England. The *r* that is always heard after a vowel, as in *varlet* and *master*, will perhaps remind you of a West Country, Irish, or American accent. The *o* vowel in words like *go* and *know* might make you think of Yorkshire or Wales. The way *yes* and *yet* are pronounced with an 'i' vowel will sound Australian. The *h* in such words as *what* was sounded, so that *wine* and *whine* are different, which might make you think of Scots. That's the intriguing thing about OP: it has resonances of many modern accents but is identical with none of them. People hear hints of their own regional accent in it. But no-one (unless you were at the Globe last year) has heard this accent on the London stage before—at least, not for 400 years.

There are some features that appear in no accent today. You'll notice the way the 'ch' sound is missing in such words as *nature*—pronounced 'nay–tur'—and the 'sh' sound is replaced in *affection*—pronounced with a 'see–on' ending. Words like *one* and *other* have a long vowel: 'ohn', 'ohther'. And you'll hear several words with a different stress pattern, such as *canonize*, *advertized*, *gallantry*. Some names sound different: *Ulysses* has his

SAYING IT LIKE IT WAS

An OP Troilus and Cressida

David Crystal

last syllable rhyming with *says* rather than *seas*. And you will hear rhymes you never heard before: at the very end of Act 4 Troilus tells Ulysses:

> *She was beloved, she loved, she is, and doth;*
> *But still sweet love is food for fortune's tooth.*

It is 'tuhth', not 'tooth'.

In fact, only some of the sounds have changed since Shakespeare's time. For instance, the *i* in *sit* and the *e* in *set* haven't changed at all. And most of the consonants are exactly the same. There are some lines which are virtually identical with modern English, such as *This challenge that the gallant Hector sends*. You'll hear the *r* sounded in *Hector*, and perhaps notice that the *H* is dropped (*h*'s were often dropped, in Shakespeare's time, but there was no feeling of sloppiness about the practice, as there is today). Otherwise it's the same. So you won't have as many problems of understanding as you might have thought. Past experience suggests that your ears will tune in (if passing helicopters don't get in the way) by the end of the first scene.

Past experience? This isn't the first time there has been an OP production at the Globe: that was in June 2004, when a weekend of three OP performances of *Romeo and Juliet* was put into the middle of the run. But there is a big difference with *Troilus*: the whole run of six performances is in OP, and the actors rehearsed the play in OP from the very beginning. Not for them the trauma of having to keep two versions of the play in their heads at the same time. The result is a production in which, to my mind, the OP ties in with the movement and the character interaction even more seamlessly than it did last year. After a while, I think you will forget it is OP, and just enjoy the play—with the enjoyment, I hope, enhanced by the frisson of freshness which OP brings. This is as it should be. The play, not the pronunciation, is the thing.

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A GUIDE TO SOME ORIGINAL TROILUS PRONUNCIATIONS

How do we know how Shakespearean English sounded? There are three sources of evidence. First, there are the way the words were spelled: for instance, when you see *travail* spelled *trauell* in both the Quarto and Folio texts of *Troilus*, it suggests it was pronounced in the same way as *travel*. Second, there are the rhymes and puns which Shakespeare uses: in the play you'll hear *done* rhyming with *bone*, and *fool* is made to pun with *full*. And most important of all, there were the descriptions made by the scholars of the time, which gave detailed accounts of exactly how Elizabethan vowels and consonants were pronounced. How do we know the *r* was pronounced after vowels? Because Ben Jonson, among many others, tells us: he describes it as a 'doggy' sound (think *grrr*)!

Achilles—last syllable rhymes with *lays*
affection—ending is 'see-on'
after—drops the *f*
Ajax—rhymes with *a jakes*
another—second syllable is 'oh'
cousin—first syllable rhymes with *was*
Diomedes—last syllable rhymes with *days*
fault—drops the 'l'
fellow—ends in 'uh', as *fella*
flower—sounds like 'flohr'
Grecian—ending is 'ee–an'
haste—rhymes with *hast*
hour—sounds like 'ohr'
morrow—ends in 'uh'
move—rhymes with *love*
neither—rhymes with *tether*
none—rhymes with *moan*
nothing—sounds like *no thing*
once—has no 'w' at the beginning
one—rhymes with *own*
other—first syllable is 'oh'
pageant—ending is 'ee–ant'
picture—sounds like 'pic-tuhr'
pleasures—sounds like 'ple–zuhr'
prove—rhymes with *love*
quality—begins with 'kol', not 'kwo '
shoulder—drops the 'l'
taste—rhymes with *hast*
Thersites—first syllable rhymes with *are*; last one rhymes with *days*
Troilus and *Troy*—first syllable rhymes with *try*
Ulysses—first syllable is 'yuh' not 'yoo'; last syllable rhymes with *says*
woman —first syllable rhymes with *woe*
ye—sounds like 'yuh'
yea—sounds like modern yeah

PROLOGUE/PATROCLUS/SERVANT	Sam Alexander
ULYSSES	Penelope Beaumont
HECTOR/CALCHAS	Philip Bird
PANDARUS	Peter Forbes
THERSITES	Colin Hurley
ALEXANDER/DIOMEDES/PRIAM	Roger McKern
MENELAUS/PARIS	Thomas Padden
ACHILLES	Edward Peel
CRESSIDA/ANDROMACHE	Juliet Rylance
NESTOR/CASSANDRA	Hayley Jayne Standing
TROILUS	David Sturzaker
AGAMEMNON	Yolanda Vazquez
AJAX	Roger Watkins
AENEAS/HELEN	Liana Weafer
OTHER PARTS	played by members of the company
MD/CURTAL/SHAWM/RECORDER/SERPENT	Nicholas Perry
TRUMPET IN C/PERCUSSION	Fraser Tannock
VIOLIN/TROMBONE/PERCUSSION	Emily White
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MASTER OF SHAKESPEAREAN PRONUNCIATION	David Crystal
MASTER OF CLOTHING AND PROPERTIES	Rebecca Seager
COMPOSER/MASTER OF MUSIC	Joseph Phibbs
MASTER OF COMBAT	Tim Klotz
DIALECT COACH	Charmian Hoare
ASSISTANT TO THE MASTER OF PLAY	Joanna Turner
STAGE MANAGERS	Jason Benterman Sally Higson
TIRING HOUSE MANAGER	Paul Williams
TIRING HOUSE STAGE MANAGERS	Joni Carter Sophie Milne Lucy Southall David Young
TANGO CHOREOGRAPHY	Siân Williams
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Richard Howey
COMPANY MANAGER	Charlotte Geeves
PROPS SUPERVISOR	Jessica Drader
WARDROBE MANAGER	Deborah Watson
WIGS, HAIR AND MAKE-UP MANAGERS	Louise Ricci Julie Ruck
DEPUTY WARDROBE MANAGER	Nicola Evans
WARDROBE DEPUTY	Elaine Taylor
WARDROBE ASSISTANTS	Hannah Gunsberger Ana Zolotuhin

TROILUS & CRESSIDA

by William Shakespeare

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EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Greg Ripley-Duggan
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MUSIC MANAGER	Eva Koch-Schulte
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THEATRE INTERN	Catherine Duffy
HOUSE MANAGER	Celia Gilbert
DEPUTY HOUSE MANAGER	Kevin Emsdon
DUTY HOUSE MANAGERS	Cristin Moor Tanya Page Paul Taylor Verna Tucker
STEWARDS CO-ORDINATOR	Jean Jayer
ASSISTANT CO-ORDINATORS	Julie Patten Linda Spanner
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Giles Block **MASTER OF PLAY** talks to Libbi Lee about his approach to directing *Troilus and Cressida*.

Libbi Lee: *Do you have a particular directorial method, and how have you adapted it to working in original pronunciation?*

Giles Block: I'm not sure that I do; some directors work with an overt method, but I think my approach is more pragmatic. I have found that the greatest challenge in directing Shakespeare is to find a way in which thoughts can resonate. When you are speaking, more emphasis goes on *how* you shape a thought, rather than the actual words that you use. Hopefully the right words tumble out, but you are more conscious of the thought you are trying to pursue. This presents a challenge for the actor—they look at a page and can think it is the words that they have to learn, when in fact it is the thoughts.

It is a fascinating process to recapture the sounds that Shakespeare intended to be heard when he wrote. Last year I had nothing to do with the *Romeo and Juliet* original pronunciation project, and I was very sceptical about it. I had spent so much time and energy trying to make Shakespeare clear, but within about five minutes I realised yes, now I see, now I understand.

What was it that you came to understand?

The speech is more visceral and emotional, as if the words lie in a richer place. Also, in original pronunciation Shakespeare's speeches become more colloquial; we listen to characters communicating on a level of familiarity and warmth that suggests stronger relationships than we hear in Received Pronunciation. Original pronunciation allows us to dispense with the idea that Shakespeare needs to sound 'correct'—his verse is more immediate than that. At the same time, his metre, his puns, and his rhymes are reinstated, so that the words work, in performance, as intended.

What has stood out in the play to influence your direction?

The play throws up surprises continually; mysteries of character and motivation that make it endlessly fascinating. It is a brilliant play, so full of contrasting scenes—if I'm working on a scene of military high command, it is so different from the scenes where Troilus and Cressida meet—the play has such breadth.

Has directing the play changed your opinion of some of the play's great characters, such as Cressida?

Yes, I feel that I have learnt something about her character. Shakespeare changed many details from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. She's not a widow, for example, but probably a young girl. The interesting thing about Shakespeare's Cressida is that she is both virginal, and sexually knowing. It is her uncle, Pandarus, who has created this duality in her character: he is her guardian but also like her pimp, and Cressida calls him a 'bawd'. I also think that his grooming has led to Cressida having a very jaundiced attitude to love. She protects herself against Pandarus, but I think that a lot of her language is an echo of his language. This confusion about her sense of self makes her vulnerable and rather sad—a symptom of this is her belief that as soon as she gives herself to a man, the joy of love will go.

What do you see as Shakespeare's intentions in reshaping Chaucer's story?

I think that frequently Shakespeare takes a story and speculates on what could have really happened to reach that outcome—how Troilus could have come to be destroyed by Cressida's perceived unfaithfulness. So, in Troilus, Shakespeare creates a character that is too idealistic and one who falls for a woman who has been groomed to arouse desire. But Troilus knows little about the world, and all he can think about is what his first night of sex will be like. Then, extraordinarily, Troilus and Cressida meet and fall in love. It is this moment that is central to his interpretation of the story; Cressida learns that love isn't what she

MASTER PIECE DIRECTION

thought; instead she sees that it could be something life-enhancing and enduring, but only if she stays with Troilus. She knows, I think, that she can't manage alone: she is not the stuff of martyrs, not a Viola or a Helena in *All's Well That Ends Well*. When she arrives at the Greek camp, Shakespeare adds a kissing scene, which is not in the Chaucer, because he wants us to understand the vulnerability of someone in her position.

Another influential voice is that of Thersites. How do you see his role in the play?

Thersites is a wonderfully abrasive voice: the play is shot through with people doubting the value of things, and Thersites, in this spectrum of voices, is in a position where he sees no good in anybody. So he mocks his fellows, and pours bile on every human action that he watches—a voyeur, like Pandarus. But Thersites is driven to it; he is so angry that he feels driven to seek out all the depravity and dishonour to justify how he feels about himself and the world, and how the world has treated him.

Voyeurism and spectatorship recur throughout the play. How have you found the Globe, with its unique architectural relationship between audience and performer, as a space in which to direct?

The Globe is the ideal place to put on the play because it is all about watching and being watched, and people watching people watching people watching. I'm really interested in the movement between the stage and the balcony, and I'm always on the lookout for ways in which it might have been used. In the play, I have Troilus and Ulysses on the upper level watching Diomedes and Cressida down below, and then Thersites somewhere on the stage watching them all. Also, the pillars come in to play in several scenes. They are no longer obstructions, but facilitate the presentation of spectatorship, seen and unseen, in the play.

In the last scenes of the play you use costume reminiscent of World War One. Why do feel that this is a pertinent modern parallel?

I suspect there are many modern parallels I could have drawn with the destruction of love, and brutal revenge, but I find this one particularly appropriate. We end up in a kind of WW1 look, not because there aren't more recent parallels in the history of our civilisation, but because there is something about the madness of those trenches and the length of the war that seems particularly appropriate. As the action approaches a ferocious stalemate, it seems fitting that the characters become indistinguishable from one another—voices on a muddy plain. The war finishes with the intervention of Achilles, but the play seems to close without any cathartic resolution.

There is an ongoing academic quandary as to the genre of the play. It is described as a comedy in the first quarto, a history in the second quarto, and is placed with the tragedies in the First Folio. What do you think?

I don't think that Shakespeare wrote in genres, he just didn't repeat himself. Yet some themes do run thread-like through his oeuvre: the sanctity of love and a horror of adultery. *Troilus and Cressida* brings together two stories; a war fought over an adulterous wife, and a love affair that can't survive the pressure that war places upon it. It seems to me that there are two endings to the play—the possibility of an upbeat conclusion when Troilus says 'Strike a free march! To Troy with comfort go,' which is then punctured when Pandarus returns to the stage. At one time I was going to cut Pandarus, but I found that his speech conveys something unique to this play about the perversion of love—about love being equated with desire, which is perhaps, in Shakespeare's eyes, at the root of everything that is wrong with the world.