

...RICHARD GLOUCESTER IS AT HAND...

...JOURNEY PLANET 24...RICHARD III...





Journey Planet 24 - June 2015
In Memory of Richard III
James Bacon ~ Editors ~ Christopher J Garcia

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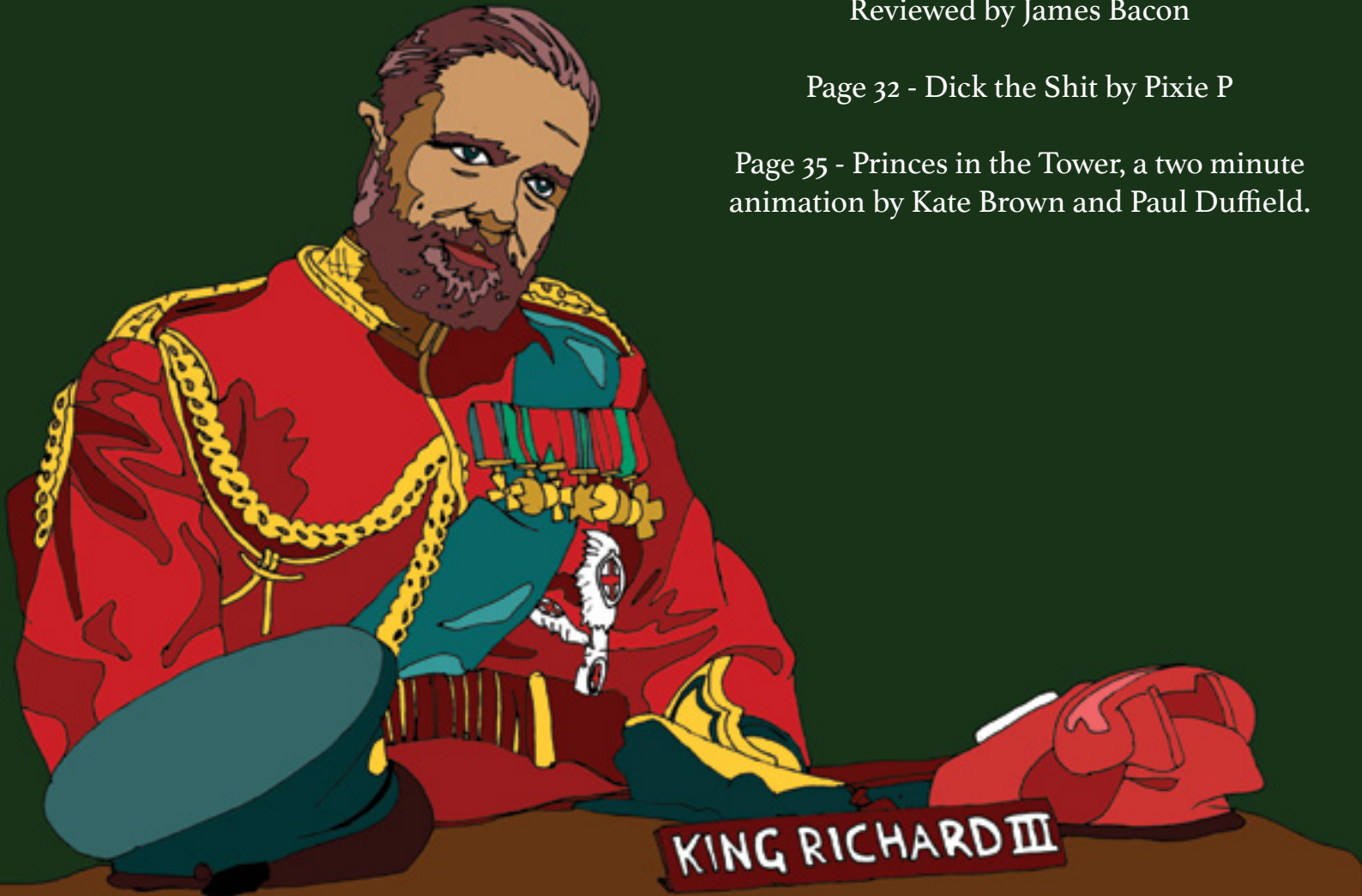
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Editorials

If Richard of Glouster had lived in times like these, we'd know. We'd have photos of his deformities, and know how bad they were. We'd know if public opinion was in his favor. We'd be able to put together a list of truths about him, and another set of likely truths, and an obvious set of lies. No matter how powerful the reach of the Tudor Facebook presence, we'd know all sorts of things about Richard III, almost beyond debate.

You see, we don't know. We're not 100% sure where the Battle of Bosworth Field happened, and if someone had checked in on FourSquare, we'd be able to pin-point it. We have no idea what happened to the Princes in the Tower. In fact, when the young Edward V's Instagram account went stale, folks would have known something was up. Plus, do you think Sir James Tyrrell would have been able to keep it off of Twitter?

Miles totes just made his bones someone would have posted.

Also, I find it highly likely that after their disappearance, the hashtag #princeslivesmatter would have been a popular one.

Today, we know. There are few people not on social media (M and Jay are the only two of my close friends with no presence) and that's a good thing if you're going to be studying people. When people look back on my life, they'll know that I was an over-weight 40 year old whose twins were the apples of my eye! They'd know who my wife was, who my associates were, how I spent my days, what I ate, and most importantly, what I looked like. Part of the joy of researching those long-gone years is that we don't know for sure. Each step along the communications/record-keeping evolutionary ladder gives us a better idea of what the world was like as a whole, and that makes it a bit simpler to piece together an accurate picture of place, and most importantly, people.

James Bacon

I hated Shakespeare. *Hamlet*. What a dreadfully boring story. As usual it was on my school curriculum. *Julius Caesar* had seemed moderately OK, but then came this fecking idiot. A long drawn out, uninteresting play, with no excitement and much melancholy. Tragedy is right.



It's all absurd
Time to tell the truth
'Bout King Richard the third
~ Horrible Histories - Richard III

So I left school with utter disdain for Shakespeare. Jane Austen. James Joyce. Educational.

I spotted Ian McKellen's *Richard III* on DVD and the cover caught my eye. I put it on, and the opening scenes looked like a Second World War military setting; a fine house, like many used during the Second World War, but this a headquarters, an officer speaking to his superior, father and son, King and Prince, all in British military uniform. The news is grim. The King retires for bed.

The dog with the prince looks up. There is a rumble and a suddenly a Tank smashes through the grandiose wall and a camouflaged smocked man in a gas mask leads men in the breach and slays the King.

This is Richard, Duke of Gloucester and it is wonderful.

The setting is a 1930's Britain. Utilising as it does the uniforms, insignia and paraphernalia of Britain and Germany of the time to distinguish the two sides in this war between royal families just astounded me in it's brilliance. I loved it.

McKellen's Richard was perfect; he played the villain so well, as did the amazing cast, from Robert Downey Jr. to Maggie Smith. I thought it was fabulous.

I had to readjust my opinion of Shakespeare, and soon realised that, like many creators, some of the work really appealed to me and some just did not. What was good, and something that I can only attribute to his brilliance, was that his plays are so adaptable and therefore, for me at least, could reach out and connect.

McKellen had adapted Richard Eyers' stage production for film, giving him even greater importance. I loved how landmarks which I could recognise were used out of place, giving another slight tilt to the setting.

Battersea Power Station was well known for me because of *Blue Peter*; I'm pretty sure it was Janet Ellis who told me as a child that it would be a huge entertainment centre. It has featured in many of my favourite films from John Hurt's *1984* to *Children of Men*, and both *Dr Who* and *Sherlock* have prowled around it's iconic structure. The Senate House of the University of London which houses the government is another place I know, and indeed have visited, this is considered to have been an influence on George Orwell for his Ministry of Truth in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Senate House was actually used during the second world wary the Censorship Department of the Ministry of Information.

Richard's uniform is a personification of Nazi design; indeed his flags, Red with a white circle and a black boar head

inside, is so obviously derivative it gives the viewer a total and instantaneous understanding of the good against evil setting. Of course Richard soon ensures he is known as the villain, but this is an important cue for the viewer, it helps. McKellen's version helps.

The play is well adapted; the Duchess of York sees more screen time, Rivers is killed in front of the audience, many of the monologues were shortened or not used - giving it a quicker feel - and the ending was similarly but cleverly different in a number of ways.

This version of the play captured my imagination so much. The setting obviously appealed, but also it was how I could see it as a strange type of alternative history, moving the setting and era as he did. Then of course there is the action; this film was full of scenes with trains, planes and automobiles, and the violence was modern in it's portrayal.

One of the tanks used in the film, a Czech T-34, was bought and then left on wasteland on Mandela Way in Bermondsey, London. It has been painted many times from pink to most recently with a type of yellow tiger stripe with a poppy on the turret. Along with the T-34, T54 and T-55 Soviet tanks also featured. The iconic American M3 Half-track was more obvious amongst the lesser known military vehicles as the Citroën-Kégresse C4 P.17 and Sonder Kfz-1, mixed with the Rolls Royces, Bentleys and indeed Mercedes Benz 320.

Whether it be Richard blasting a Lewis Gun, or grounding his Dodge WC 57 or calling out "A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!", it all just fitted in well.

I was soon addicted and, of course, learning about the Plantagenets, the War of the Roses, the Battle at Bosworth, but I also started to enjoy other versions. The Laurence Olivier version left me a bit cold, but the Propeller production at Hampstead Theatre, which I went to twice, really impressed me. Here again a totally different setting but more brutal in many ways.

Mark Rylance was OK, as was Kevin Spacey, but Martin Freeman was so incredible. Here again the setting was beautifully well done and there was much adjustment to who we get to see on stage and who gets killed.

I found other plays I liked; *Coriolanus* modernised and set in what I felt was a Balkan setting, again featuring Soviet tanks, directed and lead by Ralph Fiennes, a part that Christopher Walken also played on stage; the Patrick Stewart version of *Macbeth* set in Soviet Russia. So I have come to love *Richard III* and am willing to give other plays a go, although David Tennant in *Richard II* was mediocre upon reflection.

Never took the crown
With the ilegal power
Never killed my nephews



The princes in the tower
Tudor propaganda
~ Horrible Histories - Richard III

Vehicles in the film:

http://www.imcdb.org/movie_114279-Richard-III.html

Mandela Way tank – with it's gun trained on Council Buildings. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandela>

[Way T-34 Tank](#)

I hope you enjoy this issue. I am grateful to Autun Purser for the cover and artwork and I am grateful to Steven, Joan, Chuck, Kate, Ruth, our fabulous contributors. I am very pleased as this issue really feels good. It looks good, and I know Chris has been working on it a long time. We are still working on a World War I issue, an Art issue, and Letters in Absentia. No doubt other ideas will come up as we go forward and a couple are actively being put together. Chris and myself did want to say though, we do welcome both contributors and ideas for future issues.

I am in America as I write this and on my way, meandering through various book shops and burger bars, to the Worldcon in Spokane. It is an interesting year, that is for sure, but the individual impact and upset that have occurred to folk is regrettable. I am indeed still proud to be nominated, and grateful for that, and will hold my head high, knowing that readers and fans felt that *Journey Planet* was worthy of a nomination, and I am thankful for this honour and recognition. Onwards to Worldcon. March on, join bravely, let us to't pell-mell If not to heaven, then hand in hand to hell.

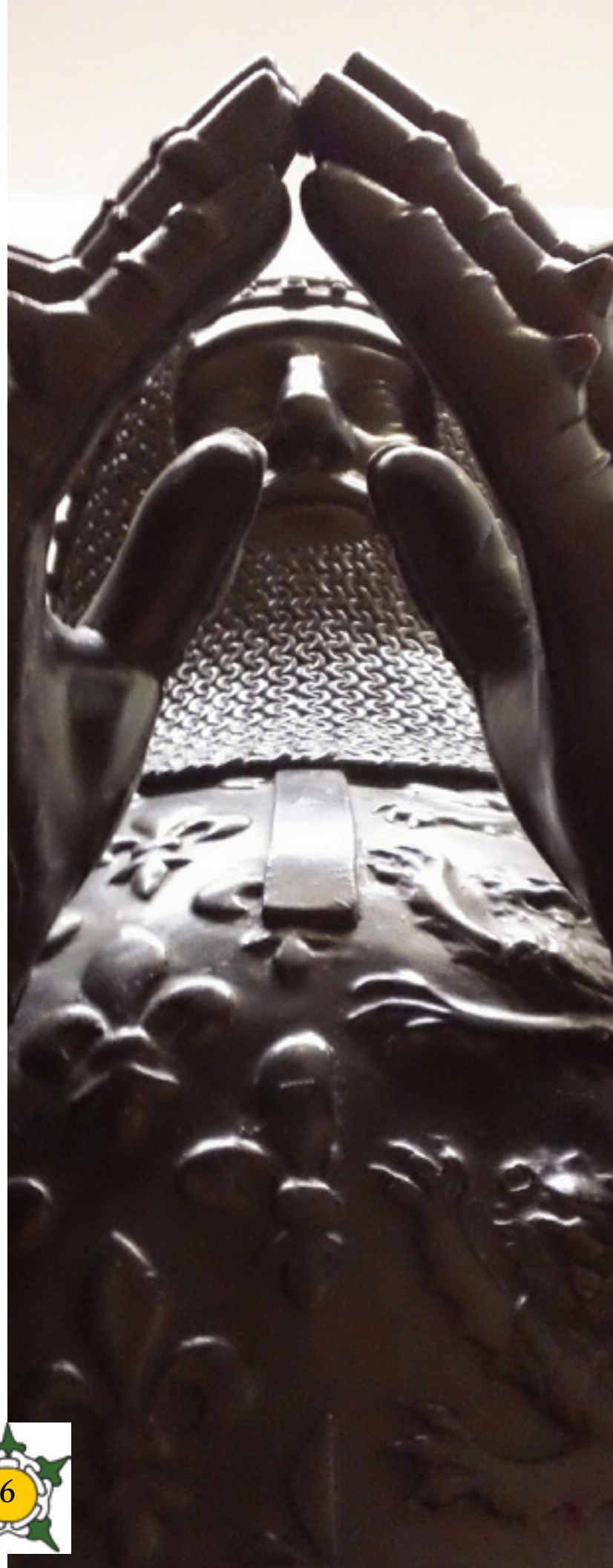
About Our Featured Artist - Autun Purser

Autun Purser is a deep sea ecologist working in Bremen, Germany. He is also a freelance illustrator specialising in science fiction illustration.

Over the last few years he has enjoyed some success with his 'Fantastic Travel Destinations' series of posters (<http://www.apillustration.co.uk/project-fantastic-travel-destinations/>), advertising the dubious delights of various destinations described in unusual fiction. The posters are all designed using a limited colour palette and following the format of the old rail travel posters common in the UK from the 1940s - 1960s. The travel posters have been exhibited at various recent conventions, as well as having been used by Gollancz for 'masterworks' publicity.

Particularly keen on eastern European and Russian science fiction from the cold war days, he is currently designing a screenprint series based on output from the great Prague TV and film studio, Barrandov. These will follow on from a set of images based on 'Ikarie XB1' (<http://www.apillustration.co.uk/project-ikarie-xb-1/>)

In 2017 he will be the Artist Guest of Honour at the 2017 Eurocon in Dortmund, Germany.



Some Thoughts on Richard III

By Steven H Silver

In 1987, I was studying in Britain and had the fortune to work with Pamela Tudor-Craig, Lady Wedgwood. I was interested in the life of Richard III and she had curated a major exhibit on Richard III for the National Portrait Gallery in 1973. She agreed to guide me in an independent study of Richard III that gave me the chance to see the non-public parts of the Society of Antiquaries, the Museum of London, York Cathedral, and the Tower of London. What follows are revisions of some of the notes I took during my work with her.

Upon the death of Edward IV, Richard realized that if he permitted his sister-in-law to retain custody of Edward V, Richard's life would be forfeit. The Queen and her relatives, therefore, gave Richard, in his view, an ultimatum of either acquiring Edward V or seeing his fortune, and possibly his life, vanish.

Once he had control of Edward V and Richard of York, Richard realized that the "brainwashing" of the children against him by their Woodville kin was so complete that even away from their direct influence, what Edward had been taught would carry over into his reign. I am convinced that much of this line of thinking was either presented or nurtured by Henry Stafford, the Duke of Buckingham, who viewed himself another kingmaker, and William Hastings, as a rival for that power.

It is also possible that Buckingham, may have killed the Edward IV's sons without Richard's approval as a way to strengthen his own position in cementing Richard's claim to the throne.

Buckingham's influence on Richard was great and the King knew this. His refusal to see Buckingham before his execution seems to show that Richard felt that the Duke had the ability to persuade Richard to change his mind concerning the execution.

During Richard's reign, Richard consistently made gross errors of judgment, using leniency where he





should have been ruthless and being ruthless when he could have been lenient. In the case of Hastings, Richard could most likely have avoided the necessity of an execution, however, he chose to be ruthless. However, Richard, who tended to have a suspicious nature of nearly everybody, seems to have a blind spot in any view towards the possibility of rebellion to place Henry Tudor on the throne. Even after the “Buckingham rebellion in August of 1483, Henry “Tidder” wasn’t mentioned in a proclamation by Richard until 21 June 1485. Richard’s strange inability to realize the seriousness of Henry’s pretensions to the throne eventually caused his downfall.

Concerning the death of Edward, Richard’s son: After Edward died, Richard appears to begin to lose faith in his crown. He had pinned all his hopes of a dynasty on his son and Edward’s death left a large void for Richard to fill. The loss of his heir was a major setback to Richard and the length of time between the death of the heir apparent and Richard naming of an heir designate seems to point to an uncharacteristic lackadaisical attitude in Richard.

With the death of his wife, Anne, less than a year later, Richard’s resolve to hold onto his throne seems to have weakened further. Many of his strongest barons had left the country to join the “court” of Henry Tudor and Richard’s own family was dead. Perhaps Richard realized that his crown couldn’t bring him happiness and it became the symbol, for him, of his shattered hopes. In many ways, Richard seems not to have taken Henry Tudor seriously as a threat and Richard’s final charge at Bosworth, his household knights against

Tudor, seems to have been calculated to end in Richard’s death. Instead of courage, perhaps it shows the cowardice of a man afraid to keep on living who felt a glorious death in battle would be better than life as a king or ignominious death under the hand of an usurper.

On the other hand, King Louis XI of France had made a similar attack on the Comte de Saint-Pol at Montlhéry in 1465 as Richard did on Henry. Richard would have known about that attack and may have hoped that he could recreate it and save the day.

One of the most interesting and often overlooked individuals in the story of Richard III’s downfall and his subsequent reputation is Bishop John Morton, who would later serve as Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of England. Richard’s brother, Edward IV had appointed Morton Bishop of Ely in 1479, but after Edward’s death Morton spoke out against Richard III and was sent into exile.

Although Morton had never met Henry Tudor, he was instrumental in getting backing for and organizing the invasion force led by Tudor. The first time Henry VII met Morton was at his Coronation and Morton began to receive rewards almost immediately was given much power and had a good relationship with the Tudors until his death in 1501.

One member of Morton’s household from 1490 to 1492 was a young clerk named Thomas More. Now best known for writing *Utopia* and standing up to Henry VIII when he was Lord Chancellor and his eventual martyrdom. However More also wrote *This History of King Richard III*, which was strongly based on the stories he heard about Richard III in Morton’s household and carries so much of Morton’s enmity towards Richard that Sir Clements Markham theorized that the work’s actual author was Archbishop Morton. In any event, the book went on to become the primary source of the most popular image of Richard III, that written by William Shakespeare.

Morton was also the inventor of a clever Catch-22 style fundraising ploy that he made use of while serving as Henry VII’s Lord Chancellor from 1487-1500. His technique is called Morton’s Fork and essentially states that if a man is living lavishly, he is clearly wealthy and can afford to pay taxes. However, if a man is living modestly, it means he is hiding his money and can also afford to pay taxes.

The most famous portrait of Richard III is the one that exists in the National Portrait Gallery and is widely copied. It shows Richard wearing a chain of office and playing with his rings. However, there are two lesser known portraits of him. Both in the Society of Antiquaries, the earliest paint-

“It occurred to me some years ago, that the picture of Richard theThird, as drawn by historians, was a character formed by prejudice and invention.” Horace Walpole



“He was malicious, wrathful, envious, and from before his birth, ever perverse.”
Thomas More

ing also shows him playing with his rings and another one that is rare seen.

This other portrait of Richard hanging in the Society of Antiquaries is different from the National Portrait Gallery version and the other Society of Antiquaries portrait in many ways. The chin and nose are more pointed than in the other two and the painting has a faded look to it. Instead of playing with his rings as Richard is doing in the other portraits, in this one, he is shown holding a sword. Normally, this would suggest a warrior, but in the case of this portrait, the sword is broken off to a jagged edge, suggesting he has been defeated. The implications of this are that the portrait was painted after Bosworth Field. Even in regular light, changes can be seen in the left shoulder and arm, showing that the shoulder and arm have been made more normal. Originally, this Richard was given both an hump and a withered left arm. Because of the original arm and shoulder, as well as the broken sword, this painting was probably painted near the beginning of the reign of Henry VII. This assumption, however, leads to the question of why a portrait of Richard would have been painted at that time instead of a picture of Henry defeating Richard at Bosworth Field. The features of Richard's face in this picture seem to be much less distinct than in the other portrait, especially his lips, which are usually very sharp. His eyes, also, are more washed out in this portrait than in the others. Another way in which this picture differs from the NPG portrait is that Richard's hump is on the "wrong" side. It is almost as if the painter had never actually seen Richard or a portrait of Richard, but had simply heard he was supposed to have had an hump.



"Suspicious and calumny were fastened on Richard as so many assassinations."
Horace Walpole





Miracle in a Municipal Parking Lot

by Joan Szechtmán

The announcement February 4, 2013 that the remains found under a municipal parking lot in Leicester, UK were, beyond a reasonable doubt, those of Richard III was the culmination of years of research, cajoling, and begging by fellow Ricardian, Philippa Langley.

According to extant records, after Richard's body was exhibited for two days, he was buried in the choir of the Greyfriars church in Leicester. The site remained unmarked until ten years later when Henry VII gave ten pounds for a monument to be erected over the site. The friary was destroyed during the dissolution and Richard's grave was lost. A legend that his remains were tossed into the River Soar took root after John Speed could not find Richard's grave when he searched for it in 1612 because he had looked for it at the site of the Blackfriars.

After extensive research, Langley determined that if anything remained of the Greyfriars, that it was under a municipal parking lot in Leicester. But before she could campaign for an archaeological dig for Richard's remains, there had to be something to compare the remains to.

A few years ago (ca. 2005), in order to identify whether some remains in Belgium were those of Richard's sister,

I, here, whom the earth encloses under various
coloured marble,
Was justly called Richard the Third.
I was Protector of my country, an uncle ruling
on behalf of his nephew.
I held the British kingdoms by broken faith.

~ Held to be a Translation of Richard's Epitaph ~



"No unskilled captain was he in war, for which his disposition was more suited than for peace."

Thomas More



Margaret, John Ashdown-Hill had tracked down the maternal line descendent of Cecily Neville, Richard III's mother, to Joy Ibsen. Her mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) is the same as Richard's mom's. ((Her mtDNA belongs to haplogroup J whose ancestors can be traced back 10,000 years to Syria. This clan represents about 17% of the European population. The mtDNA shared by Richard III, Ibsen, and another donor belongs to haplogroup J1c2c is rarer still. It is shared by only 2% of the European population.)) This is significant because the mother passes her exact mtDNA to her offspring, but only the female passes that mtDNA down to the next generation. So Joy's children and Cecily's children shared the same mtDNA. Langley now had her exemplar that could be used for comparison if skeletal remains were found and if other evidence such as battle trauma and that the skeleton was male could be compared to. It should be noted that Joy Ibsen had died prior to this search, but her son, Michael, was willing to provide his DNA, where his mtDNA is identical to his mother's and to Cecily's—17 generations back. However, his children would not have his mtDNA, but would have their mother's instead.

This now was a project that the University of Leicester would consider, but this kind of dig would not be cheap. Langley sought funding. Once she had the funding the dig

was scheduled, but days before it was about to start, one of the donors had to back out £10,000. The project appeared to be doomed. However, fellow Ricardian Annette Carson created a flyer for funds for the project that was emailed to Ricardians around the world. Within two weeks individual small donations made up for the short fall and then some. Yay crowd funding! The dig was back on track. On a personal note, I was thrilled to be part of the dig in a monetary capacity.

Late in August 2012 the parking lot was cleared, three trenches were dug and almost immediately the archaeological team found human leg bones and artifacts indicating that they had found the friary. Jo Appleby, Osteology expert, immediately began excavating the site where the leg bones were uncovered. After a few days, she discovered a fully articulated male skeleton that showed battle trauma and scoliosis, a curvature of the spine that would make one shoulder appear higher than the other. Meanwhile, the University of Leicester team was able to determine that the location where this skeleton was found was the friary's choir.

Now that it seemed to be a good chance that this could be Richard III's remains, DNA and bone samples were sent for analysis and a 3-D computer model was made of the skull

"The murders committed by Henry were indeed executions and executions pass for prudence with prudent historians..."



...for when a successful king is chief justice, historians become a voluntary jury."

Horace Walpole

for facial reconstruction. On February 4, 2013, the University of Leicester archaeological team announced that the DNA and bone analysis confirmed beyond a reasonable doubt that these were the remains of Richard III.

That would reduce these bloody days again,
And make poor England weep in streams of
blood!

Let them not live to taste this land's increase
That would with treason wound this fair
land's peace!

Now civil wounds are stopp'd, peace lives
again:

That she may long live here, God say amen!

~ Richmond's final lines in Shakespeare's Richard III~

This find after Richard III was first interred some 527 years ago is made all the more remarkable by what could have gone wrong but didn't. Richard's feet were missing, thought to have been destroyed in the 19th-century during building construction. As noted earlier, the funding almost failed to come together. To obtain an mtDNA exemplar, a living descendent from the female line needed to be found. In addition, to be sure of the exemplar, a second female lineage was needed. In both instances, the last of the living descendents of the female lineage are alive today. If this research had started a few years from now, we may not have had the mtDNA for comparison.



“Madam, so thrive I in my enterprise
And dangerous success of bloody wars,



As I intend more good to you and yours,
Than ever you or yours were by me wrong'd!”
Richard the III according to Shakespeare

The Lesser-Known Theories of The Princes in the Tower

by Chris Garcia

The story is one of the most famous cold cases in history. Two “Princes”, well technically the discredited King of England, twelve year old Edward V of England and nine year old Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York, were never seen again after being held in the Tower of London under orders of their uncle, the King Richard III as a way to make his claim on the throne more definite. While never solved, the bones of two young boys were discovered a couple of hundred years later.

They were almost certainly murdered, most likely under the orders of Dick 3. Or maybe Hank Tudor. Or possibly The Duke of Buckingham. These are the theories most frequently bandied about, but these are not the only theories. Some of the less frequently cited theories deserve a little attention.

The Sister’s Act

First put forward in the 1580s in Thomas Cormant’s *The Third Booke of Femenine Di-ceptiones*, Cormant takes the concept of Edward and Richard’s oldest sister, Elizabeth, being given leave to visit the Princes in the Tower one evening. Lizzy, a wise and tactical women, had been conspiring with Henry Tudor AND Baron Stanley to bring about the rise of the House of Tudor, of which she would be the Patriarch. Cormant claims that it was through her that Stanley was convinced to hold back from entering the fray at the Battle of Bosworth Field, and then to turn against Richard III, leading to the Lancastrian victory. She had planned to marry Henry Tu-



“It occurred to me some years ago, that the picture of Richard theThird, as drawn by historians, was a character formed by prejudice and invention.” Horace Walpole



dor all along, but knew in order to become Queen, she would need to eliminate all the potential male competition from the House of York.

“Elizebet dispatched her bruthers after pullyng tem to her perfum’ed bosm, and foll’wed to led di-cepton ‘gainst her uncles reyne.” said Cormant of Elizabeth’s deception and murder of her brothers.

The story, supposedly based on whispers heard in drinking halls frequented by Palace guards, is that Elizabeth had planned to bring about Tudormania by pulling a Michael Corleonean murderous secret coup. She herself murdered her brothers, then made her play at Richard through Henry. Cormant follows up by claiming that Elizabeth basically ran England, and faked her own death twenty years later, continuing to run England for several more decades.

Cormant’s theories have been taken down as the rantings of a woman-hating malcontent, but his writings decrying 16th century journalistic ethics in gambling and gaming have received more interest lately.

“I don’t see it as fatuous to offer supporting evidence for a hypothesis. I see none in return. Is it not more fatuous to blame a man for a crime with no evidence even of a crime, let alone his guilt, because a playwright says so?”

Matthew Lewis



“and as it was easy to perceive, under all the glare of encomiums which historians have heaped on the wisdom of Henry the Seventh, that he was a mean and unfeeling...



The Accident

Shakespeare’s lost first version of Richard III supposedly told the full truth of the Two Princess, but Elizabeth I, having seen the play performed privately, demanded The Bard change the story. According to diarist and former lover to The Sun Queen, Julius Shrewsman, Shakespeare depicted Richard visiting young Edward at the Tower, bringing toys to the boys, along with a large ham. Upon arriving, the young King jumped into his Uncle’s arms, and since King Richard had the gimpy arm, he dropped Edward, who hit his head on a small table, killing the boy.

“My kindred, slain: and by this weary arm.” Shrewsman claims Willy Shakes wrote in the original version of the play.

Since Edward had witnessed his brother’s death, Richard had to clean up his mess. He then ordered the two Princes hidden under a staircase.

While few took this claim seriously, Shrewsman’s diary is held at the Folger Shakespeare Library in a special collection (Manuscript, ca. 1589-1607. Shelfmark H.b.1.) and the marginalia describing other early performances of Shakespeare’s works are frequently quoted by scholars.

The Affair

One of the darker theories was put forth by NAMBLA co-founder and historian David Thorstad concerned King Richard again. Seemingly based on some of Shrewsman’s description of Shakespeare’s original presentation, Thorstad proposes that Richard went to the Tower to visit Edward, who he had taken his lover. Upon arriving at their lodgings in the Tower, Richard came across Edward and his brother engaged in sexual activity and flew into a jealous rage, murdering them both and telling his men to “bury their bones where they’ll be tred upon forever,” which led to their being buried beneath the stairs where the bones were found two centuries later.

Few see this tale as anything more than the rantings of a really creepy dude, though the eight pages of citations Thorstad compiled were exhaustively collected during research done at more than fifty archives around the world.

The False Murder-Suicide

This theory was first presented as a sub-textual, off-handed comment made by Edgar Allan Poe’s early detective C. Auguste Dupin in the unpublished story The Secret of Jeann dePrey, then expanded by John MacDonald into the story “The Murders in the White Tower”. Richard goes to visit the boys at the Tower, only this time, they’re dead when

...tyrant, I suspected that they had blackened his rival, till Henry, by the contrast, should appear in a kind of amiable light.” Horace Walpole

he gets there; one has been run-through, and the other is laying, having fallen on his sword, a note declaring it a suicide on the bed. Richard orders the room locked, and then spends the rest of the story working out what happened to the boys, eventually coming to the decision that Henry Tudor had managed to insert an agent, James Tyrrell, into his secret circle and use him to work out the covert aspect of the Lancastrian takeover of the English Crown. This was then the reason Richard had Tyrrell held and tortured.

When asked about his research process for the novel, MacDonald said simple, "I sat at my typewriter and found the home row. That was my entire research process."

"Richard III had no need to execute Warwick, as Warwick's claim had been discredited by Clarence's treason. The princes' claims were much more powerful, and hence had to be dealt with swiftly. No doubt Warwick would have been removed later, as Richard only ruled for two years."

Julian Sutcliffe

The Food Poisoning

In his 1783 book, *The Safe Cook*, Guy duPin presents a story to illustrate the dangers of leaving mutton out during warm weather.

Translated from duPin's original manuscript "In the colder months it is far safer to hold mutton even on a table in a kitchen, so long as it is covered with a loose cloth. In the summer months, leaving a leg of mutton such can easily lead to digestive distress of the worst kind. According to Millefiore's writings, It was just such an over-sight that led to the death of young King Edward V and his young brother, and the execution of several members of the kitchen staff, and the reason for the secrecy around their disappearance, as Richard III would have wanted to cover up his staff's incompetence."

There are a compule of problems with this story. The first, the name Millefiore, is likely a reference to Giovanni di Lorenzo, who was called 'Thousand Flowers' by locals for his fondness of decorating his lodgings with great numbers of flowers. He would have not arrived in London until 1503. Next, none of the staff of the Tower were executed near the time of the Prince's disappearance. Finally, he was known to be illiterate.

Most think this was simply an invention of duPin, who was familiar with English cooking techniques of the fifteenth century, only as a way to provide some color to his cookbook.

The French Connection

Two separate theories have sprung up, both claiming that at least one of the Princes, survived and made it to France. While Perkin Warbeck's story of claiming to be Richard of Shrewsbury is well-known, the lesser-known theory that both young boys were smuggled out of England into France, where they were cared for by the family of the Anne of Brittany, who Edward was betrothed to until he was declared illegitimate. The story goes that Edward and Anne were dear friends, and perhaps even secretly married, and that Edward fathered her first three children. James Lincoln's 1833 seminal conspiracy book *The Guide To The True English Dominion*, outlines the idea that having Edward father three largely-legitimate heirs with the Duchess of Brittany would allow the Yorkists to rise again. Perkins may well have been Richard of Shrewsbury, and his return was only made after the death of his brother from some lingering disease. Lincoln provides a great many pieces of documentation that seem to hint that someone of Yorkist visage may have been the father of Anne's children. Then again, other claims in the book include the replacement of Elizabeth the First by an impostor after the original had been accidentally executed in the Tower, that George III was never mentally ill, and that the true rightful King of England was a French winemaker.



"Of the death of this prince, Henry the Sixth," says Fabian, "divers tales wer told. But the most common fame



went, that he was sticken with a dagger by the handes of the duke of Gloceter.""
Horace Walpole

Building Problems

In her massive history of the Tower of London, Daria L'Aventura provides a detailed look at the various states of the fortification over the centuries. In the fourth volume of her work, she details the layout of the section of the Tower in which the Princes were resident, pointing that that extreme renovations were underway, including widening staircases, and re-working both sleeping chambers and secure rooms. L'Aventura points out that the rooms in the portion of the White Tower where the Princes had been kept were next to an area where many changes were made during both Richard's and Henry's reigns, including the removal of a wall of their room. L'Adventure says this certainly proves that the Princes were not only dead by the time of the removal of the wall (1483), but that it also points to the likely cause of their deaths.

Collapses in castles of the period are well-documented. L'Aventura suggests that the removal of the wall had led to a collapse that crushed both of the Princes. This sort of code violation could easily have caused King Richard III to execute the builders performing the work, the Tyrrell Company. Thus, since much of the Castle was under-construction, it was an easy choice of the builders to put the bodies of the Princes under an incomplete staircase, a solution many modern contractors have used in similar situations.

Bare Bones

Poet Francesca Mymanowitz's most famous poem, *The Labours Lost in Love*, posits that the Princes existed only on paper, and as a series of impostor children paraded out whenever one was needed for a public event.

Did the little princes scream
as pillows blocked their breath?
No, for air is not needed
by imaginary lungs facing death.

The poem, written in the early 1920s, was published in the *New Yorker*, and led to a massive debate in the pages of the following week's *New York Times* debating the idea that Mymanowitz had falsely defamed the Plantagenet kings. When asked where the idea came that the Princes were not real, her answer surprised some.

"I looked at many paintings, and the boys never look the same. Obviously, the painters were not painting the same boys, and the only logical reason would be that the Princes only existed in concept and different boy were used to play them."

Dragging the River

Historian Louise Salmes rocked the Richard III Society annual meeting in 1998 delivering a lecture titled "The Quote-Unquote Princes in the Tower" speculating that the Princes in the Tower were not King Edward and Richard of Shrewsbury, but Emily, Queen of England, and Recinda, her sister.

The backbone of this argument is very simple – Edward IV knew that this was a contentious time, and that his brother Richard was gonna be gunning for the throne. The only way to guarantee that his heirs would continue inheriting the Kingdom of England was to ensure male heirs. Having already produced three daughters with Elizabeth Woodville, the family decided to claim that their fourth child was, in fact, a male, and therefore heir to the throne. They played the same trick with the next birth as well.

The deception fell apart when someone tipped off Richard that they were not what they thought. Salmes even concocted a scenario where Richard rushed to the White Tower, and when he burst into the 'Princes' quarters, he only found two servants cleaning the room. The servants were actually the 'princes'

Salmes' most shocking revelation has to be that Edgar/Emily was whisked off to France, where she was married to a dignitary from the Court of Avignon. In this scenario, it would be Elizabeth of York, Edward IV's eldest daughter, who would have been the rightful heir to the throne of England. She would eventually marry Henry VII, which would have meant that her off-spring, Henry VIII would have been the heir to the throne of England... which is exactly what happened!

It should be noted that David Icke discussed the Two Princes in his book *My Compleat Truest History of England* and noted that Richard III did, in fact, murder the Princes... though Richard was, in fact, a reptilian.





A Richard III for Our Generation by Chuck Serface

On March 26, 2015, more than five hundred years after his death, Richard III again was laid to rest at Leicester Cathedral. This time, the Archbishop of Canterbury presided, and days before thousands of English had lined the streets with white roses, the symbol of the House of York. Most are familiar with the popular image of this last Plantagenet king, the misshapen Machiavellian who ordered his nephews murdered after supposedly scheming his way on to the English throne. Most also know about his death at Bosworth Field, the battle at which the victorious Henry Tudor claimed the crown, becoming Henry VII, ending the War of the Roses, and establishing the Tudor dynasty. Now scholars are questioning Richard's commonly accepted villainous image, wondering how much is fact and how much is a version written and promoted by the winning Tudor king?

William Shakespeare's malignant image has done nothing for Richard's reputation, of course. Indeed, the majority, like me, have come to know him through the Bard's play. Peter Cook has great fun spoofing Sir Laurence Olivier's black-wigged iteration in the first series of *Black Adder*. Cook's Richard was a loving uncle, eventually murdered by *Black Adder* himself. Audiences laugh, however, noting the twists on both history and Shakespeare's monumental tragedy. But while knowledgeable about history, Shakespeare never intended to present accounts accurately in his History plays. Academicians have catalogued the moments when Shakespeare sways from canonical lore, but perhaps he merely was referencing what was commonly

"It occurred to me some years ago, that the picture of Richard the Third, as drawn by historians, was a character formed by prejudice and invention." Horace Walpole



"If I did take the kingdom from your sons,
To make amends, Ill give it to your daughter."
King Richard III in Shakespeare's play

accepted during his time? In any event, Shakespeare wasn't interested in presenting history per se. He explores, among other things, themes involving politics and leadership. Throughout these several plays Shakespeare teaches viewers and readers what makes a good king, Henry V being his paragon, and Richard III, well . . . not so much. His reputation may have suffered, but so be it.

While pursuing graduate work at San Jose State University, it was my great pleasure to study with Arlene Okerlund, who demanded her students strictly adhere to Shakespeare's texts when analyzing and

forming hypotheses. Why does she still remain a rigid adherent to this exacting methodology? I can only quote how she'd answer whenever a bold classmate brought up historical variations within Shakespeare's plays: "Shakespeare did not write as historians do. He applied artistic license when necessary to amplify thematic meaning, to augment statements about human nature, about politics, about what makes an effective ruler. In this sense, Shakespeare did not write history. He wrote about human nature, and about human nature he wrote the truth!"

One can explore these truths about politics and leadership within Richard III through two films, the first starring and directed by Laurence Olivier and the second starring Ian McKellen and directed by Richard Loncraine. Watch the Olivier version for its solid, traditional staging that incorporates Colley Cibber and David Garrick's Eighteenth Century adaptations, both of which open with material from Henry VI, Part III to clarify historical contexts. Due to the play's length, both Olivier and Loncraine cut significant material, although Olivier's is the longer by far. Loncraine follows Richard Eyre's stage production and sets his film in a 1930s fascist Britain, one that would bring abundant joy to Oswald Mosley and his British Union of Fascists. Other than lines and plot, viewers hardly recognize anything Shakespearean at all. In the end, however, I cannot lie. Olivier is wonderful, but I prefer Loncraine and McKellen. Here's why.

(1) McKellen's Delivery of the Winter of Our Discontent Monologue Emphasizes Character and Theme More Clearly

Olivier goes for the standard approach, alone on stage, speaking directly to the audience. There's nothing inherently wrong with his style. In fact, it's an outstanding delivery. He outlines the political situation while making us unwitting abettors in his wicked plans against his brothers and any who would block his path to the throne. He slithers across stage, casting shadows, and gazes into his mirror to embolden the text. We see the evil he reveals later to the others when it is too late. We become witnesses who can't warn the victims.

McKellen accomplishes the above but with enhanced brio. The first thirteen lines are delivered as



"For Richard, the Duke of Gloucester, by nature their uncle, by office their protector, to their father beholden,



to themselves by oath and allegiance bound, all the bands broken that bind man and man together "
Thomas More

part of a congratulatory speech to his brother, Edward IV, whom he has helped to wrest the crown from Henry VI. He preens while puffing on a cigarette and the champagne-soaked audience smiles and laughs before him. Then suddenly he's in a men's room, foregoing praise for treachery and connivance. Like Olivier, he reveals his true self, tacitly enlisting us into his plan, but more effectively so. How many men's rooms in the corporate world have been turned into secret meeting rooms in any given industrialized nation? Signs on WC doors around the world should read, "Men's Room: For Pissing and Dirty Politics." Eyre, Loncraine, and McKellen exploit this truism with frightening success. The turn on stage expertly matches the turn within Shakespeare's monologue.

And McKellen's mastery with breaking the fourth wall! He urinates, his cigarette dangling from his mouth, glancing over his shoulder at the camera, at us, as he reveals the darkness within. I shuddered equally when watching Francis Urquhart, portrayed by Ian Richardson, leer conspiratorially after betraying one colleague or another in *House of Cards*. The staging, the acting, the physical symbolism all blend to enhance character and theme much more poignantly here. Props to Sir Laurence, but bravo, Sir Ian! Bravo!

(2) Where Are the Women?

Olivier cut thematically essential female characters from his production. In a 1995 interview with *Movietimes.com*, McKellen states about Olivier's Richard III, "I was astonished to see what he'd cut out." It's not just one-man show about a charismatic jolly villain, it's about a whole group of power brokers and would-be powerful people, the setting in which Richard moves." Richard's mother, played by Maggie Smith in the Loncraine/McKellen film, completely vanishes from the Olivier production. About this McKellen opines, "When you don't see her telling her son 'I hope you die,' you're missing a part of the psychological truth of it all. And the scene where Richard tries to repeat his success with Lady Anne, by asking Queen Elizabeth for the hand of her daughter, is also gone."

In her essay, "The Women of William Shakespeare's Richard III," Jone Johnson Lewis outlines the importance of these characters in relation to political and historical themes"

These women have lost husbands, sons, fa-

thers, or will by the end of the play. Most have been pawns in the "bvdwer," are dispatched, the king who marries her has locked up a tighter claim on the crown, though Richard has declared Elizabeth Woodville's marriage to Edward IV invalid and therefore Elizabeth of York illegitimate.

Although not strictly a historian Shakespeare understood how these women were important not only to history, but also to the themes of his play. I share McKellen's shock. His version cuts substantially more material than Olivier's, but at least women receive their due credit.

(3) A Play for All Times, and an Interpretation for Our Time

That Shakespeare's play is so readily adaptable to a fascist Britain speaks to its timelessness. All hail producers who strive to recast any of his wonders into more contemporary or even experimental settings! Viewers must see traditional works to understand Shakespeare in his time, but adaptations reveal how his themes stand true in any time. I walked away from Olivier's effort understanding the tragedy intellectually, but Loncraine's opus brought that understanding straight to my heart, because the contextual design and visuals were closer to my generation. If you're in the mood for binge-viewing, put away *Arrow* or *Game of Thrones* and pick up these two perspectives on a classic. Olivier will lay the foundation, but Loncraine and McKellen with their still largely contemporary take will prove more accessible and thus more powerful, building an understanding of history, politics, and leadership applicable throughout many lifetimes.



"The garter, blemish'd, pawn'd his knightly virtue;
The crown, usurp'd, disgraced his kingly glory."
Queen Elizabeth in Shakespeare's *Richard III*



"He was malicious, wrathful, envious, and from before his birth, ever perverse."
Thomas More

Tyrant Muse

by K. A. Laity



According to the Dover edition of *Richard III*, the English viscount John Manningham claims that Richard Burbage beguiled a woman so much playing the role of Richard at the Globe that she asked him to visit her later that night in costume. Though an early play, the tragic story of ‘his tyrannicall usurpation’ demonstrates the first full flowering of the rhetorical power that would make Shakespeare’s name for the ages. In offering this magic to burnish the ‘detested life’ of Richard, he also glimpsed his power to make the monster beguiling.

It should be enough to give any young playwright a chill. A resonant story can mean years of cosplay and fanfiction for a modern writer, but the dark side exists, too—a mad gunman clutching your book in his bloodstained hands, claiming inspiration from its pages. Shakespeare might not have foreseen these developments of mass culture, but Burbage’s fiendish allure may have given him pause.

Richard invites us into his schemes. He confides in the audience how he is ‘curtail’d of this fair proportion’ so ‘that dogs bark at me as I halt by them’ to arouse our pity. Can we blame him for desiring ‘to prove a villain’? Particularly as he does it so well. Right at the start he turns one of his brothers against the other, all the while playing the innocent friend.

His most intoxicating triumph is wooing Anne. She curses the hand and heart that killed King Henry



By drunken prophecies, libels and dreams,
To set my brother Clarence and the king
In deadly hate the one against the other: ~ Shakespeare’s Richard III

and his son, her husband Edward, calling upon ‘adders, spiders, toads, / Or any creeping venom’d thing that lives’ to wreak her vengeance upon him, any child or any wife he might have—unknowingly damning herself. It’s magic how Richard turns her thoughts around. Shakespeare makes much use of capricious monarchs, kings like Leontes in *Antony and Cleopatra* who create conflict simply because they can. Yet here he works hard to portray Anne’s change of heart, demonstrating his might through Richard’s.

When Richard halts the funeral cortege, Anne calls him a devil and a ‘dreadful minister of hell’. He counters by calling her a saint. The scene has a striking pacing: first he allows her to speak at length, then both have short exchanges. Near the end as her mind begins to admit the possibility of change, Richard speaks at greater length. From language of devils, angels, demons and deeds ‘inhuman and unnatural’ he turns the vocabulary to that of romance. Hearts bleed: they also love.

At first his language confuses Anne. She speaks of curses, blood and revenge. He calls her ‘divine perfection of a woman’ and begs to be allowed to acquit himself, like a squire who has imbibed nothing but Andreas Capellanus’ *Art of Courtly Love*. Anne calls him a ‘defused infection of a man,’ but Richard responds with the melodious: ‘Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have / Some patient leisure to excuse myself.’

Anne refuses, but she mimics his words, ‘Fouler than heart can think thee, thou canst make / No excuse current, but to hang thyself.’ Angry as the words are, she’s reflecting his style. It’s the first chink in her armour against him. Richard loses way a little when he puts the responsibility for the deaths on his brother and when he declares her husband fitter for heaven than for earth, but he uses that moment to launch the surprise attack.

When she declares him fit only for hell or at least a dungeon, Richard suggests that there’s one other place he truly belongs: ‘Your bed-chamber.’ The words act like a smack in Anne’s face. The shock throws her off-kilter. Richard returns to wooing, calling her gentle and suggesting they should ‘leave this keen encounter of our wits.’ He speaks as if they have been wrangling like Beatrice and Benedick about nothing momentous.

Hereafter he is the gentle wooer and she the recalcitrant, hard-hearted woman. When Richard speaks

of her beauty intoxicating, Anne threatens to destroy it. He refuses to allow it: ‘As all the world is cheered by the sun, / So I by that; it is my day, my life.’ She spits at him, calls him toad, wishes her eyes were basilisks, but Richard presses on with the single-mindedness of a shark. Sensing that success is within his grasp, he opens up once more in a long speech, declaring how his eyes have remained free of tears through every tragedy, but ‘Thy beauty hath...made them blind with weeping.’

It only takes one final, dramatic gesture. Richard hands her his knife and bares his breast, beseeching her to kill him for his crimes: ‘But ‘twas thy beauty that provoked me.’ She drops the knife—and her resistance—and he gloats, ‘Was ever woman in this humour woo’d?’ After this triumph it’s no wonder that he conquers all the others. Like his author, he has mastered his muse.



“The proclamation ended, another herald cried: “Behold here Henry of Lancaster Duke of Hereford, appellant, which is entered into the lists royal to



do his devoir against Thomas Mowbray Duke of Norfolk, defendant, upon pain to be found false and recreant!” Holinshed

Violence and bloodshed at Hampstead Theatre by James Bacon

According to the Dover edition of *Richard III*, There was something just unnerving about the propeller rendition of Richard III.

As I walked in, it was eerie, the set was steel scaffolding, the floor a strange feeling of operating floor, and then, well before the play starts, people start to menacingly walk into stage, slowly and methodically, they are masked, strangely masked and wearing long coats with the sleeves cut off, a bit like a doctors coat, a bit like a trench coat, a bit scary. Their faces are masked, in a strange ski mask front but tie back, half ski mask half doctors mask, the hair sticking up or around, a rough and sinister look in a very sterilised way.

These men, for all the players in this performance are men, all wield heavy metal items, tools, weapons, steel and iron, and so, they start to tap sharply, menacingly, the scaffolding, that ring of metal against metal piercing the whispers from the audience, who are not yet seated, and yet are greeted by incredible theatre as they move to find their seats, more clumsy than usual, captivated by this precursor.

There is a strange mix of times in this play, Richard wears black and he is maimed, with a metal socket instead of a hand. From this comes flowers for Lady Anne, and into it fits a special Axe that he then wields aptly. Death in this version is grim, and indeed pushes boundaries. Clarence gets a DIY drill to the eye, Buckingham is beheaded to the sound of a chainsaw, which we get to see brandished about the stage, roaring gutturally, before the butchers clear curtains



“I only hope that when the history of Fandom is written, I am not considered its Richard III.”

Christopher J Garcia

are drawn, to be suddenly splattered and covered in blood as the petrol motor roars and the one time ally of Richard is dispatched.

Surprise is everything here, in a play so many know well, so after the interval, the menacing men sneak into the audience, and line up their weapons, clubs, huge blades, with various theatre goers, oblivious to their impending risk, as it is from behind, and curious as others around them start to go silent, or notice, a few are genuinely started, some smile and the audience, transient as they are to the bar, toilet and ice cream servers, surprised, and then comes the sound of feedback and electricity, as one of those men with menaces comes on stage with a tormented electric guitar, chanting 'Bloody, Bloody Richard' to which he is joined in eulogy by those armed and dangerous.

The princes are wonderful puppets, and so when they are killed, their heads bob in a specimen jar. The story follows the traditional track, and indeed, it could have done with a little editing, just a tightening up, but overall it is gruesomely brilliant and enjoyable. I appreciate that it is an all male cast in a way that was original, and the performances from all were amazing, but I reckoned that this added element was a bit unnecessary. Unlike the violence metted out, this added a realism and fear that permeated the audience, I felt like I was watching a tour de force, something very edgy and different, and the performances were incredible and so, I went to see it again.



“Richard’s crooked back indicates a moral crookedness, his withered arm the perversion of his actions.



The toad metaphors suggest an ugly deformity and a lower, toxic form of life.”

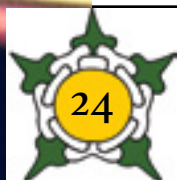
Trafalgar Transformed's Richard III by Ruth Pe Palileo



All the cruelest despots I've personally known have ruled kingdoms of paper, via multi-line phones, from behind executive desks, in corner offices. So Martin Freeman's smug, shrewd and staccato CEO-Richard III is no shock to me. I have taken dictation from that villain; I have known the violence within the pinstripe suit. Director Jamie Lloyd's production at the Trafalgar uses banal means to draw blood and uses blood to draw the audience into intimacy. But it's the intimacy one has with a prostitute or a business partner, an on-the-job affair. The energy is exhaustingly high and pantingly close yet everybody goes home empty and penniless.

Set in the 70s, during the United Kingdom's "winter of discontent", a bleak time of joblessness and labour strikes, this Richard's kingdom is appropriately negligible and threadbare—Formica conference tables and typewriters, grainy closed-circuit TV, and spider plants. We sat on-stage, packed with about twenty others into two "jury boxes" just behind Richard's desk. One couldn't leave without everyone noticing—the only exit was a narrow aisle between the two boxes. We were truly a captive audience.

From the opening soliloquy throughout every scene in Act I, Shakespeare structured the play so that Richard III updates the audience in asides. So, the audience is always the first to know that violence is about



"Upon the Tuisdaye than nexte ensuyng beyng the twentie daye of Iune, the said Protectour takyng then uppon hym as kynge and gournoure of the realme, wente with greate pompe unto Westminster" The Concordaunce of Hystories



to happen, but here's the dirty little secret about this play—we, the audience, let it happen anyway. Lloyd's staging drives this home by literally putting the audience behind the fax machines and foul machinations.

The smallness of his kingdom doesn't stop Richard from taking his work seriously; he's simply an efficient killer rather than a grandiose one. The largest elements of the whole production are the moustaches; the assassins on Richard's payroll sport facial hair to rival that of the Beastie Boys in their video Sabotage (compare the facial hair in Sabotage, www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5rRZdiuUE, with the production stills at ATG's site: <http://www.atgtickets.com/shows/richard-iii/trafalgar-studios/>).

Clarence (Mark Meadows), who is some rungs above Richard on this corporate ladder, dies first, about three feet away from where I was sitting. Tyrell (Simon Coombs) and Catesby (Gerald Kyd) cram Clarence's

head and shoulders into a fish tank and the water turns a dark wine colour—a nod to the butt of malmsey in which Shakespeare originally drowned Clarence. Catesby then stabs Clarence some more. Rivers (Joshua Lacey) dies a slow, fluorescently-lit death by hypodermic needle injection. Even when the deaths happen off-stage, the body parts return onstage. Tyrell re-appears covered in blood. Hastings' head returns in a cardboard box.

The word "overkill" is a verb, not a noun, in this production.

Things are writ even larger for the audience seated "out of the office". My friend Lisa Macklem and her husband, in the front row, were splashed with blood. Their hands got bloody, the CCTV cameras were in their faces and at least one screen was running visuals for them the entire time. Spotlights were used to indicate who the next victim would be; it wouldn't do for Richard to off them out of sequence. During some

"Then was the corps of Richard late king spoiled, & naked as he was borne, cast behinde a a man, and so caried unreuerently ouertwharte the horse backe,



unto ye friers at Leicester. Where after a season that he had lien, that al men might behold hym, he was there with little reuerence buried." The Concordaunce of Hystories

speeches, a cast member might grab a microphone and make a public service announcement to the audience. When Maggie Steed enters as Queen Margaret to deliver her curses, the lights spark in electrical failures and the lift doors go mad, opening and closing disconcertingly. Nothing in the office is sacred; all will be sacrificed to Richard's agenda of violent ascension, accompanied by tinned elevator music.

More than many CEOs, Richard delivers on his promises. He's told us he's going to kill Lady Anne—"I'll have her, but I'll not keep her long"—so he does. Richard supposedly seduces Lady Anne (Lauren O'Neil) over the body of her husband; the only thing more puzzling in this scene than his brusque proposal is her acceptance. Only when Richard pornographically strangles Anne, using a phone cord, holding her prostrate on a desk and climbing all over her, do we realise "that wasn't seduction, it was a takeover and now he's making her pay." Which is of course why we have to avert our eyes as he grunts and ruts and grinds and squeezes for what seems like hours. Nothing like catching the boss and some lady 'working late'. They might as well have shaken hands over the "deal" before Richard gets down to business.

These misogynist corporate dynamics also illuminate the scene where Elizabeth (Gina McKee) eventually capitulates to Richard about her daughter. I've never understood how she could sign over her daughter to the man who killed her two sons. In Lloyd's production, Richard's staff duct-tapes Elizabeth to a rolling office chair. Now the negotiations for her daughter make sense; if she doesn't agree, she'll never be allowed to escape.

I found myself hoping someone would be killed with the teletype machine, that the whole office would be entirely besmirched and broken by the end of the play. Freeman has said of the role that it left him utterly exhausted at the end of the day. In generating this bloodthirst in the audience and this exhaustion in the actors, Lloyd has achieved some measure of theatrical catharsis for the office workers of the world. Sort of.

Because by reducing Richard's kingdom to the size of an office and Richard to a desktop dictator, Lloyd's production effectively overturns the traditional moral compass of Shakespeare's Richard III—at the end

of the play, we are meant to believe Richard's death is deserved because he was magnificently amoral. Instead, Freeman's Richard gets done in because that is the nature of business. Freeman is aware of this; he delivers the play's most famous line—"my kingdom for a horse!"—over his shoulder at the jury boxes, a wry cynical acceptance stripped of any defiance, indicating that it's time for the next workhorse in line, please.

The new boss arrives—Richard is dead! Long live what's his name—oh yeah, Richmond!—but the faxes remain the same. We leave the battleground in grim exhilaration, experiencing the tunnel-vision of every office rat who clocks out after a day when a lot of shit has gone down. Kingdoms have fallen on paper and people have died at the other end of the phone line. Just another bloody long day at the office. The most chilling thing about Trafalgar Transformed's Richard III is that we accept this as the status quo.





“vpon a time, as I you tell,
there was noe more but the Erle & shee; shee made



complaint of Richard the King, that was her vnckle of
blood soe nye.”

The Song of Ladye Bessiye



Richard III - The Studio Theatre Trafalgar, directed by Jamie Lloyd Reviewed by James Bacon

This theatre is modern in style. Comfortable seats rise directly from the stage itself, giving a closeness that is unusual, while intimacy of the space is increased with five rows of seating at the back of the stage. Side stages in the wings allow another set of parts to be played close to different sets of the audience.

One gets an immediate sense of place and time. Here is an open plan office of the late 60s or early 70s. An executive office space during wartime, two long heavy wooden desks suitable for three people perpendicular to the audience, place names which also mean counties. The chairs have a green material, the machinery of office: real type writers on the cusp of going electric, but not yet, reel to reel recording devices, wooden cased televisions, the fluorescent strip lights, phones with dials, it is an amazingly well-crafted set.

The wood contrasts with the stainless steel of the lifts, and the large square black and white floor tiles, while a roof skylight gives an angular feel and indicating this space is near the top, the ninth floor perhaps as indicated by the lifts.

As the audience files in, an older lady, Queen Margaret, comes in and sits on a waiting couch, upright, tweed suit, vodka bottle and handbag, dejectedly quiet.

Thunderous drumming, explosions, the TV's on and a coarser sounding version of God Save the King, all announcing the entry, and so the cast walk onstage, all in black gas masks, a sombreness and menace that ceases with removal of masks and cheering and rejoicing, for the war is won. The characters wear a mixture of suits and British military uniform. If a sense of timing was needed, the SLR rifle, the woolley pulley jumpers, the green combat trousers



“& King Richard doe know this thing,
wee were vndone, both thou and I
The Song of Ladye Bessiye

all say early 70's.

Martin Freeman of course must start the play, and so the stage darkens suddenly, a green blackish hue freezes everyone motionless, and they freeze oh so well, and he enters into his speech. He carries it off brilliantly. He is fully bearded here, and this improves his royal look, his stoop, walk and useless arm, all carried off brilliantly, and straight away he is earning his keep.

When we return, one can take in the incredible details, the music in the lifts, the uniforms of the Duke of Gloucester, Lord Stanley, Clarence and the king all look perfect. The king's a little different with riding breeches and high boots, but all are looking immaculate with Sam Brown belts of No 2 uniforms. These uniformed men are juxtaposed with Buckingham in a single breasted tight suit, his longish brushed back hair, and moustache, Richmond in a light brown three piece suit and dark brown polo neck shirt, Catesby with more bureaucratic look, also in a suit and Lady Anne and Queen Elizabeth in fantastic dresses, tight, high-necked and respectable.

There is a diversity in the accents that the actors use. Rivers in a sky light blue suit and open shirt is from the north, Lady Anne sounds like she is from Liverpool, Tyrell has a Caribbean accent, all played well, and whether their natural voices, or put on, it is believably England.

Queen Margaret's proper entry is accompanied by superb music and sparks and explosions and light failures, as she curses all, and they cower and run around the office keeping their distance, it is fabulous stuff. Maggie Steed is wonderful, and uses the stage to great effect.

There is a modernity and expedience here that allows the viewer to get closer to this production than most. Tyrell seems to use some white powder to help strengthen his resolve, and when it is explained to Clarence that 'Your brother Gloucester hates you', the words are spaced, slow on purpose, like sarcastically explaining it to a child, and it is hilarious. There is incredible action, Tyrell leaps across the desks that remain in situ.



The play though is grim in its portrayal of death. Richard III is a play full of killing, but here it is intimate and nasty, to a level of accuracy that astounded me, and left some, well, feeling unwell.

Clarence is drowned in a fish tank, and as he struggles, he is under for just too long. No one can hold their breath so long, and the audience start to realise it, the reaction ripples through, people are uneasy, uncomfortable, this is very close, and then as Tyrell and Catesby relax in pleasure at their achievement, standing back from the dead body, the head still submerged, a coup de grace is given as Catesby takes out a small blade and quickly ensures the job is done with a cut to the neck, blood pumping out into the fish tank.

And so a person exits the audience. This is theatre on the edge, and one person has decided, for their own reasons, to exit promptly.

Of course this is wondrous stage design. There must be a breathing apparatus in the murky water of the tank, but this is also movie level effects.

The lift music is excellent, and there is a lounge, tinny background music as the king tries to bring all parties to peace over tea and sandwiches. The timing is beautiful, Rivers slurping his tea at the perfect moment during Richard's speech.

Freeman commands this stage, as do the other actors. He is incredible here. This is the nice Watson of Sherlock fame, this is not The Office he is used to, he is normally meek and quiet, the put upon character, be it Arthur Dent or Tim Canterbury.

Yet here he is the villain. Waiting as Lady Anne talks about him, in the shadows, but acting out listening, just as superb as his engagement with her, his beard and composure and comportment adding something that makes this a special version of this play. One viewer commented to me that she had to remind herself that this was not Kenneth Branagh, she was so taken with his acting.

I was too. For this is indeed a villain, but humour in this play is required. The audience must laugh, and I admit I was worried there might be pointless applause of gushing laughter due to his fame, yet my concerns were ill founded. There was no vacuous laughter here.

Freeman portrayed Richard brilliantly, head movements, his intonation, pauses all perfect, creating the laughter of Richard, endearing and charming as a character who is also a child murderer can be.

The malice of Richard III wrapped up in humour and eloquent subtlety is enhanced by smart writing, but it was the

look of Freeman, his turns, his silence which seals the fate of laughter, and so the audience laughs, just when they should.

There is a violence about everything, when Richard wants to speak to Queen Elizabeth she is accosted, held and duct taped screaming to a chair. It is uncomfortable, and horrible.

Gina McKee as Queen Elizabeth was fabulous, as were the two princes, I liked them both, different and full of childish life, yet clever and born to be royalty. It was brilliant when the younger prince came onstage on a space hopper, sandals and shorts and sleeveless jumper, perfect.

The confidence of all the actors is present, they are comfortable on the stage, easily moving pieces, removing a misplaced space hopper, or paper fallen. Jo Stone-Fewings as Buckingham, Gerald Kyd as Catesby, Simon Coombs as Tyrell really impressed me.

Lauren O'Neil as Lady Anne, the widow of the prince that Richard slayed, who he then woos, plays this part brilliantly. Again it is the direction, but she plays a much better part than usual, not just in the main scene with Richard, but also she is on stage when he announces that it is to be put about that she is unwell. Her murder is usually something that happens off stage, but her, she is aghast, in the realisation, but worse is to come.

Freeman murders her with a fervour that is shocking and upsetting.

With his one hand he tries to strangle her and the fight is fearsome, he is both enjoying the moment and struggling with his weakness. The noises from him are beastly, heavy breathing and grunting, rising in an orgasmic style, like a man engaging in intercourse, he enjoys this death in a dreadful sort of way, his acting only confirming the pleasure, and then the little shrug of carelessness.

The grimness never leaves, be it the death of Rivers, screaming with lights on his face, a sensation of torture in the air, and then a slow and horrible death by injection, or when Hastings's blood-covered head is removed from a bin bag in a cardboard box. It is not the effect or the blood that makes one wince, it is the sloppy heavy sound it makes as it is dropped back into the box, Tyrell covered in blood when he reports the princes slain.

Grimness and laughter. The audience laughing as Richard walks in with an old cassette recorder playing holy music, a huge device by today's standards, the audience fully lit so that Richard can address them, as the citizens, the engagement with Buckingham brilliant.

I loved the costumes, and when Richard arrives in a

red guard style jacket as worn by Royalty, I try and spot the medals, and wonder what would adorn his jacket. He is forthright in his language, again ensuring the audience does not get lost in the complexity of the play. No one misses what he means when he says, 'he wishes the bastards dead'.

The final scenes are wonderful. Some adjustment occurs, so that Ricard is visited by some of those he has slain, including the princes sporting boar head masks covered in blood. A surprise is held for some that he has killed.

The red jacket is swapped for green smock and combat trousers, while Richmond's men sport balaclavas, slightly more sinister than one expects, yet this is part of the added story.

The audience gasps at the right moments, at varying times more people leave, some just for fresh air, to return at the interval with cups of water, and colour returned. This is connecting with an audience, who laughs and likes a murderer, and I secretly think it must be a little more with such a likeable chap as Freeman.

Yet it is not gratuitously gruesome. It is actually terribly clever and makes everything much more real. The final gunshot startling the audience with its noise and suddenness, the blood from the melee splattering across the stage, deathly cuts spurting blood in a believable way.

I loved it, I just loved the experience, it felt fabulous. I have seen Mark Rylance and Kevin Spacey as Richard III, and I have to say, this performance beat them both. I have seen

David Tennant as Richard III and I thought that he was just a little too much Tennant.

Freeman though, he can do anything. He radiates malice and is sinister in his humour.

I feel that the changes, the subtle adjustments, the real perspective given, and the setting all contributed to making this, to date, the best Richard III I have seen so far. It is the direction, for sure, Lloyd must be cheered and jubilated, but Freeman, McGee, O'Neil, Steed, Coombs, Stone Fewings and Kyd, just all do such an incredible job.

Jamie Lloyd's great adjustments and direction added to the stage design of Soutra Gilmour, warrant appreciation. There was a dynamism to the set, stage and costuming that really helped.

This is great Shakespeare. The story is the same, and the changes are smart moves that improve it, while it was obvious that the majority of those enjoyed this play a lot as they stood and applauded.



Dick the Shit

by Pixie P

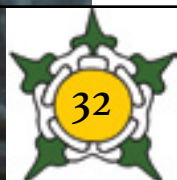


Say ‘Shakespeare’ to some and you can almost see the colour drain from their face and they appear to quiver with fear when asked to read a piece out loud. I vividly remember the dry, wearisome delivery of the text in uninspiring English classrooms and amateur dramatic renditions as might you.

So what’s so special about Richard the Third? (known affectionately to some as ‘Dick the Shit’). My interest in Shakespeare is paralleled by my interest in mental health. Shakespeare’s characters are arguably timeless and open to all kinds of interpretations. The empathy we feel towards them is possibly due to our access to and deeper understanding of our own minds and the health thereof. As an actor I now find little more exciting than to dive, headfirst, into a Shakespearean text and devour its’ delicious, metered offerings. Richard III is such a fascinating piece not only for its historical significance but for the complexity of Richard himself and what drove Shakespeare to write him the way he did.

I owe my interest interpreting Shakespeare, in the most part, to having worked with some of the most knowledgeable directors and academics on the subject, all with differing views as to how the Bard’s characters should/could be portrayed. Seasoned professionals and novices alike have their own approaches to taking on one of Shakespeare’s infamous lead roles which brings me to my own research. How does one bring text to life? What aspects of Richard III should one concentrate on? And where on earth do we get the information from?

Stage directions and character descriptions for Shakespeare’s works are pretty much non-existent UNLESS you know where to look. I had a Say



“Richard’s Parliament ... passed considerable sound and beneficial legislation.”
Bertram Fields

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The play's opening speech takes us straight to a glimpse into Richard's mind and his feeling towards his 'deformity'. Richard soliloquises :-

I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want

love's majesty

To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;

I, that am curtail'd of this fair

proportion,

Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,

Deformed, unfinish'd, sent before my time

Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,

Knowing what we do about how medieval monarchy saw deformity we would be forgiven for thinking Richard was written this way to make put audiences at ease and to make the actor's job easier. I, however, think a more interesting approach to this is that it is a physical representation of his mental health. How he describes himself says a lot about what he thinks other around him see and, therefore, think of him as a person. The idea of 'nature versus nurture' interested me very much and I looked at Richard's relationships with other characters in the play, predominantly his mother. She makes no attempt to hide her disgust for her son. It would appear he was premature and was a 'heavy burden' on his mother's womb through pregnancy. Did his birth make her then infertile? (what would that mean for a Queen of that time?) Are we meant to feel sorry for Richard or is he telling us this to validate his need for power? Does he crave the affections for others so much that he would take fear as an alternative? Does he thrive on attention despite it being negative? OR has his birth defects caused his brain to under develop and, therefore, stop his feeling remorse or knowing right from wrong. An actor has to make that decision in order to begin reproducing those emotions. It is our job, if you like, to bring the text to life and physically interpret the text for an audience.

He woos Ann whilst she grieves over the body of her husband (or father in law depending which publication you read) who has been murdered by Richard himself. She says he 'infects' her eyes. Margaret (of the defeated Lancaster house) curses him.

Thou elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog!

Thou that wast seal'd in thy nativity

"Richard III's end would prove to represent England's last personification of the monarch as the flower of chivalry; the last king leading his men shoulder to shoulder in battle,



but more than that, attempting to curtail the bloodshed by settling the outcome in single combat."

Annette Carson

The slave of nature and the son of hell!
Thou slander of thy mother's heavy
womb!
Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins!

Likening Richard to animals is common amongst other characters giving us an insight into how he is seen by others. No more than a beast.

One glimpse of humanity we do see is towards the end of the play where Richard says that 'There is no creature loves me'. He has just dreamed of all those he has murdered in his quest to take the throne. Richard is at his most vulnerable at that point. Richmond (later Henry VII) has returned with an army from France to take the throne and Richard's paranoia has begun to take a firm hold.

It is really difficult not to get too carried away when rehearsing for an iconic role such as Richard III as we really just need to give our interpretation (alongside the director's vision). BUT unless one sees beyond the 'theatre' and returns again and again to re-read Richard as a person he becomes something of a museum piece, bound to the Received Pronunciation versions of the past.

My hope is that Richard III continues to be one of the most performed of Shakespeare's play and that I may find a director brave enough to take up the task of putting another 'all female cast' version. I know a certain person who would be incredibly interested....



"In the course of a mere eighteen months, crowded with cares and problems, he laid down a coherent programme of legal enactments, maintained an orderly society, and actively



promoted the well-being of his subjects. A comparable period in the reigns of his predecessor and of his successor shows no such accomplishment." Paul Murray Kendall

Princes in the Tower, a two minute animation by Kate Brown and Paul Duffield.

In 2013 Kate Brown and Paul Duffield (<http://spoonbard.com>) created a short animation about the Princes Edward and Richard, in which one of my favourite characters Richard III shows up, for the Tower of London.

The artistic pair, were commissioned by HRP back in February to create a modern, cartoon/visual piece about the Princes in the Tower that ran to two minutes, that would be screened in the Bloody Tower. Ewan Parry: <http://liquidcow.co.uk> worked on the sound design side, while Emma Vieceli assisted creatively.

Kate wrote a long piece about it on her BLOG here (<http://danse-macabre.nu/autojoy/?p=528>)

‘At the end of 2012, me, Paul and Emma were contacted by the Tower of London to make an animated short based around Edward V and Richard of York, aka. The Princes in the Tower. It was to be screened in the Bloody Tower, where they have the current display focusing around these two: possibly the Tower’s most notorious prisoners guests prisoners short-stay holiday makers prisoners young people, as part of a drive to increase the modernity of the Tower itself. We needed little introduction to this particular piece of history (*COUGHCOUGHCOUGH*) and met up with Tower staff to discuss the outcome and what they hoped to In



The oldest surviving American feature film is a 1912 version of Richard III. It is almost unwatchable!

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The Tower allowed the piece to go onto Youtube, so everyone could enjoy it, and learn about these two young royals. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fd7h0t8e46E>

Some lynkes

Kate Brown: <http://danse-macabre.nu>

Paul Duffield: <http://spoonbard.com>

Ewan Parry: <http://liquidcow.co.uk>



April 9th 1483



Journey Planet 24 was laid out in Lucile Packard Childrens's Hospital and at home, with babies JohnPaul and Benjamin Garcia watching and wondering what Daddy was doing...

