

blocked; actors were off-book by the next day and worked all of Act One. On Thursday Act Two was gone over in detail, followed by Act Three on Friday. Saturday the company ran the new show twice, performed the current production in the evening (striking it), and prepared the technical side of the new show on Sunday, for a Monday night opening.

The details that Euringer provides on his work with Campbell, Gill, Whittaker, and others are what make this book a valuable tool for a theatre historian. *A Fly on the Curtain* is the perspective of only one relatively minor actor/director. The value of this work, however, is that it provides one piece of the mosaic that is Canadian theatre in the 1950s and 1960s. On its own it may seem to be only a collection of personal anecdotes by a little known actor, but combined with texts such as Ann Saddlemyer's and Richard Plant's *Later Stages*, Don Rubin's *Canadian Theatre History*, or Betty Lee's *Love and Whiskey* it takes on a new significance. *Later Stages*, for example, provides essential information about when and where the Straw Hat Players performed, as well as who was in the company (including Euringer) and what shows were staged. *A Fly on the Wall* adds to this base knowledge by fleshing out how these plays were staged and details about the working conditions of the time. Together with other historical texts, Euringer's first person experiences help to create a vivid picture of an emerging Canadian theatre.

As a student of Fred Euringer's in the 1990s, I quickly came to realize that he did not teach in broad strokes, but with detailed movements of his brush. His directing classes, for example, did not provide his students with extensive definitions on how to direct a play. Rather, Euringer taught that it is the small details in a theatrical production that really bring it to life. *A Fly on the Curtain* is full of the same specifics that Euringer brought to his classes, and consequently provides the reader with a rich and textured impression of Canadian theatre in the 1950s and early 1960s. ❁

RIC KNOWLES.

Shakespeare and Canada: Essays on Production, Translation, and Adaptation.

Brussels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2004. 190 pp. Paperback: \$22.95

SUSAN BENNETT

What is it with Shakespeare and Canada? Somehow this has become a relationship that obsessively captures the imagination

not just of the scholarly community, but of our national media. Witness the recent flurry of interest in Colm Feore's performance as Cassius on Broadway. The marquee of the Belasco Theater reads "Denzel Washington" above "Julius Caesar"—a celebrity-driven hailing of its audience that elides Shakespeare and certainly Canada. But in an interview with Feore in *The Globe and Mail*, Canada's national newspaper, and in the inaugural "Scene" segment for The National, the jewel in the crown of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, there is a determined belief that Feore, as one of the Stratford Festival's most distinguished Shakespeareans, brings a credibility to the Broadway production. Further, as Kamal Al-Solaylee puts it in his review for *The Globe & Mail* ("Burying Caesar with faint praise," April 14, 2005, R4), "[i]n a cast of 30, the closest anyone in this production comes to distilling a sense of Bard-like authority and vigour is Feore, who towers above his co-players like Gulliver on a day trip to Lilliput." Feore's performance is, the media would tell us, important for Canada. And it is this sensibility, simply put, that is Knowles's project in *Shakespeare and Canada*.

Knowles's book, appearing as the eighth volume in Peter Lang's "Dramaturgies" series (under the general editorship of Marc Mauffort), provides a fascinating account of cultural "coat-tailing" (166) in its insistence in moving from the familiar investigative stance of "Shakespeare in Canada" to the more exploratory "Shakespeare and Canada." As Knowles explains: "I want to consider the two terms of my title as both shifting and mutually constitutive" (12). This volume comprises an introduction and six chapters, all of which have been previously published in oral and print versions in a range of venues, along with a brief Epilogue that allows not just for careful reflection on the work completed but a meditation on that yet to be done. This is no ordinary retrospective collection of essays, however, but something that is so much more important as a whole, gathered through time and bringing together a needed interrogation of the proliferated "Shakespeare in Canada" scholarship, cultural material analyses of Shakespearean production, multi-/inter-cultural practice in Canadian and Québec contexts, and postcolonial theatre theory. Each essay works both with appropriate critical approaches and detailed case study to build a productive and often provocative take on the Shakespeare and Canada conundrum. A particular emphasis is the author's care to locate both himself and his project:

This volume represents an attempt to engage in what Gayatri Spivak might call an historical analysis and critique of my own position and the script that history has written for me as a postcolonial settler/invader critic writing in “English,” while focusing on some aspects of ongoing relationship between “Shakespeare” and national identity in “Canada.” (26)

This self-awareness never drops out of sight in a discussion that starts with the Stratford Festival and moves through Shakespeare in translation on the Québec stage, Robert Lepage and the auteur-director, to feminist and other rewritings of Shakespeare’s plays.

Each of the three sections—on Stratford, on Québec, and on adaptation—provides, then, a detailed discussion of particular cases and texts. The chapters on the Stratford Festival are the oldest, originally written in the early 1990s, but much of what Knowles argues could easily be brought to bear on its 2005 season. The discussion of Shakespeare in Québec occasions “a re-theorizing of the theatrical directing of classical scripts, particularly Shakespeare, and particularly as performed in postcolonial contexts, as resistance” (71). And the final two chapters, on adaptation, allow for nuanced and useful readings of recent Canadian rewritings of Shakespeare’s plays, many of which we regularly teach in our classes.

Equally powerful in this book is the subsidiary yet interlocutory narrative of Knowles’s footnotes—a sub-structure that engages consistently, persuasively, and boldly with the precepts of theory, Canadian (theatre) culture, and the academy. For instance, powerful notes on facing pages (note 9 on page 74 and note 10 on page 75) take to task, justly, the American powerhouse Association for Theatre in Higher Education, the Shakespeare Association of America, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, and the Royal Shakespeare Company—a literally underlying critique that points, I think, to the necessity of Knowles’s Shakespeare and Canada argument. It suggests, too, Knowles’s own complex imbrications in scholarly fields and cultural practices that too often “efface historical and other difference by consuming the other as part of a universal ‘us’” (25).

This is a book that no reader of *Theatre Research in Canada* dare ignore: Shakespeare may not be your primary research area, but it is here the occasion through which Knowles raises a range of questions for all of theatre studies in Canada. More importantly still, he proposes—and effectively so—a future terrain that only our collective diligence and interest can begin to address. ❁