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POWLKES, H. LEE. A Production of Hamlet ESP. (1977)
Directed by: Dr. Herman Middleton. Pp.

This thesis is a record of a UNC-G Summer Repertory Theatre production of Hamlet ESP by Paul Baker, performed in Taylor Theatre on June 19, 20, 22, 24, 26, and 28, and July 1, 3, and 5 of 1974.

The first chapter provides introductory analysis of the play "Hamlet," the play in adaptation, and detailed analysis of the characters, setting, lights and costumes. A discussion of considerations influencing the choice of the script is also included.

The Promptbook comprises the second chapter. In it are notations of movement, composition, business, and characterization, as well as cues for sound, lights, special effects, and curtains. Photographs and diagrams are integrated to demonstrate composition, focus, and picturization.

In the third chapter are critical evaluations of the audience response and the acting, along with discussion of technical considerations which weighed in the over-all success of the production, and/or the limitations of that success.

A PRODUCTION OF PAUL BAKER'S HAMLET ESP

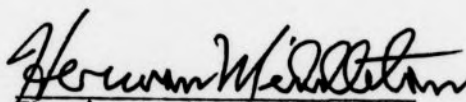
by

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A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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Approved by


Thesis Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTORY ANALYSIS

THE PLAY

Hamlet is often thought of as singular in kind: a tragedy of thought inspired by continual and never-satisfied meditation on human destiny and the perplexity of this world's events, and calculated to call forth the very same meditation in the minds of its spectators. Much has been said, much written, on this piece, and yet no thinking mind who expresses himself anew on it is likely to agree entirely with his predecessors.

For the Eighteenth Century, the play posed no particular problem. The severest stricture that Dennis, writing in 1712, could level at it was its failure to observe the laws of poetic justice.¹ For the anonymous author of Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet (1736), the famous question of why the Prince delayed in avenging his father's murder, the answer was simple: if he had not delayed, there would have been no play.² But for the critics of the Romantic period, the play posed a distinct problem; they isolated it in Hamlet's delay to action,

¹John Dennis, from "An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakespeare," in Hamlet: A Norton Critical Edition, ed: Cyrus Hoy (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1963), p. 145.

²From "Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet," in Hamlet: A Norton Critical Edition, ed: Cyrus Hoy (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1963), p. 146.

and found the explanation for the delay in the peculiar make-up of his nature. On this assumption critics have enriched the world with new thoughts on the nature of voluntary action. Goethe found the play representative of "the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it--an oak tree planted in a costly jar,"³ and Coleridge saw in Hamlet "an overbalance in the contemplative faculty, one who vacillates from sensibility, and procrastinates from thought, and loses the power of action in the energy of resolve."⁴ Yet no theoretical solution of Hamlet's mystery so far proposed is entirely satisfactory. Hamlet cannot be explained away, and the reason seems to be that he is perhaps the most representative character in all dramatic literature.

Hamlet's situation as a grief-stricken hero is typical. Moralists of the Renaissance maintained that all men are in like case with Hamlet and that the remedy lies in the curing of the mind so that it will rise above the trials of life.⁵ They reproached man for allowing

³Johann Von Goethe, "A Soul Unfit," in Hamlet: A Norton Critical Edition, ed: Cyrus Hoy (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1963), p. 152.

⁴Samuel Taylor Coleridge, from "Notes on the Tragedies: Hamlet," in Hamlet: A Norton Critical Edition, ed: Cyrus Hoy (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1963), p. 158.

⁵Hardin Craig, from "Shakespeare's Life and Works," in The Complete Works of Shakespeare, ed: Hardin Craig (Atlanta: Scott, Foreman and Company, 1961), p. 902.

himself to become "lapsed in time and passion" so that he habitually let go "the important acting of the dread command," and suffered his mind to become tainted with worldly considerations and cowardice. These are Hamlet's reproaches to himself and may be interpreted as exemplifying the common fate of all men. Hamlet is not weak as an individual; he is merely the representative of weak humanity. He rebukes himself, not for his own faults, but for those of all mankind. Men look at Hamlet and see a picture of themselves, for deep in the heart of man is a consciousness of the frailty of the clay of which he is made. The significance of Hamlet's struggle is thus profound. Its background is human calamity, which Hamlet conquers by overcoming his human cowardice and human fears, and he reaches the point where he is able to defy the augury of death and see that "readiness is all." It is because the distresses of Hamlet are transferred, by the turn of his mind, to the account of humanity that whatever happens to him we apply to ourselves, and Hamlet's words acquire the reality of our own. Their reality is in the reader's/spectator's mind.

HAMLET IN ADAPTION

It is the machinations of Hamlet's mind which have drawn Paul Baker's focus in developing Hamlet ESP. Mr. Baker asserts that "the main action of Hamlet happens

inside Hamlet's mind," that "the real excitement is the working of his (Hamlet's) imagination, emotions, intellect, and senses . . . "⁶ One cannot help but wonder whether Mr. Baker derived his initial inspiration from the following passage by Coleridge:

In Hamlet I conceive him (Shakespeare) to have wished to exemplify the moral necessity of a due balance between our attention to outward objects and our meditation on inward thoughts -- a due balance between the real and the imaginary world. In Hamlet this balance does not exist--his thoughts, images, and fancy being far more vivid than his perceptions, and his very perceptions instantly passing thro' the medium of his contemplations and acquiring as they pass a form and color not naturally their own. Hence great, enormous, intellectual activity . . .⁷

It would seem that Mr. Baker has capitalized on the imbalance between the real and the imaginary, heightened Hamlet's thoughts, images, and fancy, and carried the concept of perception subject to contemplation to its logical end: subjecting everything to the scrutiny of Hamlet's mind and imagination.

This adaptation of Shakespeare's Hamlet plays out the events as Shakespeare developed them and as Hamlet lives them. But in order to accomplish this, Mr. Baker calls for the casting of three men as Hamlet, each of

⁶Paul Baker, from "The Director's Notes," in Hamlet ESP (New York: Dramatist's Play Service, 1970), p. 5.

⁷Coleridge, Hamlet: A Norton Critical Edition, p. 163.

whom is to portray the complete character of Hamlet when he speaks.

The play opens with Hamlet's first great soliloquy: "O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt . . ." and as the soliloquy refers to various parts of the preceding scenes, to the emotional, physical, imaginative relationships in those scenes, Hamlet re-enacts the scene as he himself sees those characters and their relationships. He re-enacts the bits and pieces of those scenes which have galled him most, or dug most deeply into his memory. During this, one of the characters remains Hamlet while the other two take the character of the King, Queen, Ophelia, Laertes, or Polonious and say the King's lines (or Polonious' lines, or Ophelia's), as Hamlet felt and saw them in their original sequence. Thus the audience is presented with Hamlet's incisive view of the King's and Queen's grotesqueness at the great feast celebrating their marriage. In a similar fashion, the Hamlets join with Horatio on the battlements where Hamlet develops the ghost out of his own mind, enlarges it, and at the same time shares that fear with Horatio.

Each of the great soliloquies serves as a summary of a sizable portion of the preceding action so that as the Hamlets are speaking each particular soliloquy, they flash-back to the action to which it refers, which it is summarizing, or which Hamlet is turning over in his mind.

After demonstrating the action with which Hamlet is involved, or concerned, in the soliloquy, it is often repeated.

Much of Mr. Baker's adaptation consists of transposing, or juxtaposing lines and scenes such as in Act III, scene 1, in which Laertes and the King are plotting the death of Hamlet. Polonious has been killed--is already dead; while Laertes is talking to the King about how he wants to kill Hamlet, Polonious recaps some of the best lines from the Polonious' advice to Laertes scene of the original as a kind of counterpoint to the evil plotting of Hamlet's murder. The effect is one of adding a new dimension both to the scene under enactment and the original advice to Laertes. This technique is used twice more in the third act; when Ophelia's mad scene and Gertrude's recounting of Ophelia's drowning are intertwined, and again in the final moments of the play when each of the principals repeats one of their more representative lines, bringing into sharper focus the part that each has played in Hamlet's tragedy.

Hamlet ESP, in its form, may be likened to a classical symphony with themes that are stated, developed, re-stated with variations, and reaffirmed in the plays conclusion with the traditional coda (formal ending distinct from the body of the work) of the classical symphony.

Character Analysis

Hamlet, as he himself reveals it in the play, is naturally sensitive and affectionate. He loved and admired his father, adored his mother, and is warm and loyal in his friendship for Horatio. His reception of his old "schoolfellows," Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is at first cordial and affectionate. They themselves report to the Queen that he received them "most like a gentleman." Charming too is his welcome of the players; he gives himself no airs of superiority whatever, they are his equals, his "good friends."

He is a generous, and not a shrewd, judge of character. He tells Horatio that Laertes is a "very noble youth," which he most certainly is not. And he is incapable of hiding his own feelings; there is no craft in his madness, nor even common caution. In the play scene he practically puts all his cards on the table and invites the King to trump them. He is too frank, too impetuous, too much a creature of moods and impulses. We find too that he is introspective. He is immensely interested in his own thoughts and fond of self-analysis, but he has an imaginative sympathy which carries him beyond the range of his personal experience; Intellectually, he is brilliant. He is quick in comprehension and possessed of a strongly marked vein of ironic humor. He

has, too, the poet's instinctive feeling for beauty, and above all, he has the genius of language. Ophelia exclaims of him:

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword:
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form. (II,2)

Yet there is the Hamlet who is not only harsh but brutal in his behavior towards Ophelia; who stabs Polonius with the frank but rather cruel explanation "Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!/ I took thee for thy better." The Hamlet who refrains from killing the King at prayers, because he is not content with killing the body, but wishes that " . . . his soul may be as damned and black/ As Hell, whereto it goes." The Hamlet who sends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to their death in England with no compunction; and the Hamlet who picks a quarrel with Laertes in Ophelia's grave.

This brings us to one of the centuries old problems of the play; namely how can we reconcile these different aspects of Hamlet? Some have solved the puzzle by simply ignoring the pieces that do not fit. Others have satisfied themselves that they are not insuperable problems; that the flaws in Hamlet's character are not natural to him but are induced by circumstances too strong for him. Mr. Baker's solution to the notorious problem is to implement not one, but three Hamlet's, each of whom is to represent a complete Hamlet.

No definite differentiation is evidenced in the script although the Director has evolved the theory that Hamlet I is the more aloof, athletic, militaristic, the "rebel." Hamlet II is thought to be the sensitive aesthete and scholar, and Hamlet III the romantic.

Claudius has virtually nothing to recommend him in Hamlet's eyes. He is held to be the personification of evil; a "villain, villain, smiling damned villain." The brother of Hamlet's father, and his murderer as well, he has in precipitous haste won Gertrude to his bed and usurped Hamlet's claim to the throne of Denmark. He is ingratiating, unctuous, insincere, conniving, and ruthless: A king of "shreds and patches."

Gertrude, Hamlet's mother and Claudius' wife, is marked by her sensuality "rank and gross in nature," her over-hasty and incestuous marriage with Hamlet's uncle, her faithlessness to Hamlet's father's memory, and her passionate devotion to her son.

Polonius is established as ass-absolute, the "foolish, prating knave" of Hamlet's description. His frivolous pomposity gives rise to his comic conception and is derived from a trait in the character (officious obtuseness) which has an organic function in the play. Wishing to make the character of Polonius a dancing figure, literally dancing out the rhythm of his lines, but suffering from a dearth of male dancers, the Director

turned to a female for the part of Polonious. Casting Polonious as a female as an inversion of the Shakespearean comic ploy of exchange of identities also invites the almost vaudeville-like exaggeration of movement and rhymed sententiousness.

Ophelia, Polonious' daughter, Laertes' sister, and the estranged love of Hamlet, is here pictured as innocence itself; the personification of idealized love blighted by blind obedience to her father, and by association, with "frail" woman.

Horatio, friend of Hamlet from the University at Wittenburg, is taken on face value as a gentleman worthy of Hamlet's friendship. He is the voice of moderation, restraint, and logic which serves as a foil for Hamlet's surging passions.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are distrusted because Hamlet distrusts them, yet nothing they ever do or say is actually villainous. They exude a kind of evil, of negativeness, because they constantly reappear as a pair and never display any will or initiative of their own. They are completely subservient to the will of the greatest temporal power in the vicinity.

Laertes, like Horatio, is a foil for Hamlet. His father slain, Laertes immediately takes steps to avenge the death, raising a rebellion and storming the palace in vivid contrast to Hamlet's soulful delays. The "man of

action," hot-headed and insincere, Laertes quickly allies himself with Claudius in perfidy and guilt.

Osric is a fop of the court, a "pretty" man with nothing to recommend him but his wealth, his precious manners, and his fashionable clothes. Osric is a "front;" the false emissary of a false master.

The players are a traveling troupe of actors familiar to Hamlet. The Player King is a personal acquaintance of Hamlet's, mature, and a seasoned actor. The Player Queen is a young man on the brink of maturity, enjoying what is likely to be his last season as a player of female parts. Lucianus is a bit player, but one of the regulars, while the Player who enacts the Prologue is a young man entering into apprenticeship.

The grave-diggers exist solely for comic relief, filling the void left by Polonious and providing further display of Hamlet's ironic humor.

Setting Analysis

The setting exists as a sheerly theatricalistic background upon which the play is presented. It is meant to represent no time or place more particularized than Hamlet's mind. Those places which have definition acquire it from the lighting and the character of the movement defining the space. The concept is to provide a neutral area, adaptable, and of sufficient variety and

interest to accommodate the enormous intellectual activity of Shakespeare's play and Hamlet's imagination.

The mood of the play is one of darkness, cold, and decay. All of the action takes place under the pall of night, in aeries dark and infinite. The decay is a central image of "rotten" Denmark, "an unweeded garden that grows to seed." It is thought that by suspending the acting area, allowing it to float, that the notion of activity grounded in intellectual activity as opposed to concrete reality, will be reinforced; the cold metallic surface of the acting areas textured, encrusted, sensual, as a visual evocation of the atmosphere in Elsinore.

The lighting is designed to both define those areas of the set which needs must have "locale," and to afford additional atmosphere. In concert with projections, the lighting expands upon and bridges the stream of consciousness in the play, and dams the gaps between memory and reality. It serves as well to imbue the stage with Hamlet's emotional coloration of actions past and present.

Costume Analysis

Costumes in Hamlet ESP serve a multiple purpose: not only must they establish period and identify relationships, they must also reflect the view of the characters that Hamlet holds of them. Thus Gertrude, a matron, mother of a grown son, and recently widowed, wears red and sports

a daring décolletage as symbols of her adultery in Hamlet's eyes, while Ophelia appears always in purest white and dressed much younger than her years: Hamlet's idealized love and her father's little girl.

In the absence of decorative set pieces and furbishings, the costumes must also serve to "fill-out" the stage picture visually and convey the mood, or tone, of the play. To that end, the costumes must be handsome, Elizabethan in flavor, of rich fabrics, heavy, and somber-hued. Older characters costumes are marked by their draped, pyramid silhouette, while the fitted inverted-pyramid is typical of the younger generation.

Justification of Script

Hamlet ESP is at once both familiar and new. Based upon Shakespeare's classic Hamlet, a staple of any self-respecting repertoire, Hamlet ESP serves up all the tragedy, pathos, intrigue, humor, and emotional impact of the original in a contemporary package. Cited for its boldness, its insightfulness, and its consummate theatricality, Hamlet ESP seemed the perfect foil for Guys and Dolls in summer repertory.

Combine that with the Director's very real affinity for the character and the play, Hamlet, and his exposure to Hamlet ESP and its creator while apprenticed to the Dallas Theatre Center, and you have ample reason for his selection of it as his Thesis production.

CHAPTER TWO:
THE PROMPTBOOK

NOTE: Because of overlapping speeches, this script is prepared horizontally with the lines of the principal speech printed on the left of the page, overlapping speeches in the middle of the same line, and basic stage directions on the right of the page. Speeches uttered simultaneously are underlined.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

THE CURTAIN IS UP AS THE AUDIENCE ENTERS AND THE SKY CYC IS LIT, REVEALING THE SET IN SILHOUETTE. THE SETTING IS SPARE AND ABSTRACT: A SERIES OF "FLOATING" PLATFORMS CONNECTED BY STAIRS, IN FRONT OF A SKY CYC. THE CENTRAL PLATFORM IS STEEPLY RAKED. AT 8:12 P.M. MUSIC BEGINS AND HOUSE LIGHTS ARE TAKEN TO HALF ON A FIVE-COUNT. WITH 45 SECONDS OF MUSIC REMAINING, HOUSE AND CYC LIGHTS, ON A COUNT OF FIVE, ARE FADED TO DARK. ACTORS TAKE PLACES IN THE BLACK-OUT, AND AT MUSIC'S END A SPOT COMES UP ON A COUNT OF THREE AT CENTER OF THE RAKED PLATFORM, A. HAMLET II IS AT CENTER, KNEELING, WITH HAMLET III SLIGHTLY UL, AND HAMLET I UR OF HIM. SEE FIGURE 1 FOR SET PLAN.

HAMLET II (WITH VEHEMENT ENERGY)

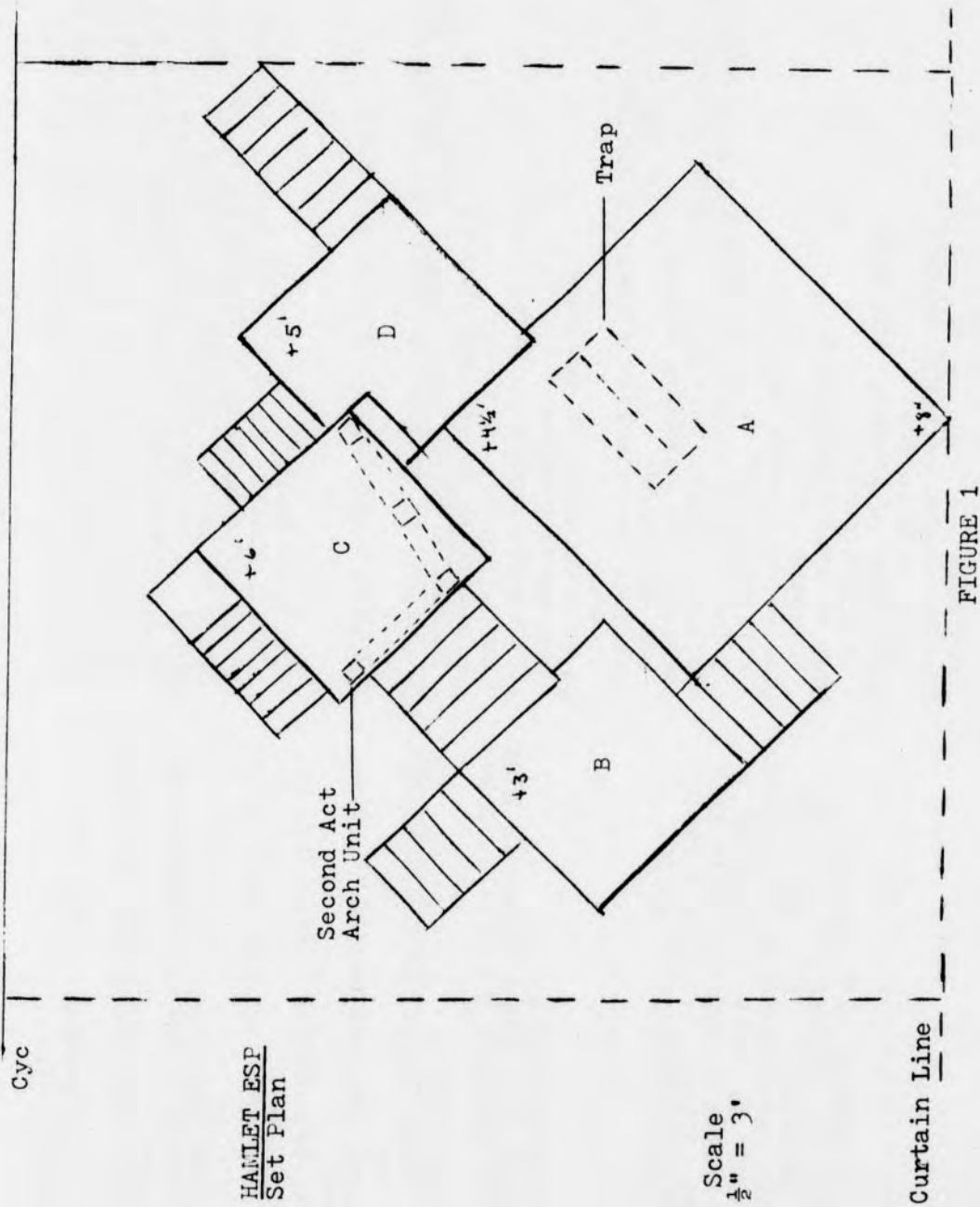
O, that this too, too solid flesh
would melt
Thaw, and resolve itself into a
dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not
fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

O God, God (HAMLETS I AND III TURN AWAY SHARPLY, I CROSSING UR,
AND III CROSSING UL TO OUTER EDGES OF PLATFORM)

HAMLET II (SOFTER, WITH HEIGHTENED SINCERITY)

O, that this too, too solid flesh



would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a
dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not
fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.
O God, God.

O, that this too, too solid flesh
would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a
dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not
fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.
O God, God.

(UNDER HAMLET I'S LINES, II CON-
TINUES WITH WORDS THROWN IN FROM
THE ABOVE SPEECH)

(THE FIRST REPETITION OF THE
WORD 'SISTER' TRIGGERS A SERIES
OF SLIDES ON THE CYC: WITH EACH
REPEAT, AN IMAGE OF GERTRUDE --
LEWD, AND SUGGESTIVE -- APPEARS
IN INCREASING SIZE. THE FINAL
CLOSE-UP, FILLING THE CYC, RE-
MAINS THROUGH THIS SECTION)

(AS HAMLET II SPEAKS, HAMLETS I AND III TAKE
APPROPRIATE CROWNS FROM PROP GIRLS, UR AND UL,
AND PLACE THEM ON THEIR HEADS, REMAINING TURNED
AWAY FROM THE AUDIENCE UNTIL THEY BEGIN TO SPEAK
AS NEW CHARACTERS. SIMPLY DRESSED, ENTIRELY IN
BLACK, PROP GIRLS APPEAR OCCASIONALLY ON THE
EDGES OF THE ACTING AREA TO PROVIDE OR REMOVE
PROPS AS UNOBTRUSIVELY AS POSSIBLE. ONLY AS
SILENT "EXTRAS" DO THEY EVER ENTER INTO THE
ACTION ON STAGE.)

HAMLET I (UNCTUOUSLY, PLAYING THE KING)

Though yet of Hamlet, our dead (WITH A HEAVY, CURVED
brother's death CROSS DS, TOWARD C)

The memory be green, and that it
us befitted

To bear our hearts in grief, and
our whole kingdom

To be contracted in one brow
of woe

Therefore our sometime sister, (GESTURING TO 'GERTRUDE',
now our Queen, III, WHO PULLS DS)

Therefore our sometime sister,
sister, sister, sister (EACH 'SISTER' LOUDER

Th' imperial jointress to this AND MORE CRUEL)
warlike state,

Have we, as 'twere, with a
defeated joy,

With an auspicious and a
dropping eye,

With mirth in funeral, and with
dirge in marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight
and dole,

Taken to wife (HAMLET I MAKES LEWD GRINDING
Taken to wife MOTIONS WITH HIS HIPS TOWARD
HAMLET III WHO IS PLAYING THE
QUEEN. THEY LAUGH SALACIOUSLY.)

HAMLET III(PLAYING THE LASCIVIOUS SIDE OF THE QUEEN)

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted (MAKING SOFT, CURVED
color off, CROSS DC TO HAMLET II)

And let thine eye look like a
friend on Denmark.

Do not forever with thy veiled
lids

Seek for thy noble father in the
dust.

Thou know'st 'tis common; all (GRINDING 'HER' PELVIS
that lives must die, INTO II'S SHOULDER)

Passing through nature to
eternity.

(HAMLET III REMOVES
CROWN, HANDS IT TO
HAMLET II WHO IS
STILL KNEELING)

HAMLET I (AS KING)

Taken to wife. (LAUGHS)

HAMLET II

Or that the Everlasting had not
fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.
O God, God!

(HAMLET II RISES, CROSSES R TO I)

HAMLET III

How weary, stale, flat and
unprofitable

Seem to me all the uses of this
world!

Fie on't, ah, fie, 'tis an (CROSSES DL)
unweeded garden

That grows to seed. Things rank
and gross in nature

Possess it merely. That it should
come to this:
But two months dead, nay, not so
much, not two.

(PROJECTION FADES
ON THREE COUNT)

HAMLETS I AND III (TOGETHER)

Nay, not so much, not two
Nay, not so much, not two
Not two, not two, not two

(IN ONE SMOOTH MOVEMENT, II TURNS AWAY FROM
AUDIENCE TO PLACE QUEEN'S CROWN ON HIS HEAD,
AND CONTINUES 360° AROUND AND ON INTO A LONG
CURVED CROSS DL TO SL OF HAMLET III)

HAMLET I

Not two

HAMLET II (PLAYING FEMININE, PERSUASIVE
SIDE OF THE QUEEN)

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted
color off,
And let thine eye look like a
friend on Denmark.

HAMLET I (AS THE KING. STEPS DL TO GROUP;
HAMLET III IS CAUGHT BETWEEN I
AND II)

Taken to wife

HAMLET II

Do not forever with thy vailed
lids
Seek for thy noble father in the
dust.
Thou know'st 'tis common, all

HAMLET III

Seek for thy noble father in the
dust.
all that lives must die,

that lives must die.
All that lives

HAMLETS I AND II

must die, must die,
must die! (EACH 'MUST DIE'
LOUDER, HARDER: PHYSICALLY
DRIVEN INTO HAMLET III WHO
CONTRACTS AS THOUGH IN PAIN)

HAMLET II

Passing through nature to
eternity. (ALL FREEZE AND HOLD
FOR TWO COUNTS)

HAMLET I (PLAYING KING. LAUGHS)

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?	(TURNING TO THE R, MAKES A SWEEPING CROSS US AND CONTINUING THEN DL TO II'S POSITION; III COUNTERS R AND CROSSES TO UR EDGE OF PLAT-FORM FOR POLONIOUS' HAT)	(II STEPS LEFT, REMOVING CROWN, HANDS IT TO PROP GIRL AND TAKES LAERTES' SCARF)
You told us of some suit, What is't, Laertes?		(SEE FIGURE 2)

LAERTES (BACKSTAGE, INTO A
LIVE MICROPHONE)

My dread lord . . . (HAMLET II TURNS ON LAERTES'
LINE, CROSSES TO KING)

HAMLET II (MOCKING LAERTES, WEARING REPRESENTATIVE SCARF)

My dread lord (BOWING), your leave and favor to return to France. (CROSS WITH I UL OF C)

KING (ALSO BACKSTAGE, INTO MICROPHONE)

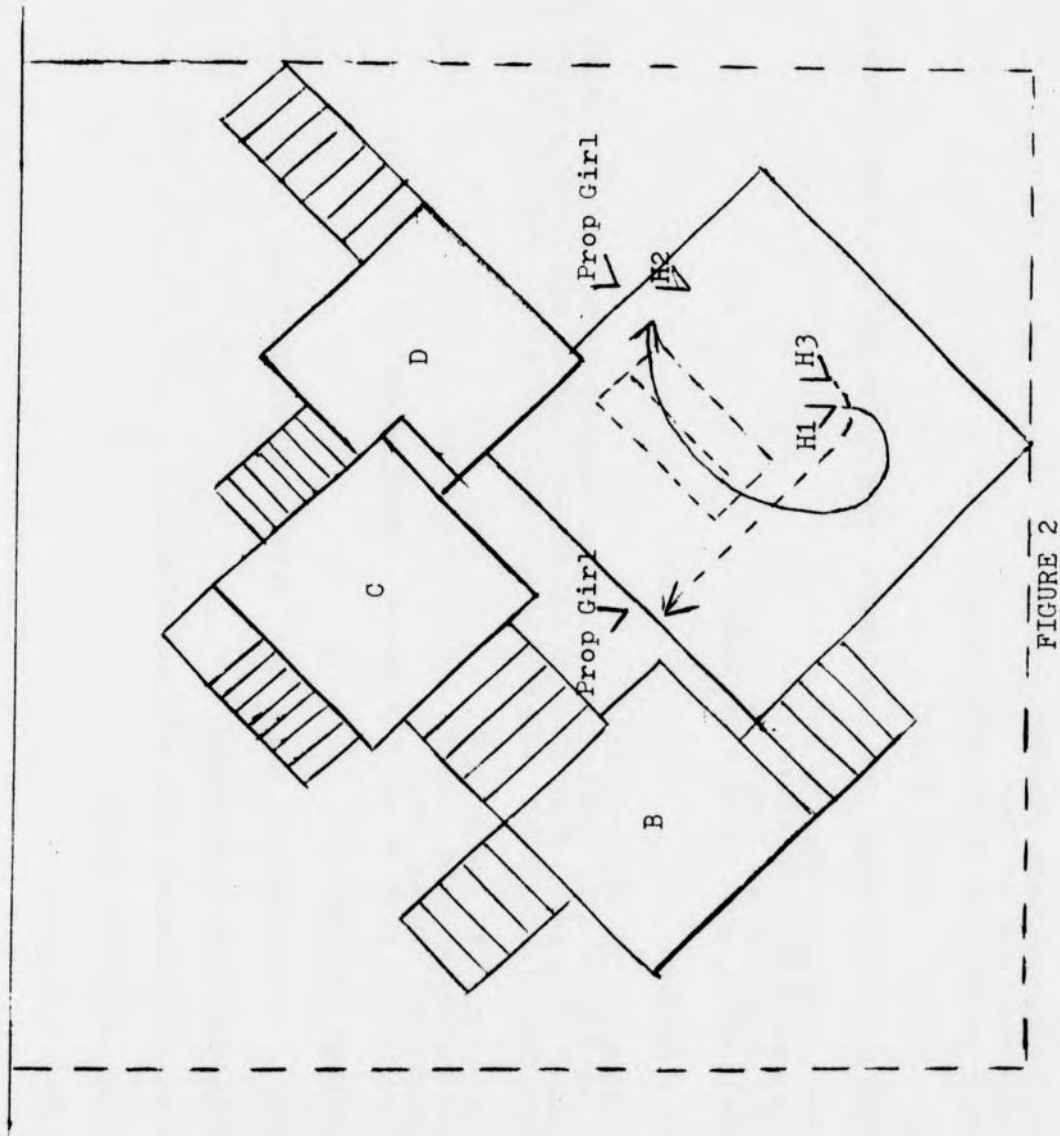


FIGURE 2

Have you your father's leave . . .

HAMLET I (PLAYING THE KING, STOPS)

Have you your father's leave? What says Polonious?

POLONIOUS (BACKSTAGE, INTO MICROPHONE)

He hath my lord . . . (HAMLET III TURNS OUT, WEARING REPRESENTATIVE POLONIOUS HAT)

HAMLET III (PLAYING POLONIOUS)

He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave (CROSSING DC, TO HAMLET I)
By laborsome petition, and at last,
Upon his will I sealed my hard consent.
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

(PROP GIRL CLAPS HER HANDS SHARPLY AND HAMLET III DOES POLONIOUS' SPEECH AGAIN IN A DIFFERENT MANNER. THE FIRST TIME THROUGH THE SPEECH, HAMLET III PLAYS POLONIOUS AS HE SEES HIM, THE SECOND TIME THROUGH AS A POMPOUS STUFFED SHIRT, AND THE THIRD TIME THROUGH AS A DRUNKEN OLD FUDDY-DUDDY)

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laborsome petition, and at last,
Upon his will I sealed my hard consent.
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

(PROP GIRL AGAIN CLAPS HER HANDS AND THE SPEECH IS REPEATED AS DESCRIBED ABOVE)

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS. ON HIS KNEES)

He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laborsome petition, and at last,
Upon his will I sealed my hard consent.

I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

HAMLET I (AS KING. MAKING CURVED CROSS DL)

Take thy fair hour, Laertes. Time be thine, (HAMLET II DISCARDS LAERTES' SCARF AND
And thy best graces spend at thy will. KNEELS IN HIS ORIGINAL POSITION, C.)
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son -- (TURNS TO HAMLET II)

HAMLET II

A little more than kin, and less than kind!

HAMLET I (AS KING.)

How is it that the clouds still hang on you? (CROSSES R TO UL OF HAMLET II, TAKING
II'S FACE IN HIS US HAND)

HAMLET II

So excellent a king that was to this Hyperion to a satyr - (JERKS HIS HEAD FROM I'S HAND)

HAMLET I (AS KING.)

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet, (CROSS DL OF HAMLET II)
To give these mourning duties to your father,
But you must know your father lost a father,
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow.

We (INDICATING III) pray you, throw to earth (HAMLET III CROSSES R TO PROP GIRL, RECEIVES
This unprevailing woe, and think of us AND PLACES CROWN)
As of a father.

HAMLET III (AS QUEEN; TURNS OUT, CROSSES DC TO L OF HAMLET II)

Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet.

I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenburg.

HAMLET II

So loving to my mother
That he might not betwixt the
winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly.
Heaven and earth
Must I remember?

HAMLET III

Stay with us
Stay with us
Stay with us

HAMLET III (PLAYING QUEEN. CONTINUES CROSS, DIRECTLY TO HAMLET II)

Do not forever with thy veiled
lids
Seek for thy noble father in the
dust.
Thou know'st 'tis common; all
that lives must die,
Passing through nature to
eternity.

HAMLET I

Die

HAMLET II (RISES, FACES HAMLET III PLAYING QUEEN)

Ay, Madam, it is common

HAMLET III

If it be,
Why seems it so particular with
thee?

HAMLET II

Seems, Madam? Nay, it is. I know
not seems

HAMLET III (REMOVES QUEEN'S CROWN) (THESE SPEECHES BETWEEN HAMLETS II AND III OVERLAP
UNTIL HAMLET I TOPS THEM WITH HIS NEXT SPEECH.)

I know not seems

HAMLET II

I know not seems

HAMLET III

Seems?

(HAMLET I RIDS HIMSELF OF KING'S CROWN AND PICKS
UP BLACK MOURNING VEILS.)

HAMLET II

Seems, Madam

HAMLET III

Seems? Nay, it is!

HAMLET II

Seems, Madam? Nay, it is

HAMLET III

It is

HAMLET I

Why, she would hang on him

As if increase of appetite had
grown

By what it fed on; and yet within
a month --

Let me not think on't; frailty, thy
name is woman --

HAMLET III (SLOWLY CROSSING DL IN FRONT OF HAMLETS I AND II)

Frailty,
A little month, or ere those shoes
were old
With which she followed my poor
father's body
Like Niobe, Niobe, Niobe, all
tears, why she,
even she --

(HAMLETS I AND II PUT ON BLACK VEILS SUPPLIED BY
PROP GIRL, AND CROSSING R, MIME NIOBE. ACTUALLY
THEY MIME THE QUEEN IN MOURNING OVER KING HAMLET.
THE VEILS ARE LONG. THE WALK IS SLOW, STATIONARY
AND PENDULANT. THEY SOB SOFTLY.)

HAMLETS I, II AND III (TURNING TOWARDS AUDIENCE, I AND II SLING OFF VEILS)

Oh, God, a beast that wants
discourse of reason
Would have mourned longer

HAMLET III (QUICK CROSS DR, OFF PLATFORM)

Married with my uncle

(THIS SECTION IS LOUD
AND FAST, WITH HAMLETS
I AND III CROSSING D
AND PLAYING DIRECTLY TO
AUDIENCE)

HAMLETS I AND II (HAMLET I CROSSING QUICKLY DL, OFF PLATFORM)

Uncle

HAMLET I

My father's brother

HAMLETS I AND II

My father's brother

HAMLET III

But no more like my father
Than I to Hercules.
But no more like my father
Than I to Hercules.

HAMLET I

But you must know your father
lost a father,
That father lost, lost his, and the
survivor bound

(HAMLET II CROSSES
DR TO III AND CALMS
HIM WITH A HAND ON
HIS SHOULDER)

In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow.

ACTORS HOLD THEIR POSITIONS UNTIL LIGHTS BEGIN TO CHANGE. AS AREA LIGHTING CROSS-FADES TO CENTRAL SPOT ON A COUNT OF FIVE, HAMLETS MOVE INTO NEW POSITIONS: HAMLET I DL CORNER, HAMLET II UC, AND HAMLET III DR CORNER. SEE FIGURE 3.

HAMLET II

(THIS SOLILOQUY IS DONE CLEARLY AND SIMPLY DIRECTLY
TO THE AUDIENCE, WITH NO MOVEMENT)

O, that this too, too solid flesh
would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a
dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not
fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.
O, God, God.

HAMLETS I AND III

O God, God.

HAMLET III

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't, ah, fie, 'tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed. Things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this:
But two months dead, nay, not so much, not two.

HAMLETS I AND II (WHISPERED)

Not two.

HAMLET II

So excellent a king, that was to this
Hyperion to a satyr, so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and Earth,

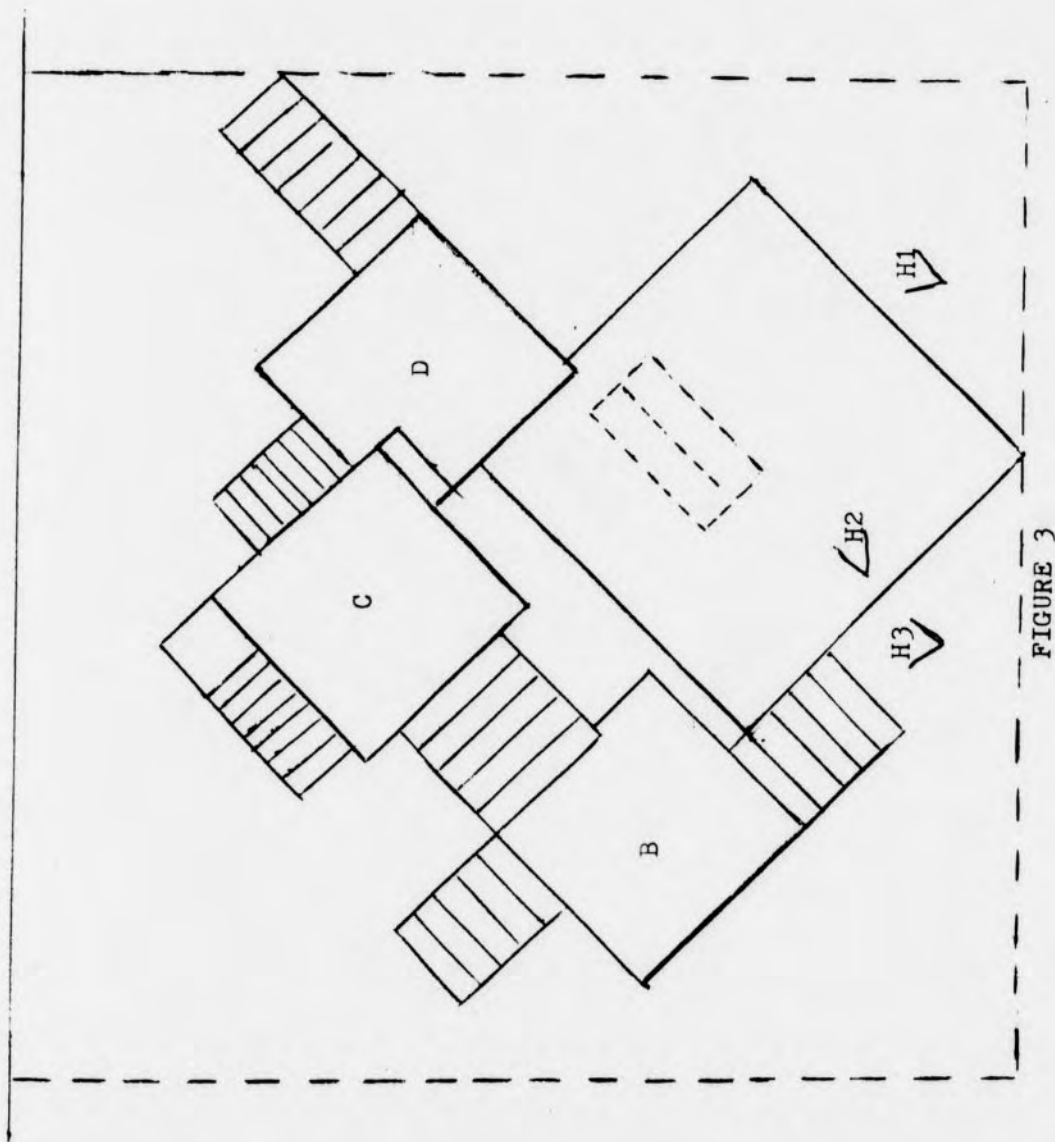


FIGURE 3

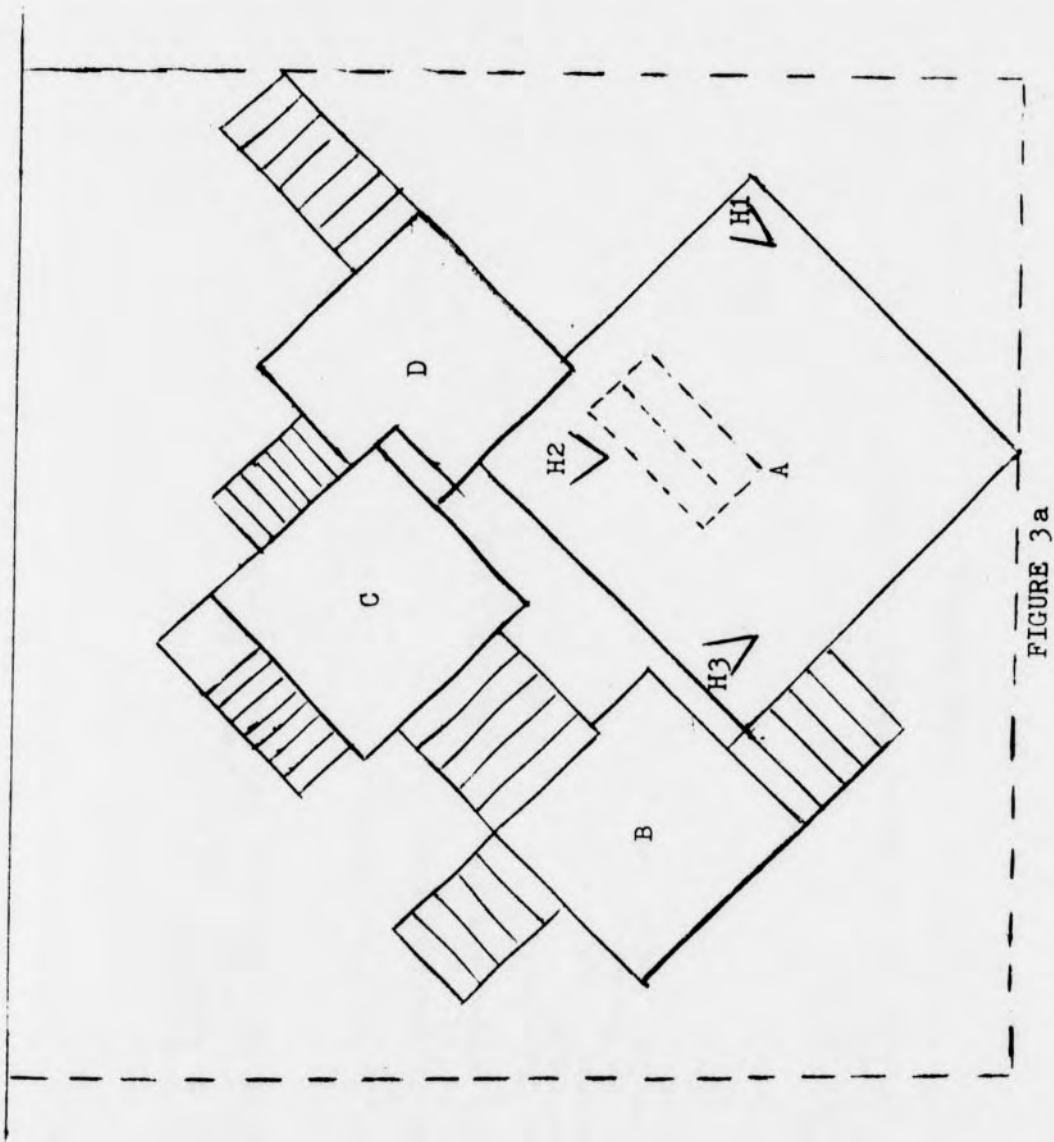


FIGURE 3a

Must I remember?

HAMLET I

Why, she would hang on him
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; and yet within a month --
Let me not think on't; frailty, thy name is woman --

HAMLET III

A little month, or ere those shoes
were old
With which she followed my poor
father's body
Like Niobe, all tears, why she,
even she --
O God, a beast that wants
discourse of reason
Would have mourned longer --
married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more
like my father
Than I to Hercules.

HAMLETS I AND II

O God

HAMLET I

Within a month
Ere yet the salt of most
unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled
eyes,
She married.

HAMLETS II AND III

She married.

HAMLET II

O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to
incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come
to good.

But break my heart, for I must
hold my tongue
hold my tongue
hold my tongue.

HAMLET I

Break my heart, for I must
Hold my tongue
Hold my tongue.

HAMLET III

Break my heart, for I must
Hold my tongue.

AS HAMLET II SPEAKS THE WORDS 'BREAK MY HEART' HE BEGINS TO BACK UP AND TO THE R UNTIL HE IS ON SAME DIAGONAL AS I AND III; AS II COMES INTO THE DIAGONAL, I -- ON THE SAME LINE -- ALSO BEGINS TO BACK UP, AND III JOINS THEM ON HIS LINE SO THAT THEY ARE NOW PARALLEL WITH THE UL EDGE OF THE PLATFORM. AS III FINISHES SPEAKING, THEY ALL TURN AS IF TO EXIT IN SINGLE FILE ONTO PLATFORM D. LIGHTS ON AREA A (PLATFORM A) CROSS-FADE ON A FIVE-COUNT WITH AREAS B, C, AND D, WHICH COME UP TO DEFINE THE CASTLE BATTLEMENTS AT EVENING WATCH. THE SKY CYC IS SNUCK UP DURING OPENING MOMENTS OF THE NEXT SCENE.

SCENE TWO

ENTER HORATIO AND TWO ARMED SOLDIERS UR.

HORATIO (CROSSING TO PLATFORM B)

Hail to your lordship (CROSSES TO C OF PLATFORM, SOLDIERS BEHIND)
Hail to your lordship

HAMLET II (BARELY TURNING TO SEE, CONTINUES ACROSS D AND UP STEP TO C)

I am glad to see you well. (LONG PAUSE, THEN IN RECOGNITION) Horatio! (CROSS C)

HAMLETS I AND III (HAVE CONTINUED THEIR CROSS ONTO C UNTIL II SAYS 'HORATIO!')

Horatio!

HAMLET II

-- or I do forget myself.

HORATIO (WITH BOW, FLOURISH)

The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

HAMLET II (STEPS DOWN ONE STEP, TAKES HORATIO'S HAND)

Sir, my good friend, (ARM IN ARM, THEY CROSS L) I'll change that name with you.

HORATIO (TO HAMLET I WHO HAS CROSSED UR TO PLATFORM C)

My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

HAMLET I

I prithee do not mock me, fellow student,
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

HORATIO

Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

HAMLET II (WITH ELABORATE SARCASM)

Thrift, thrift, Horatio. The funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
(CLASPING HORATIO'S SHOULDERS) Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!

HAMLET III (DC ON PLATFORM C. PLAYING THE KING. NO CROWN.)

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father,
But you must know your father lost a father,
That father lost, lost his.

(ON A SLOW COUNT OF THREE, AS
HAMLET III SPEAKS, A PROJECTION
COMES UP ON THE CYC OF HAMLET I
WEARING THE KING'S CROWN)

HAMLET I (TO HAMLET II, AMAZED)

My father; methinks I see my father.

HORATIO (STARTING IN SURPRISE)

Where, my lord?

HAMLET II (TO HAMLET I, DISTRACTED, DISTANT)

In my mind's eye, Horatio.

HAMLET I (TO HAMLET III, LIKEWISE)

In my mind's eye, Horatio.

HAMLET III (TO HAMLET I, THE SAME)

In my mind's eye, Horatio.

HORATIO (STEPS DOWN FROM PLATFORM C, TO D)

I saw him once. He was a goodly king.

HAMLET II (ALSO STEPPING DOWN)

He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

(PROJECTION PAGES ON THREE-COUNT)

HORATIO (HESITATING, THEN PLUNGING AHEAD)

My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

HAMLETS I, II, AND III (CROWDING ABOUT HORATIO AND III C, II R OF HORATIO, I L OF III)

Saw? Who?

HORATIO

My lord, the King your father.

HAMLET III (TAKING HORATIO APART, THEY STEP DC)

The King, my father?
For God's love, let me hear.

HORATIO

Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch
In the dead waste and middle of the night
Been encountered. A figure like your father,
Armed at point exactly,
Goes slow and stately by them.

(THE SOLDIERS, WHO CAME IN WITH HORATIO,
TAKE UP THEIR POSITIONS, ONE C ON PLAT-
FORM B, THE OTHER AT DC EDGE OF PLATFORM
C. HAMLET II JOINS FRANCISCO ON C, AND
HAMLET I CROSSES TOWARDS BERNARDO ON B.
SEE FIGURE 4.)

BERNARDO (ON GUARD, FACING FRONT)

Who's there?

FRANCISCO (ALSO ON GUARD, TURNS TO THE SOUND)

Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself.

BERNARDO

Long live the King.

HAMLET II (PLAYING FRANCISCO) AND FRANCISCO

Bernardo? (BERNARDO RELAXES GUARD, CROSSES UL
TO SECOND STEP WHERE HE IS JOINED BY
HAMLET I)

(THE HAMLETS TAKE OVER THE PARTS OF
FRANCISCO AND BERNARDO THROUGH THIS
INTERCHANGE. THE ACTUAL SOLDIERS FADE
TO THE WINGS. THE INDIVIDUAL CHARAC-
TERS OF THE SOLDIERS ARE FADED IN HAM-
LET'S MIND AND HE IMAGINES HIMSELF AS
THEM)

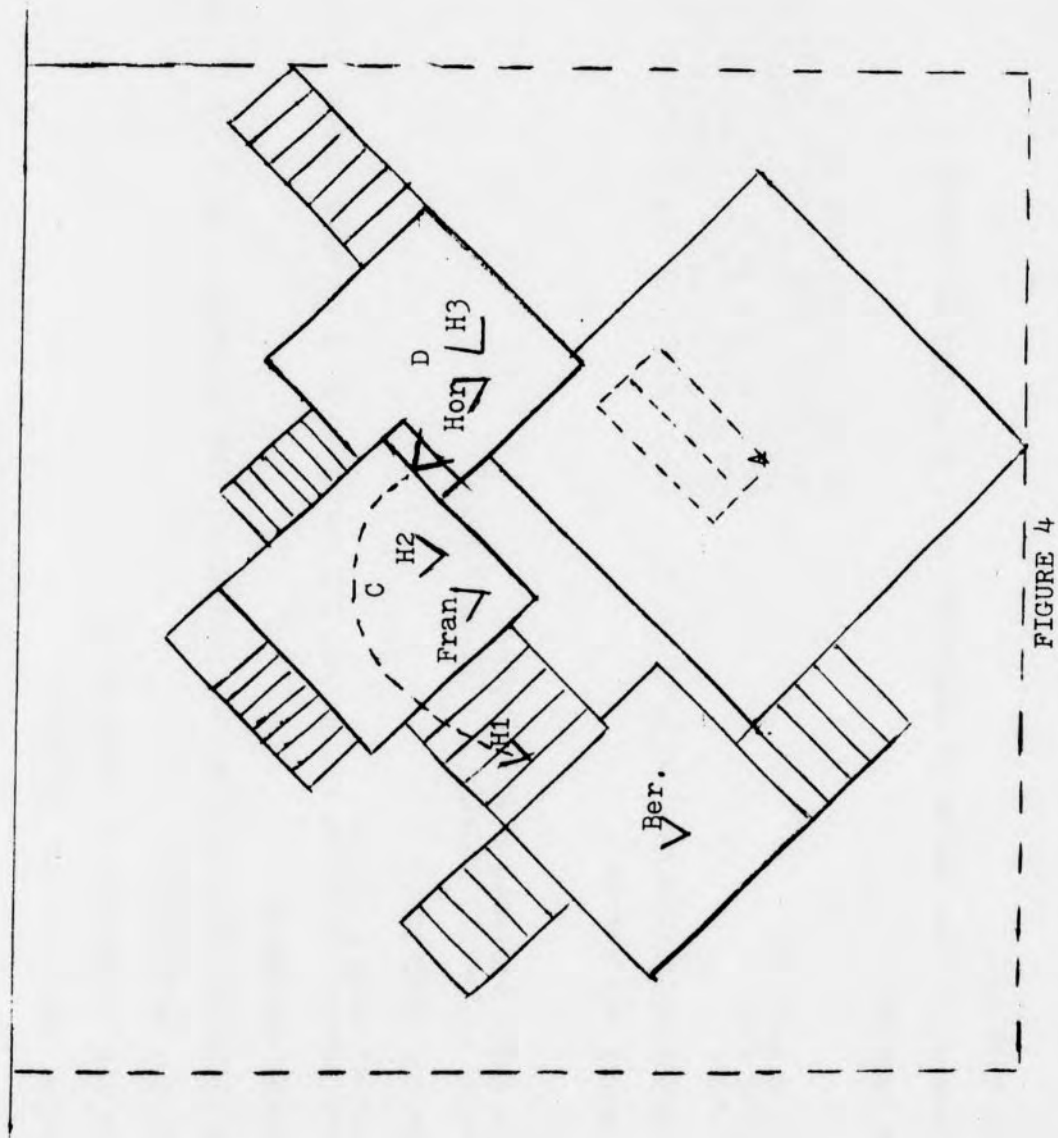


FIGURE 4

HAMLET I (PLAYING BERNARDO) AND BERNARDO

He. (BERNARDO AND I CONTINUE UP STEPS TO C)

HAMLET II (PLAYING FRANCISCO)

You come most carefully upon your hour. (FRANCISCO AND BERNARDO EXIT UC OF PLATFORM C)

HAMLET I (PLAYING BERNARDO)

'Tis now struck twelve. (HORATIO AND HAMLET III CROSS TO C, I CROSSES BEHIND II TO HORATIO) Welcome, Good Horatio.

HAMLET II (PLAYING FRANCISCO)

Welcome, Horatio. (HORATIO CROSSES R, III FOLLOWING)
What, has this thing appeared again tonight?

HORATIO

Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

HAMLET I (AS BERNARDO, CROSSING L TO PLATFORM D)

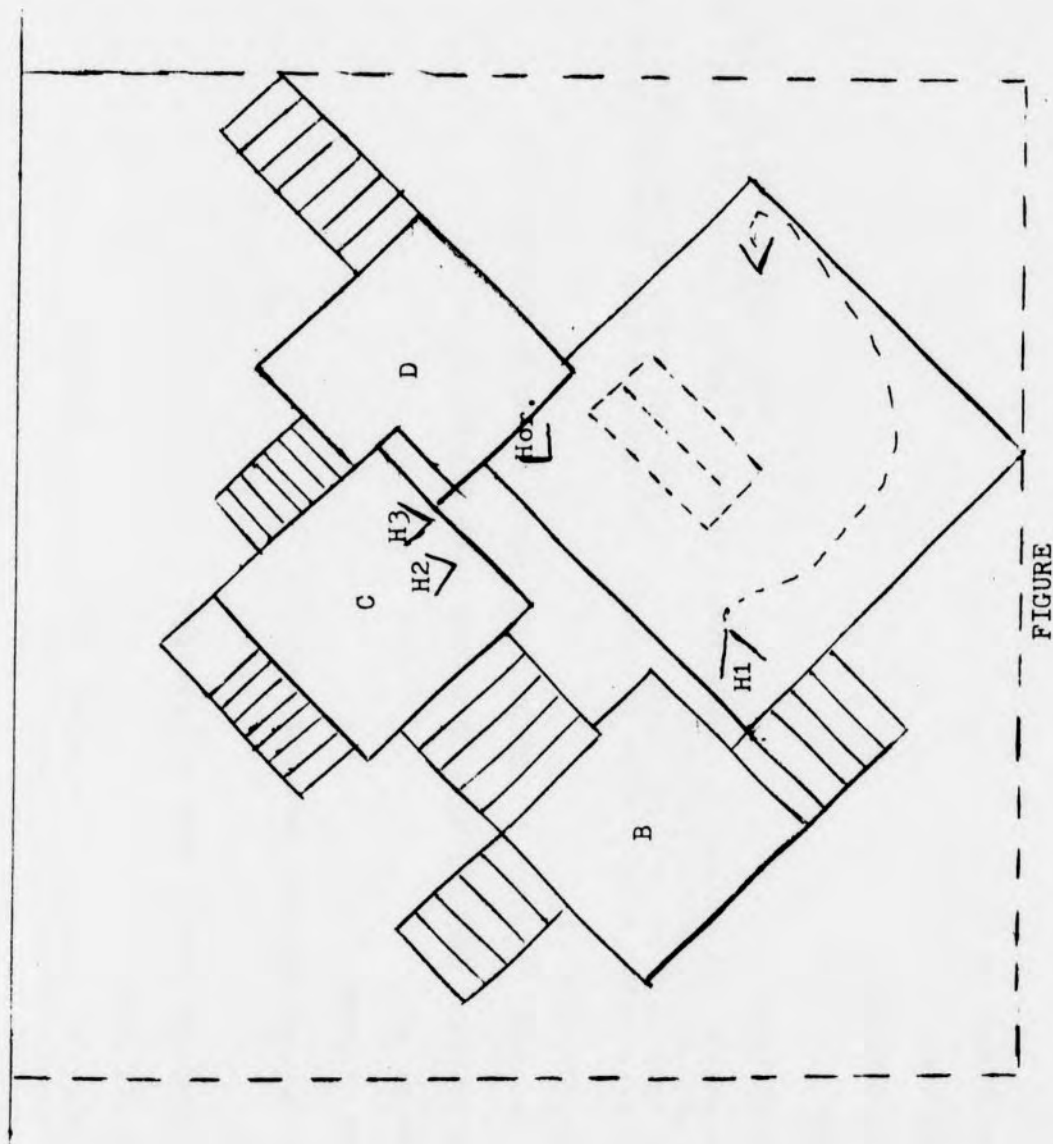
Last night of all,
The bell beating one . . .
The bell beating one . . .

(PROP GIRL, AT TOP OF ESCAPE STAIRS
UR ON PLATFORM D, GIVES HAMLET I THE
DEATH MASK. HAMLET I BECOMES THE GHOST.
HE HOLDS THE MASK OUT IN FRONT OF II,
PLAYING THE SOLDIER. SIMULTANEOUSLY,
THE DEATH MASK APPEARS IN PROJECTION
ON THE RAKED PLATFORM, A.)

HAMLET II (AS SOLDIER)

Peace break thee off. Look where it comes again. (HE POINTS TO HAMLET I)

HAMLET III (AS SOLDIER)



FIGURE

In the same figure like the King that's dead.
(TURNING TO HORATIO) That art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

HAMLET II (AS SOLDIER)

Looks 'a not like the King? Mark it, Horatio.

HORATIO

Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

HAMLET III (AS SOLDIER)

It would be spoke to.

HAMLET II (AS SOLDIER, PUSHING HORATIO L ONTO STEP BETWEEN C AND D)

Speak to it, Horatio. (GHOST, I, BEGINS SLOW, HEAVY CROSS DR ONTO RAKE)

HORATIO (ONTO PLATFORM D)

What are thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By heaven, I charge thee, speak. (GHOST CROSSES INTO DR CORNER OF A,
LOOPING ABOUT TO FACE HORATIO)
(GHOST BEGINS NEW MOVE, MAKING
WIDE, CURVED, CROSS INTO DL COR-
NER) (SEE FIGURE, P. 39)

HAMLET II (AS SOLDIER)

It is offended.

HAMLET III (AS SOLDIER)

See, it stalks away.

HORATIO (AT AC CORNER OF D)

Stay, speak, speak. I charge thee, speak.
If thou hast any sound or use of voice,
Speak to me!

If there be any good thing to be done
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me.

(TO HAMLET) I knew your father.
These hands are not more like,

(HAMLET I HANDS DEATH MASK TO PROP GIRL, DL OF A,
AND PROJECTION FADES. I TURNS OUT, AGAIN HIMSELF.)

HAMLET I

I will watch tonight. Perchance it will walk again. (CROSSES UC TO D)

HORATIO

I warrant it will.

HAMLETS II AND III JOIN HORATIO AND HAMLET I ON PLATFORM D. THEY HUDDLE AS IF FIGHTING
THE COLD, AND MAKE APPROPRIATE NOISES. LIGHTS SHIFT TO COLD, BLUE, ON A COUNT OF FIVE.

SCENE THREE

THIS SCENE IS PLAYED SOFTLY, OMINOUSLY, WITH A PERVASIVE AIR OF TENSION.

HAMLET II

The air bites shrewdly. It is very
cold.

HAMLETS I AND III
Cold.

HORATIO

It is a nipping and an eager air.

HAMLET III

What hour now?

HORATIO

I think it lacks of twelve.

HAMLET I

No, it is struck.

HORATIO

Indeed? I heard it not. (WITH HAMLET II, CROSS DR ON RAKE)

It then draws near the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

(HAMLETS I AND III, ON D, TURN THEIR BACKS
TO AUDIENCE AND LAUGH RAUCOUSLY)

What does this mean, my lord?

HAMLET II (CONTINUING DR; ANGRY, RESENTFUL)

The King doth wake tonight and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swagg'ring upspring reels,
And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down
The kettledrums and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

(MORE LAUGHTER)

(I AND III OPEN UP, STEP DC ONTO
RAKE; III TO THE L, I TO THE R)

HORATIO

Is it a custom?

HAMLET III (CROSSES CL ON RAKE)

So oft it chances in particular men
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As in their birth, wherein they are not guilty, that (these men,

Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star)
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault.

HAMLETS I AND II (I PULLING DC, OPPOSITE II)

(PROP GIRL HANDS HAMLET III
DEATH MASK)

The dram of evil
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,
To his own scandal. (THIS IS AN EXACT CUE. HAMLET III,
WITH DEATH MASK, IMMEDIATELY WHIPS AROUND TO AUDIENCE)

(DEATH MASK PROJECTION COMES
UP SUDDENLY ON THE RAKE)

HORATIO

Look, my lord, it comes. (WITH HAMLETS I AND II, STEPS BACK UR. GHOST SLOWLY CIRCLES DIC)

HAMLET I (CROSSES R TO L OF C, SO THAT HE AND GHOST ARE CIRCLING EACH OTHER; II FOLLOWS)

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damned,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet.

HAMLET II

HAMLET I

So excellent a king, father, royal King, father, royal Dane, O
Dane, O answer me! answer me!

Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements, why the sepulcher
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws
To cast thee up again.

(HAMLET I CROSSES DR TO TAKE DEATH
MASK FROM HAMLET III; II COUNTERS L)

(HAMLET I TAKES THE DEATH MASK AND LOOPS
BACK DC WITH IT)

HAMLET III (CONINUES UR, THEN TURNS AND FACES I)

What may this mean
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel,
Revisits thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?

HAMLET I

Say, why is this?

(HAMLETS I, II AND III CONVERGE C AND CONSULT ON
WHAT TO DO WITH THE DEATH MASK. I IS DC, II TO THE
R, AND III TO THE L.)

HAMLET II

Wherefore?

HAMLET III

What should we do?

(HAMLET I GIVES THE DEATH MASK TO HAMLET III, WHO
CROSSES R TO PLATFORM B, WAVING FOR HAMLET TO FOLLOW)

HORATIO (CROSSING L TO L OF II)

It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone,

HAMLET II (PLAYING SOLDIER; CROSSING R)

Look with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground.
(HOLDS UP HIS HANDS AS IF TO DETAIN HAMLET)

But do not go with it.
No, by no means.

HAMLET I (STEPS R, AS IF TO GO)

It will not speak. Then I will follow it.

HORATIO (STEPS DR, TOWARDS I)

What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff?

HAMLET II

My fate cries out,

I say away! (HE TURNS AND QUICKLY CIRCLES L, RE-
TURNING TO C OF RAKE; I CROSSING UL
SIMULTANEOUSLY TO PLATFORM D)

(DEATH MASK PROJECTION ON RAKE
FADES ON A SLOW COUNT OF THREE)

HORATIO (WHISPERED)

Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. (HORATIO EXITS DL, OFF PLATFORM)

THERE IS A PAUSE. HAMLET IS ALONE WITH THE CREATION OF HIS OWN MIND. ON A SLOW COUNT OF THREE, A PROJECTION OF HAMLET'S EYES AND BROW COMES UP, FILLING THE CYC. HAMLET II IS AT CENTER OF RAKED PLATFORM, A, FACING US. HAMLET III, WITH DEATH MASK, IS AT CENTER OF B. HAMLET I IS CENTER ON D.

HAMLET II

O all you hosts of heaven! O
earth!

HAMLETS I AND III

Mark me.

HAMLET II

I will. Hold, hold, my heart. (SLOWLY FALLS TO HIS KNEES, FACING III)

HAMLET III (AS GHOST) HIS VOICE TORTURED)

My hour is almost come,
When I to sulf'rous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

HAMLET I

Alas, poor ghost.

HAMLET III (AS GHOST)

Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

HAMLET II

Speak, I am bound to hear.

HAMLET III (AS GHOST)

So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

HAMLET I

What?

HAMLET III (AS GHOST)

I am thy father's spirit, remember me.
Remember me.

HAMLET I

Do not forever with thy veiled lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

You must know your father lost a father,
That father lost, lost his.

HAMLET II

O all you hosts of heaven! O earth!

What else?

And shall I couple hell?

O fie!

Hold, hold, my heart,

And you, my sinews, grow not
instant old,

But bear me stiffly up. (RISES) Remember
thee?

HAMLET III (AS GHOST)

But know, thou noble youth,
That serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

HAMLET I

Remember thee? (CROSSES DC, ONTO RAKE)
Ay, thou poor ghost, whiles memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe (INDICATING HIS HEAD).
Remember thee?

HAMLET II (IN PROFILE, TO THE R)

Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
That youth and observation copied there.

HAMLET III (AS GHOST)

O, horrible! Horrible! Most horrible!

HAMLET II

And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmixed with baser matter. Yes, by heaven.

HAMLET III (AS GHOST)

But howsomever thou pursues this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught.

HAMLETS I AND II (TURN TO EACH OTHER WITH LOUD PASSION)

O most pernicious woman!

HAMLET III (AS GHOST)

Leave her to heaven
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge
To prick and sting her.

HAMLETS I AND II (MOANING THE LINE, THEY TURN AWAY FROM ONE ANOTHER: I TO THE L, II R)

O most pernicious woman!

HAMLET III (AS GHOST. HAMLET III,
WHO HAS PLAYED THE TORMENTED GHOST
IN THIS SEQUENCE, SUDDENLY DROPS

THE TENSION AND FORCED VOCALIZATION
TO PLAY THE NEXT LINES DIRECTLY TO
HAMLETS I AND II, WITH COMPASSION)

I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to
walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast
in fires,

Till the foul crimes done in my HAMLET I
days of nature

Are burnt and purged away. Are burnt and purged away.

HAMLET II (CROSSING DC)

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables -- meet it is I set it down
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.

(HAMLET III STEPS TO RAKE, I CROSSES
R AND TAKES DEATH MASK FROM III BEHIND
II. II GOES TO ONE KNEE TO 'SET IT DOWN')

HAMLET I (AS GHOST, MAKING CURVED CROSS L TO L OF II)

But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and comigned locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an end
Like quills upon the fearful porpentine.

HAMLET II

O villain, villain, smiling damned villain!

HAMLET III (AS GHOST, TO II)

Now, Hamlet, hear.
'Tis given out that , sleeping in my orchard
A serpent stung me.

(HAMLETS I AND III HOLD DEATH MASK
TOGETHER OVER THE KNEELING FORM OF
HAMLET II

HAMLET II

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.

HAMLET I (AS GHOST. HE KNEELS L OF HAMLET II) (III REMAINS HOLDING MASK)

Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole
With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distillment.

HAMLET II

Leperous distillment.

HAMLET III (AS GHOST

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen at once dispatched. (ALL RISE. III DISCARDS DEATH MASK, R.)

HAMLET I, II AND III

Fare thee well at once.
The glow worm shows the matin to be near
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.

(ALL HAMLETS PLAYING THE GHOST, AND
BACKING US SLOWLY; II UL, I UC, AND
III UR)

HAMLET I

Adieu

HAMLET II

Adieu

HAMLET III

Adieu

HAMLETS I, II, AND III

Remember me. I have sworn it.

SCENE FOUR

HORATIO (OFFSTAGE)

My lord, my lord!

Lord Hamlet! Heavens secure him!

HAMLETS II AND III (GRAVELY)

(HAMLET I CROSSES R, GETS SWORD FROM PROP GIRL)

So be it.

HORATIO (ENTERING DL)

Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

HAMLETS II AND III (FACING ONE ANOTHER; WITH 'ANTIC' DISPOSITION)

Hillo, ho, ho, boy!

HAMLET II (TURNS TO HORATIO)

Come, bird, come.

HORATIO (CROSSING ONTO RAKE, TO R OF HAMLET II)

How is't, my noble lord? What news, my lord?

HAMLET III (NOT FACING HORATIO, STEPS DR)

O, wonderful!

HORATIO (CROSSES TO UL OF III)

Good my lord, tell it.

HAMLET I (ABOVE HORATIO)

No, you will reveal it.

HORATIO (STEPPING UC TO I)

Not I, my lord, by heaven.

HAMLET II (STEPS TOWARDS HORATIO)

How say you then? Would heart of man once think it?
But you'll be secret?

HORATIO

Ay, by heaven, my lord.

HAMLET III

There's never a villain dwelling in Denmark
But he's an arrant knave.

HORATIO (TURNS TO III)

There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.

HAMLET I (STEP TO HORATIO)

Why, right, you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all, (CLASPS ARMS WITH HORATIO)
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:

HAMLET III (TURNS TO FACE I AND HORATIO)

You, as your business and desire shall point you,

HAMLET II

For every man hath business and desire
Such as it is,

HAMLET I

And for my own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray. (STEPS UL TO PLATFORM D)

HORATIO

These are but wild and whirling words, my lord. (I STOPS)

HAMLET II (TURNS AWAY, L)

I am sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, faith, heartily.

HORATIO (CROSS DL TO II)

There's no offense, my lord.

HAMLET III (CROSSING L TO HORATIO AND II)

Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offense too.

HAMLET I (CROSSING DR ON RAKE)

O, horrible! O, horrible! Most horrible!

HAMLET II (MOVES DC WITH HORATIO, ARMS ABOUT HIS SHOULDERS; III COUNTERS ROUND TO L OF II)

Touching this vision, here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you.
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friend,
As you are friend, scholar, and soldier,
Give me one poor request.

HAMLET III (AS GHOST TO HAMLET II)

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen at once dispatched.

HAMLET I (AS GHOST TO HAMLET II)

It is adieu, adieu, remember me.
I have sworn it.

HORATIO

What is't, my lord? I will.

HAMLET II

Never make known what you have seen tonight.

HORATIO

My lord, I will not.

HAMLET III

Nay, but swear't.

HORATIO

In faith, my lord, not I.

HAMLET I (CROSSING DC TO HORATIO AND II, PULLING OUT SWORD)

Upon my sword

HORATIO

I have sworn, my lord, already.

HAMLET II (TAKING HOLD OF SWORD)

Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

HAMLETS I, II AND III (AS GHOST)

Swear

HAMLET I (LAUGHING)

Swear

HAMLET III (OPENING UP; BODY TURN TO THE R)

Ha, ha, boy, say'st thou so?

HAMLET II

Say'st thou so?

HAMLET III

Art thou there, truepenny?

HAMLETS I AND II (ECHOING)

Truepenny, truepenny, truepenny.

HAMLET III (STEPS DC TO GROUP)

Come on. You hear this fellow in the cellarage.
Consent to swear.

HORATIO (RELUCTANTLY)

Propose the oath, my lord.

HAMLET I

Never to speak of this that you have seen.
Swear by my sword.

HAMLETS I, II AND III (AS GHOST)

Swear (HORATIO TAKES HILT OF SWORD)

HAMLET II

Here and everywhere? Then we'll shift our ground (CROSSES UL)
Come hither, Horatio,
And lay your hands again upon my sword.
Swear by my sword
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

HAMLETS I AND III (ALL CROSS UL TO II)

Swear by his sword. (HORATIO AGAIN TAKES SWORD HILT)

HAMLET III

Well said, old mole! Can'st work i' th' earth so fast?

O worthy pioneer! Once more remove, good friends. (HE CROSSES R)

HORATIO

O, day and night, but this wondrous strange!

HAMLET I (CROSSING R)

And therefore as a stranger give it welcome. (HORATIO AND II CROSS R)
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

HAMLET II

But come:
Here as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd some'er I bear myself
(As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on),
That you know aught of me,

HAMLET III (ILLUSTRATING WITH APPROPRIATE GESTURES)

With arms encumbered thus, or this headshake

HAMLET I

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, and if we would"

HAMLET III

Or "If we list to speak," or "There be, and if they might"

HAMLET II

Or such ambiguous giving out, to not
That you know aught of me -- this do swear,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you.

HAMLETS I AND III (AS GHOSTS. THE GHOST GROWING FAINTER)

Swear

(HORATIO AGAIN TAKES SWORD HILT)

HAMLET II (CROSSING DL)

Rest, rest, perturbed spirit. (L OF C, HE TURNS TO THE OTHERS) So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do t' express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack.
That you know aught of me.

HAMLETS I AND III

That you know aught of me.

HAMLET II

Let us go in together, (CROSSES UL TO PLATFORM D, STOPS, TURNS)
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint. O cursed spite.

HAMLETS I AND III

O cursed spite.

HAMLET II

That ever I was born to set it
right!

Nay, come, let's go together.

HAMLETS I AND III

Let's go together.

(ALL EXIT UL, ACROSS D)

SCENE FIVE

LIGHTS UP ON FIVE-COUNT ON AREAS C AND D AS KING AND QUEEN ENTER UC ON PLATFORM C. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ENTER UR ON PLATFORM D, MOVING IN TANDEM, LOOPING TO C OF D AND BOWING AS ONE. KING AND QUEEN CROSS TO L EDGE OF C, AT STEP.

KING

Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.
Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation:
What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from th' understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,
Rest here in our court; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,
That opened lies within our remedy.

QUEEN (STEPS D TO STEP BETWEEN C AND D)

Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of you,
And sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres.

ROSENCRANTZ

Both your majesties (BOWS, AND GUILDENSTERN DOES LIKEWISE)
Might, by the sovereign powers you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

GUILDENSTERN

We both obey (BOWS, AND ROSENCRANTZ DOES LIKEWISE),
And here give up ourselves in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

KING (TO GUILDENSTERN)

Thanks, Rosencrantz and (TO ROSENCRANTZ) gentle Guildenstern.

QUEEN (STEPS BETWEEN R. AND G., INDICATING THE ERROR)

Thanks Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz.
And I beseech you instantly to visit my too much changed son.

GUILDENSTERN

Heavens make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him! (TOGETHER THEY BOW, AND BOW EACH OTHER OFF L)

QUEEN

Ay, amen! (THE KING EXTENDS HIS HAND, AND THE QUEEN RETURNS TO HIM. THEY EMBRACE)

POLONIOUS (ENTERING DR ON PLATFORM B) (LIGHTS UP ON THREE-COUNT ON PLATFORM B)

The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord, are joyfully returned.

KING (CROSSES WITH QUEEN TO TOP OF STAIRS, R)

Thou still hast been the father of good news.

POLONIOUS

I assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty as I hold my soul.
I do think that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

KING (ON PLATFORM B)

O, speak of that! That do I long to hear.

POLONIOUS

Give first admittance to the ambassadors.

My news shall be the fruit to that great feast. (KING AND QUEEN EXIT OFF REAR OF PLATFORM B, POLONIOUS FOLLOWING. ON THREE COUNT, LIGHTS ON B AND C CROSS-FADE WITH AREA A. LIGHTS ON D REMAIN UP.)

SCENE SIX

THE THREE HAMLETS ENTER UR ON PLATFORM D; ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN FROM THE FLOOR, DL. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN CROSS ONTO RAKE, LC, AS HAMLETS ARRIVE UC.

GUILDENSTERN

My honored lord! (BOWS)

(DURING THIS EXCHANGE HAMLET I ASSUMES THE IDENTITY OF ROSENCRANTZ, AND HAMLET III ASSUMES THAT OF GUILDENSTERN. TOGETHER THEY APE EVERY MOVE THAT ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN MAKE. LIGHTS ON D FADE ONCE ALL HAMLETS ARE ON THE RAKE)

ROSENCRANTZ

My honored lord! (BOWS LIKEWISE)

GUILDENSTERN

My most dear lord! (BOW AND FLOURISH)

ROSENCRANTZ

My most dear lord! (LIKEWISE)

HAMLET II (LAUGHS, CROSSES DC TO R. AND G.)

My excellent good friends! How dost thou,

Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads,
How do you both? What news?

ROSENCRANTZ

None, my lord,
honest.

HAMLET II

Then is doomsday near. But your
news is not true.
What have you, my good friends,
deserved at the hands of
Fortune that she sends you to
prison hither?

GUILDENSTERN

Prison, my lord?

HAMLET II

Denmark's a prison.

HAMLET I

Then is the world one.

HAMLET II

A goodly one, in which there are
many confines, wards, and dungeons,
Denmark being one o' th' worst.

HAMLET I

My lord, but that the world's
grown honest.

(II CROSSES R TO C, THEN TURNS TO R. AND G.)

HAMLET III

My lord?

ROSENCRANTZ

Then is the world one.

HAMLET I

We think not so, my lord.

HAMLET II (STEPS R, FACING AWAY FROM R. AND G.)

Why, then 'tis none to you, for
there is nothing either good or
bad but thinking makes it so. To
me it is a prison.

HAMLET I (AS ROSENCRANTZ)

Why then your ambition makes
it one. 'Tis too narrow for your
mind.

ROSENCRANTZ

Ambition
for your mind.

(R. AND G. STEP R TO II, I AND III
FOLLOW)

HAMLET II (CROSSES DC)

O God, I could be bounded in a
nutshell and count myself a king
of infinite space, were it not that
I have bad dreams.

HAMLET III (AS GUILDENSTERN)

Which dreams indeed are ambition,
for the very substance of the
ambitious is merely the shadow of
a dream.

GUILDENSTERN

Ambitious
Dream.

HAMLET II (FACING OUT)

A dream itself is but a shadow.

HAMLET I (AS ROSENCRANTZ)

Truly, and I hold ambition of so
airy and light a quality that it is
but a shadow's shadow.

HAMLET II (WHIRLING ON THEM, NOW HOSTILE)

Were you not sent for?
Is it your own inclining? Is it a
free visitation?
Come, come, deal justly with me.
Come, come, nay, speak.

(HAMLET II ADVANCES ON R. AND G. WHO BACK UP,
HAMLETS I AND III BACK DR)

HAMLET III (AS GUILDENSTERN)

What should we say, my lord?

HAMLET II

Why anything -- but to th' pur-
pose you were sent for, and there
is a kind of confession in your
looks, which your modesties have
not craft enough to color. I know
th' good Kind and Queen have sent
for you.

HAMLET I (AS ROSENCRANTZ)

To what end, my lord?

HAMLET II

That you must teach me. But let
me conjure you by the rights of

our fellowship, by the consonancy
of our youth, by the obligation of
our ever-preserved love, and by
what more dear a better proposer
can charge you withal, be even
and direct with me, whether you
were sent for or no.

ROSENCRANTZ (ASIDE TO GUILDENSTERN)

What say you?

HAMLET I (ASIDE TO HAMLET III)

What say you?

HAMLET II

Nay then, I have an eye of you.
If you love me, hold not off.

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, we were sent for.

HAMLET III

My lord, we were sent for. (ON REPETITION, I AND III ADVANCE DL; R. AND G. SCRAMBLE OFF L)

HAMLETS I AND III

We were sent for.
We were sent for.
We were sent for.

ROSENCRANTZ

We were sent for.

HAMLET II (CROSS UC)

O, that this too, too solid flesh
would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew.
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed

HAMLET III (CROSSING DC)

I have of late
But wherefore I know not,
Lost all my mirth

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter.
O God, God.

HAMLET II

How weary

HAMLET III

Foregone all custom of exercises

HAMLET II

Stale

HAMLET III

And indeed, to goes so heavily
with my disposition that this
goodly frame the earth seems to
me a sterile promontory.

HAMLET II

Flat and unprofitable.

HAMLET II

Seems to me all the uses of this world (II CROSSES DC, UL OF III. f IS UR)

HAMLET III

This most excellent canopy the air,
Look you, this brave o'erhanging
firmament, this majestical roof
fretted with golden fire!
Why, it appeareth nothing to me

HAMLET II

Fie on it, Ah, fie.
'Tis an unweeded garden that
grows to seed,
Things rank and gross in nature
possess it merely.

But a foul and pestilent
congregation of vapors.

Things rank and gross in nature
possess it merely.

HAMLET I

Man delights not me, nor woman
either.

Things rank and gross in
nature.

Foul and pestilent con-
gregation of vapors.

THE ABOVE SPEECHES SHOULD BE SPACED SO THAT HAMLET III IS THE MAIN SPEAKER AND HAMLET II IS THROWING IN HIS LINES ALMOST IN A WHISPER DURING THE PAUSES OF HAMLET III'S SPEECH. ALL HAMLETS EXIT ULC AND STAND AT THE REAR OF THE DARKENED PLATFORM D TO OBSERVE THE ACTION. LIGHTS UP ON AREAS B AND C ON THREE COUNT.

SCENE SEVEN

POLONIOUS ENTERS FROM REAR OF PLATFORM C, CROSSING R. OPHELIA ENTERS DR ONTO PLATFORM B.

OPHELIA (ENTERING)

My lord, my lord . . . (SHE SEES POLONIOUS)
O my lord, my lord!

POLONIOUS (HASTENING DOWN STAIRS, CR)

How now, Ophelia, what's the matter?

OPHELIA (CROSSES TO P., STILL ON STAIRS, CLASPS HIS HAND AND KISSES IT)

O my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

POLONIOUS

With what, i' th' name of God?

OPHELIA

My lord, as I was sewing in my closet
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced,
No hat upon his head, his stockings fouled,
Ungartered, and down-gyved to his ankle,
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors -- he comes before me.

(RELEASES HIS HAND, STEPS DC)

POLONIOUS

Mad for thy love?

OPHELIA

My lord, I do not know,
But truly I do fear it.

POLONIOUS

What said he?

OPHELIA

He took my by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow
He falls to such perusal of my face
As 'a would draw it. Long stayed he so.
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
And with his head over his shoulder turned,
He seemed to find his way without his eyes,
For out o' doors he went without their help,

(ON A SLOW COUNT OF THREE, PROJECTION
OF HAMLET I, 'WITH HIS HEAD OVER HIS
SHOULDER TURNED,' AND HIS ARM EXTENDED
IN ENTREATY, COMES UP ON CYC)

And to the last bended their light on me.

(PROJECTION FADES ON SLOW THREE-COUNT)

POLONIOUS (TAKING O. BY THE HAND, THEY CROSS DL ONTO RAKE)

Come, go with me. I will go seek the King.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

(HAMLET III ENTERS UL AND CROSSES DR AS
P. AND O. CROSS DL. POLONIOUS MOUTHS THE
WORDS AS HAMLET III SPEAKS)

I will go seek the King.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passions under heaven
That does afflict our natures.

POLONIOUS (STOPS DL)

I am sorry.
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

OPHELIA

No, my good lord; but as you did command,
I did repel his letters and denied
His access to me.

POLONIOUS

That hath made him mad.

HAMLET I (AS POLONIOUS)

(HAMLET I CROSSES DR ONTO RAKE. AGAIN
POLONIOUS MOUTHS THE WORDS)

That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgement
I had not quoted him.

POLONIOUS

Come, go we to the King.

This must be known, which, being kept close, might move

More grief to hide than hate to utter love.

Come.

(P. AND O. EXIT DL, OFF RAKE)

SCENE EIGHT

HAMLET III IS DR, AND HAMLET I IS UL ON RAKE. HAMLET II CROSSES FROM PLATFORM D TO PLATFORM C AND SITS ON DS EDGE.

HAMLET II

What a piece of work is man, how noble in reason,

How infinite in faculties, in form and moving

How express and admirable, in action how like an angel,

In apprehension how like a god; the beauty of the world,

The paragon of animals; and yet to me,

What is this quintessence of dust?

Man delights not me; nor woman neither! (WITH A GESTURE TO THE DEPARTED OPHELIA)

HAMLET I

(HAMLET II RISES, TURNS AWAY R)

Nor woman neither!

HAMLET III

Nor woman neither!

KING AND QUEEN ENTER AT REAR OF PLATFORM D, CROSS TO CENTER. HAMLETS STAND AND WATCH THE FOLLOWING SCENE.

KING

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and sorce of all your son's distemper.

QUEEN

I doubt it is no other but the main,
His father's death and our o'erhasty marriage.

KING (CROSSING TO C OF RAKE)

Well, we shall sift him.

(POLONIOUS ENTERS DL, CROSS TO DLC
ON RAKE, SEE FIGURE 5.)

POLONIOUS

My liege and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble so is mad.
Mad call I it, for, to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

QUEEN

More matter, with less art.

POLONIOUS

Madam, I swear I use no art at all.

HAMLET I

That he's mad 'tis true, 'tis true, 'tis pity.

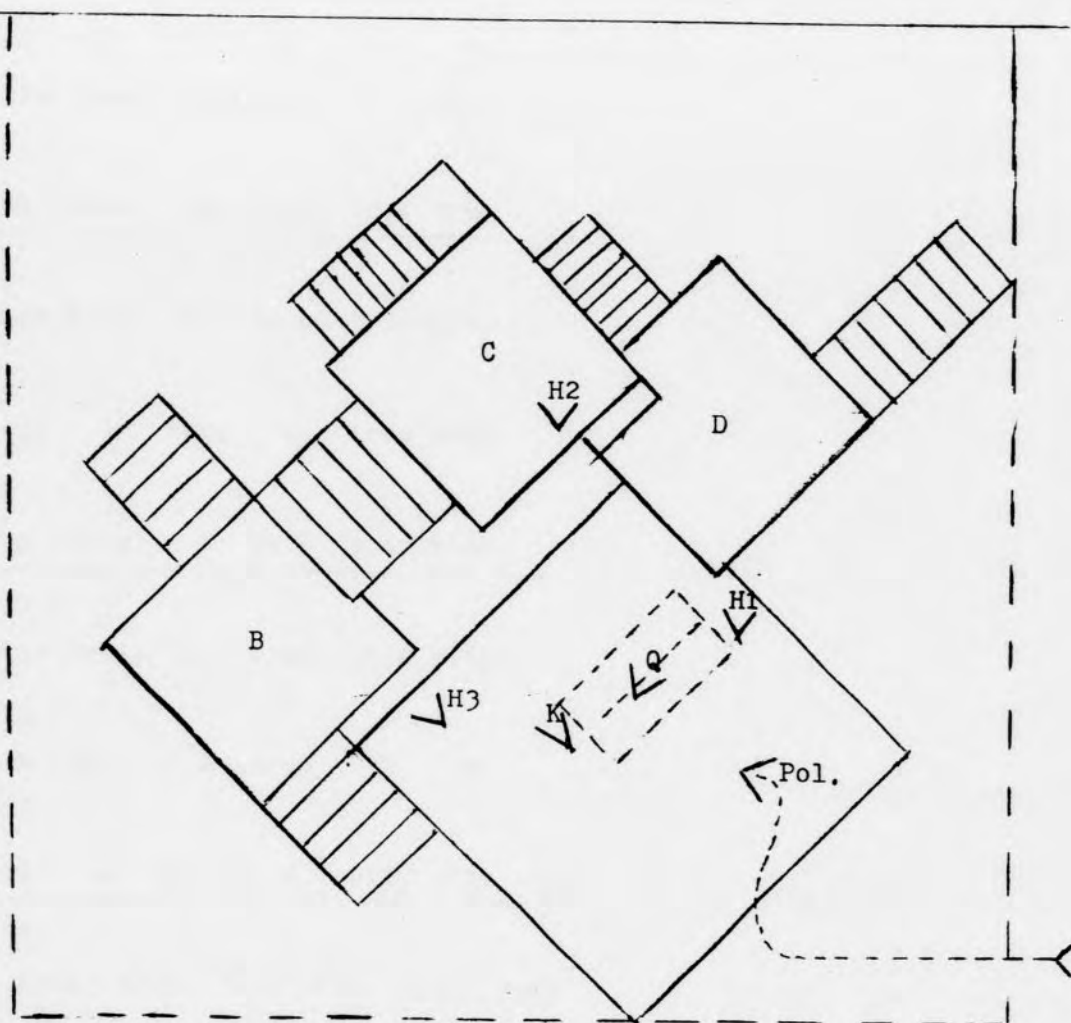


FIGURE 5

HAMLET I 1 2 3 4

He's mad 'tis true, 'tis true, 'tis pity.

HAMLET II

mad & true & true true true

HAMLET I

He's mad 'tis true, 'tis true, 'tis pity.

HAMLET II

& true & true & true true

HAMLET III

pity & pity & pity pity pity

HAMLET I

He's mad 'tis true, 'tis true, 'tis pity.

HAMLET II

true & true & true & &

HAMLET III

pity & pity & pity pity

ALL HAMLETS

'Tis true, true, true, 'tis pity, pity, pity

HAMLETS I AND III

'Tis true, 'tis pity 'tis true & &

HAMLET II

pity true true!

THESE LINES ARE A SERIES OF REPEATS BUILT ON HAMLET I'S LINE "THAT HE'S MAD ..."
HAMLET I REPEATS THE SAME LINE EACH TIME. THE UNDERLINE SEPARATES THE REPETITIONS.
THE RHYTHM GOES AS FOLLOWS: EACH WORD REPRESENTS AN 1/8 NOTE IN A SLOW, 4-BEAT
MEASURE. THE PICK UP TO THE MEASURE ARE THE WORDS "THAT HE'S" OR "HE'S" ("THAT"
BEING DROPPED AFTER THE FIRST REPEAT). THE NUMBERS REPRESENT THE BEATS. SINCE IT IS
IMPOSSIBLE TO SHOW EIGHTH REST SYMBOLS, "&" IS SUBSTITUTED FOR THAT SYMBOL.

POLONIOUS

Mad let us grant him then, and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause.
Thus it remains and the remainder thus.
Perpend.

I have a daughter: have while she is mine,
Who in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this (DISPLAYS LETTER). Now gather, and surmise.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

(KING AND QUEEN PULL DS TO POLONIOUS)

Now gather and surmise.

HAMLET I (READING LETTER AS HIMSELF, POLONIOUS MOUTHING THE WORDS)

"To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautiful --"

HAMLET I (AS POLONIOUS, WHO CONTINUES AS ABOVE)

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; "beautified" is a vile phrase.

POLONIOUS

But you shall hear. Thus:

HAMLET II (READING LETTER)

"in her excellent white bosom, these, etc."

(POLONIOUS FALTERS, GLANCING NERVOUS-
LY AT THE QUEEN)

QUEEN

Came this from Hamlet to her?

POLONIOUS

Good madam, stay awhile. I will be faithful.

HAMLET II (READING LETTER)

(ON THREE-COUNT, PROJECTION OF HAMLET
II COMES UP ON CYC)

"Doubt thou the stars are fire,
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar,
But never doubt I love.
O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers. I have
not art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee
best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.
Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this
machine is to him, HAMLET."

POLONIOUS

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me,
And more above hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

KING (WITH POLONIOUS, MOVES DR)

But how hath she received his love?

POLONIOUS

I went round to work
And my young mistress thus did I bespeak:
"Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star.
This must not be."

HAMLETS I, II AND III

(PROJECTION FADES ON THREE-COUNT)

This must not be.

POLONIOUS

And then I prescripts gave her
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens,
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice,
And he, repelled, a short tale to make,
Fell into a madness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, then into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

(HAMLETS LAUGH)

KING (CROSSES R WITH QUEEN, TO FLOOR)

Do you think 'tis this?
Do you think 'tis this?

POLONIOUS (POINTING TO HIS HEAD AND SHOULDER)

Take this from this if this be otherwise.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Otherwise.

KING

How may we try it further?

POLONIOUS (CROSSES DR TO EDGE OF RAKE)

You know sometimes he walks four hours together
Here in the lobby.

QUEEN

So he does indeed.

POLONIOUS (CROSS TO KING AND QUEEN, OFF RAKE)

At such time I'll loose my daughter to him.
Be you and I behind an arras then.
Mark the encounter. If he love her not,
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state
But keep a farm and carters.

KING

We will try it.
We will try it.

KING AND QUEEN EXIT UP STAIRS AND ACROSS PLATFORM B. POLONIOUS CROSSES L ON FLOOR.
HAMLET III TAKES POLONIOUS HAT FROM PROP GIRL, UR. HAMLETS WATCH POLONIOUS AS HE
CROSSES D OF THEM. POLONIOUS FINALLY NOTICES HAMLET.

SCENE NINE

POLONIOUS (FACING U TOWARD HAMLETS)

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLETS I AND II (WHISPER)

Hamlet

(HAMLET III WEARS THE
POLONIOUS HAT. POLONIOUS
MOUTHS THE WORDS AS HAM-
LET SPEAKS)

HAMLET I

Well, God-a-mercy.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

Do you know me, my lord?

HAMLET II

Excellent well. You are a fishmonger.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

Not I, my lord.

HAMLET I

Then I would you were so honest a man.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

Honest, my lord?

HAMLET II (CROSSING CL)

Ay, sir. To be honest, as this world goes,
is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

That's very true, my lord.

HAMLET I (CROSSING CR)

For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,
being a good kissing carrion -- (STOPS, TURNS TO P.) Have you a daughter?

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS, C)

I have, my lord.

HAMLET II

Let her not walk i' th' sun. Conception is a blessing, but as your daughter
may conceive, friend, look to't. (CROSSES UL)

POLONIOUS (ASIDE)

(HAMLET I GETS BOOK FROM PROP GIRL, UR)

How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter.
Yet he knew me not at first. 'A said I was a fishmonger. 'A is far gone,
far gone. And truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love, very
near this. I'll speak to him again. (CROSS TO DC ON RAKE)

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

-- What do you read, my lord?

HAMLET I (CROSSING UC)

Words, words, words.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

What is the matter, my lord?

HAMLET II (DL)

Between who? (POLONIOUS TURNS TO II, LAUGHS NERVOUSLY, AND STEPS D TO HIM)

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

I mean the matter that you read, my lord.

HAMLET I (ANGRILY, SLOWLY CROSSING DL TO POLONIOUS)

Slanders, sir (P. WHIRLS ABOUT TO FACE I); for the satirical rogue says here that old men have gray beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams.

(I ADVANCES ON POLONIOUS, WHO MUST STEP BACKWARD INTO II. II SOUNDLY WHACKS POLONIOUS ON THE RUMP WITH BOTH HANDS ON THE WORD "HAMS." WITH AN EXCLAMATION AND HANDS UPRAISED, P. FALLS FORWARD INTO THE ARMS OF I, IS THRUST BACKWARD INTO THE ARMS OF II, AND THUS SUPPORTED, IS WALKED DR ON II'S LINE.)

HAMLET II

All which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for you yourself, HAMLET I sir, should be old as I am if, like a crab, you could go backward.

You could go backward.

(HAMLETS I AND II SCUTTLE BACKWARDS A FEW STEPS)

POLONIOUS (CROSSES DC)

Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

(POLONIOUS TURNS TO II)

Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

HAMLET II

Into my grave.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

Indeed, that's out of the air.

POLONIOUS (CROSSES DR ONTO FLOOR; ASIDE)

How pregnant sometimes his replies are! A happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.

HAMLET III (AS POLONIOUS)

-- My lord, I will take my leave of you.

HAMLET I

You cannot take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal -- except my life.

HAMLET II

HAMLET III

Except my life.

Except my life.

(III REMOVES POLONIOUS HAT)

POLONIOUS

Fare you well, my lord.

(POLONIOUS CROSSES DR TO EXIT AS ROSEN-
CRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ENTER DR)

HAMLET II (CROSSING UR TO III)

These tedious old fools!

(HAMLETS I, II AND III RETURN PROPS TO
PROP GIRL)

POLONIOUS (TO ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN)

You go to seek the Lord Hamlet? There he is.

POLONIOUS EXITS DR. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN CROSS U TO C OF RAKE, LAUGHING AS
THEY APPROACH HAMLETS.

SCENE TEN

HAMLET III (FACING FRONT)

Man delights not me, nor woman neither,
Though by your smiles you seem to say so.

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

HAMLET II

Why did you laugh then, when I said
"Man delights not me?"

ROSENCRANTZ

To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what little entertainment the
players shall receive of you.

GUILDENSTERN

We 'coted them on the way, and hither are they come to offer you service.

HAMLET II

He that plays the king shall be welcome.

HAMLET III

His majesty shall have tribute of me.

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN EXIT UC AT
REAR OF PLATFORM D)

HAMLET I (CROSSING DS)

Is it not monstrous that this player
here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of
passion,
Could force his soul so to his
own conceit
That from her working all his
visage wanned,

HAMLET III

Tears in his eyes,

HAMLET II (PULLING DC)

Distraction in his aspect,

HAMLET I (PULLING DL OF II)

A broken voice

And his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit?

HAMLETS I, II AND III

And all for nothing! For Hecuba!

POLONIOUS (ENTERING UC, FROM REAR OF PLATFORM D)

My lord, my lord, (CROSSING DR ONTO RAKE) my lord!
The actors are come hither, my lord.

HAMLETS I, II AND III (TURN IN TO ONE ANOTHER)

Buzz, buzz.

POLONIOUS

Upon my honor --

HAMLET III (AS HAMLETS MOVE BACK, FORMING A DIAGONAL PARALLEL WITH EDGE OF THE RAKE)

Then came each actor on his ass --

POLONIOUS

The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral,
pastoral-comical.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Historical-pastoral, tragical-historical,
tragical-comical-historical-pastoral.

(POLONIOUS MOUTHS THESE LINES, WHILE
THE HAMLETS DO AN EXAGGERATED SOFT-
SHOE ROUTINE TO THIS RHYTHMICAL PASSAGE)

POLONIOUS

Scene individable, or poem unlimited. Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor
Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

THE PLAYERS ENTER UC FROM REAR OF PLATFORM C WITH A FLOURISH OF HATS AND ROBES, A
PROP BAG AND SEVERAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. LUCIANUS AND PROLOGUE CROSS L TO PLATFORM
D, WHILE THE PLAYER KING AND PLAYER QUEEN CROSS R AND BEGIN DESCENT TO PLATFORM B.
SEE FIGURE 6.

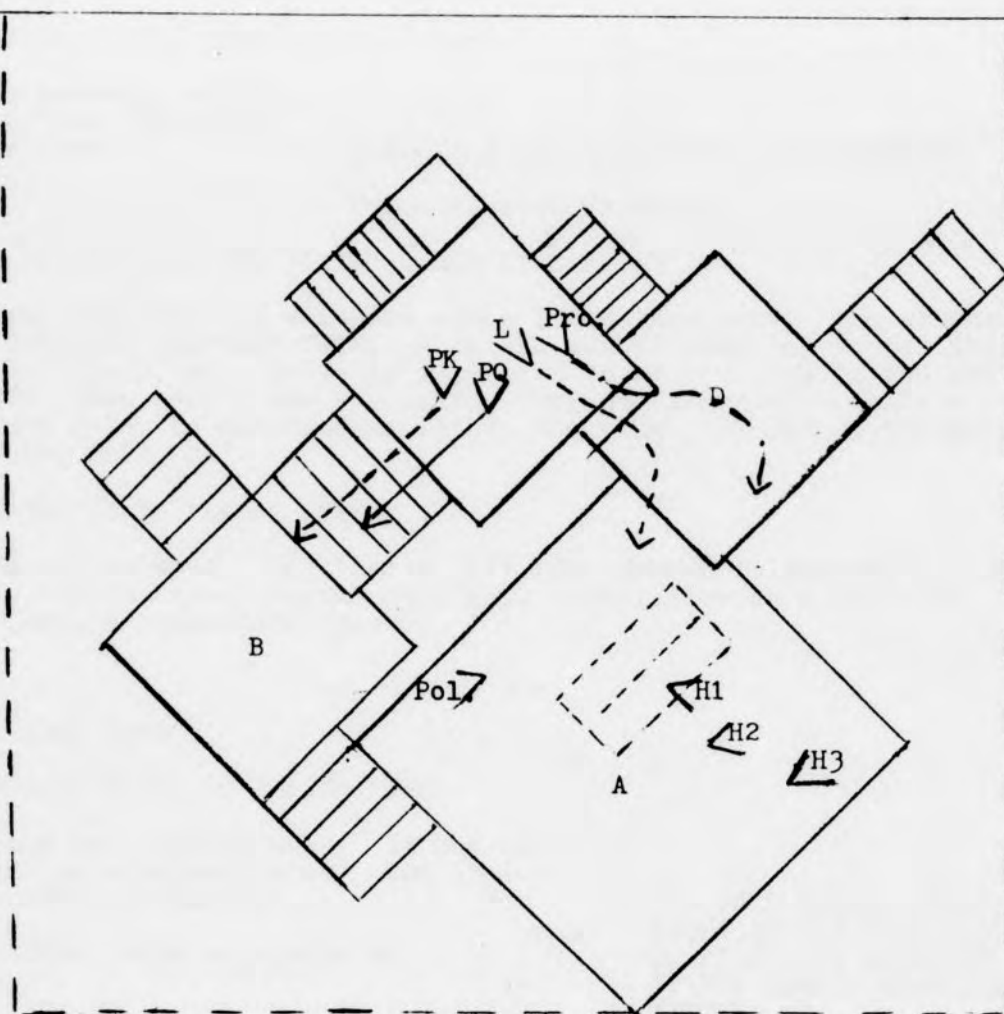


FIGURE 6

HAMLET II (CROSSING R, UP STAIRS TO PLATFORM B)

You are welcome, masters, welcome,
all. I am glad to see thee well.
Welcome, good friends.

HAMLETS I AND III (STEP R IN GREETING)

Welcome, good friends.

HAMLET II (WITH PLAYER KING AND PLAYER QUEEN AT C OF B)

O, old friend, why, thy face is valanced since I saw thee last. Com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? (BETWEEN THEM, TO PLAYER QUEEN) What, my young lady and mistress? By'r Lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven (INDICATING THE GROWTH IN HEIGHT) than when I saw you last. Pray God your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. (II GUIDES PLAYER QUEEN DOWN STEPS AND ONTO RAKE, CR)

HAMLET III (CROSSES DL TO PLAYER QUEEN, II)

Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see. We'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality. Come, a passionate speech.

PLAYER

What speech, my good lord?

HAMLET I (CROSSING R OF C, TO PLAYER KING)

I heard thee speak me a speech once. It was never acted, but it was an excellent play. One speech in't I chiefly loved. 'Twas . . .

Aeneas' tale to Dido, when he speaks of Priam's daughter.

(IN THIS PAUSE, LUCIANUS DIGS ABOUT IN HIS PROP BAG AND PRODUCES SCRIPT WHICH HE TAKES TO I. HIS MEMORY REFRESHED, I CONTINUES)

HAMLET III (CROSSES R TO HAMLET I)

"The rugged Pyrrhus, horridly smeared
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'ersized with coagulate gore."

HAMLET II (CROSSES TO III)

"With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

HAMLET I

So, proceed you.

POLONIOUS (TO HAMLETS AS THEY CROSS UC TO PLATFORM D)

Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent
and good discretion.

HAMLET II

Is it not monstrous that this player here
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion . . .

PLAYER KING (SWINGING HIS SWORD)

Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide.

PLAYER QUEEN (FALLS TO THE FLOOR)

The unnerved father falls.

PLAYER KING

(HAMLET III TAKES SCRIPT FROM HAMLET
I AND BEGINS TO READ IN A LOUD, DE-
CLAMATORY STYLE. HAMLET II AND PLAYER
QUEEN COUNTER DL. PLAYERS PROVIDE
DRUM ROLL AND TAMBOURINE THROUGH THIS
SPEECH)

(HAMLET II TAKES SCRIPT AND CONTINUES
IN THE SAME STYLE)

(THE PLAYERS GIVE THE HAMLETS A ROUND
OF APPLAUSE)

(PLAYER KING CROSSES DL TO PLAYER
QUEEN)

(PLAYER QUEEN REMOVES HIS ROBE AND
THEY PREPARE TO CONTINUE THE SPEECH)

(DRUM ROLL, TAMBOURINE)

For, lo, his sword seem'd in the
air to stick.

Pyrrhus did nothing,
But as we often see, against some
storm,
A silence in the heavens,
The bold winds speechless, and
the orb below
As hush as death; so, with
Pyrrhus --

-- vengeance sets him new a-work.

Break all the spokes and fellies
from her wheel

And bowl the round nave

Down the hill of heaven
As low as to the fiends!

HAMLET III

And all for nothing . . .

HAMLET I

He would drown the stage with
tears
And cleave the general ear with
horrid speech . . .

HAMLET II

Make mad the guilty

HAMLET III

And appall the free

HAMLET I

Confound the ignorant

HAMLET II

And amaze indeed the very
faculties of eyes and ears.

(PLAYER KING SWINGS HIS SWORD
AND PLAYER QUEEN SCREAMS)

POLONIOUS

This is too long.

(SEE FIGURE 7)

HAMLET III (ANGRILY)

It shall to the barber's, with your beard!
Prithee, say on: he's for a jig:
Or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps:
Say on.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Come to Hecuba.

PLAYER KING

"But who, O, who had seen the
mobled queen --"

HAMLET I

"The mobled queen?"

POLONIOUS

That's good; "mobled queen" is
good.

PLAYER KING

"Run barefoot up and down,
threatening the flames
With bisson rheum; in the alarm
of fear caught up;
When she saw Pyrrhus make
malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her
husband's limbs.

HAMLET II

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous,



FIGURE 7

kindless villain . . .

The instant burst of clamor that
she made,
Unless things mortal move them
not at all,
Would have made milch the
burning eyes of heaven
And passion in the gods."

(PLAYER KING FALLS TO THE FLOOR IN
EMOTIONAL COLLAPSE)

POLONIOUS

Lo, whether he has not turned his
color and has tears in's eyes.
Prithee, no more.

HAMLET III (CROSSES DC ON RAKE TO PLAYER KING)

'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out
the rest of this soon.
(TO POLONIOUS) Good my lord, will you see the
players well bestowed?
Do you hear, let them be well
used.

(POLONIOUS MOVES UL TO PLATFORM D)

HAMLET II

For they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time:

HAMLET III

After your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report
while you live.

POLONIOUS

My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

HAMLET I (CROSSING TO POLONIOUS)

Use them after your own honor and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty.
Take them in.

POLONIOUS

Come, sirs.

HAMLET II

Follow him, friends: and look you, mock him not: we'll hear a play tomorrow. (POLONIOUS AND THE PLAYERS BEGIN TO EXIT UL OFF REAR OF PLATFORM D, BUT HAMLET II DETAINS THE PLAYER KING AND QUEEN AND TAKES THEM ASIDE, R)

Old friend; can you play the Murder of Gonzago?

PLAYER KING

(HAMLETS I AND III CLOSE IN AROUND PLAYER KING AND QUEEN, DR ON RAKE)

Aye, my lord.

HAMLET III

We'll ha't tomorrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in't, could you not?

PLAYER KING

Aye, my lord.

HAMLET I

Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not.
My good friends, I'll leave you till night.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

You are welcome to Elsinore.

(PLAYER KING AND QUEEN EXIT UL AFTER POLONIOUS
AND THE OTHERS)

THE HAMLETS WAIT FOR THE PLAYERS TO EXIT, THEN GATHER AT C OF THE RAKE. HAMLET II
IS AT C WITH HAMLET I TO HIS R AND HAMLET III TO HIS L. SEE FIGURE 8.

HAMLET II

What's Hecuba to him,

HAMLET III

Or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her?

HAMLET II

What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have?

HAMLET III

He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,

HAMLET II

Make mad the guilty and appall the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.



FIGURE 8

HAMLET I

Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,

HAMLET II

And can say nothing.

HAMLET I

No, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damned defeat was made.

HAMLET II (AS REMEMBRANCE OF THE GHOST, TO III)

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen at once dispatched.

HAMLET III

Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? Breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? Gives me the lie i' th' throat
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?

HAMLET II (SHOUTS IN EAR OF HAMLET I)

O, most pernicious woman!

HAMLET I

Ha, 'swounds, I should take it,
for it cannot be

But I am pigeon-livered and lack
gall

To make oppression bitter, or ere
this

I should ha' fatt'd all the region HAMLET III
kites

With this slave's offal.

Slave's offal.

HAMLET II

O horrible! Horrible! Most
horrible!

Let not the royal bed of
Denmark be

A couch for luxury and
damned incest.

HAMLET III

Bloody, bawdy villain!

HAMLETS II AND III

Remorseless, treacherous,
lecherous, kindless villain!

HAMLETS I, II AND III

O, vengeance!

HAMLET III

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words
And fall a-cursing like a very drab.

HAMLET II (AS GHOST)

Swear!

HAMLET I

A scullion! Fie upon't, foh! About, my brains.

HAMLET II (AS GHOST, TO III)

But know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

HAMLET III (BREAKING AWAY FROM THE OTHERS, STEPS DL)

I have heard that guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so the the soul that presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions.
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks,
I'll tent him to the quick. If 'a do blench,
I know my course.

HAMLET I (WHISPERING TO HAMLET II)

It is "Adieu, adieu, remember."
I have sworn't.

HAMLET II (CROSSING DC)

The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil, and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape, yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me.

HAMLETS II AND III

I'll have grounds more relative than this.

HAMLET I (CROSSING DR)

The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

LIGHTS OUT. HAMLETS EXIT IN THE BLACK-OUT. HOUSE LIGHTS UP. HOLD FOR A SLOW COUNT OF FIVE, THEN BRING CURTAIN DOWN. IT IS DURING THIS INTERMISSION THAT THE ARCH UNIT FOR ACT TWO IS AFFIXED TO PLATFORM C. THE ARCH IS SET SO THAT THE ARRAS (CLOTH HANGING) OVER THE UR SIDE OF THE UNIT, NOW HIDDEN FROM VIEW, MAY BE LOWERED FOR ITS LATER USE. WHEN THE ARCH IS SET AND THE STAGE CLEARED, THE CURTAIN IS RAISED AND THE CYC LIGHTS COME UP.

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

FOUR MINUTES TO CURTAIN, INTRODUCTORY MUSIC COMES UP. ON CUE FROM THE STAGE MANAGER, HOUSE LIGHTS ARE FADED TO HALF ON A THREE-COUNT, HELD FOR A COUNT OF FIVE, THEN, WITH THE CYC LIGHTS, ARE FADED TO DARK ON A THREE-COUNT. ACTORS TAKE THEIR PLACES IN THE BLACK-OUT: HAMLET I IS IN DR CORNER OF TOP STEP BELOW PLATFORM B, HAMLET II IS AT L EDGE OF STAIRS ON PLATFORM B, AND HAMLET III IS UR OF II, BETWEEN THEM. THE KING IS UL UNDER THE ARCH ON PLATFORM C, THE QUEEN DL SLIGHTLY, ON STEP BETWEEN PLATFORMS C AND D. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE ON UL EDGE OF PLATFORM D, ROSENCRANTZ DR OF GUILDENSTERN AND BOTH FACING UC TOWARDS THE KING AND QUEEN. POLONIOUS IS URC ON RAKE. WHEN ALL ARE IN PLACE, LIGHTS COME UP ON THREE-COUNT AND MUSIC FADES.

HAMLET I

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them.

KING

And can you by no drift of conference
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

ROSENCRANTZ

He does confess he feels himself distracted,
But from what cause 'a will by no means speak.

GUILDENSTERN

Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But with a crafty madness keeps aloof,

HAMLET II

To die, to sleep --
No more -- and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to!

QUEEN

Did he receive you well?

ROSENCRANTZ

Most like a gentlemen.

GUILDENSTERN

But with much forcing of his disposition.

ROSENCRANTZ

Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

QUEEN

Did you tempt him to any pastime?

HAMLET II

Is it not monstrous that this player here . . .

ROSENCRANTZ

Madam, it so fell out that certain players
We o'erraught on the way; of these we told him,
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are here about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

POLONIOUS

'Tis most true,
And he beseeched me to entreat your Majesties
To hear and see the matter.

KING

With all my heart, and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclined.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge
And drive his purpose into these delights.

ROSENCRANTZ

We shall, my lord. (ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN BOW AND EXIT OFF REAR OF PLATFORM D)

KING (STEPS D TO GERTRUDE, THEY CROSS TO C OF D)

Sweet Gertrude, leave us too,
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia.
Her father and myself (lawful espials)
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If't be th' affliction of his love or no

That thus he suffers for. (THE QUEEN EXITS UL)

POLONIOUS (CROSSING UL TO THE KING ON PLATFORM D)

I hear her coming. Let's withdraw, my lord.

HAMLET I

Soft you now,
The fair Ophelia! -- Nymph in thy orisons
Be all my sins remembered.

OPHELIA (CROSSES TO L OF C ON THE RAKE)

Good my lord,
How does your honor for this many a day?

HAMLET III

Many a day?

HAMLET II

I humbly thank you: well, well, well.

OPHELIA (STEPS TOWARD HAMLET III)

My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed to re-deliver.

HAMLET II

Longed to re-deliver.

OPHELIA

I pray you, now receive them.

(POLONIOUS AND THE KING CROSS R TO THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE ARCH AS THE HAMLETS RISE AND CROSS ONTO THE RAKE, FORMING A DIAGONAL LINE ALONG THE UR EDGE, FACING L. OPHELIA ENTERS DL, WEARING A LONG SCARF OR STOLE)

(HAMLET III IS UC, AT THE HEAD OF THE LINE FOLLOWED BY HAMLETS I AND II. WHEN THE HAMLETS REPEAT THE LINES OF OPHELIA THEY STEP OUT FROM THE GROUP AND SAY THE OPHELIA LINES BACK TO THE OTHERS, AS IF OPHELIA HERSELF WERE SAYING THEM)

HAMLET III

No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

OPHELIA

My honor'd lord, you know right well you did;
And with them words of so sweet breath composed
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.

(CROSSES UR TO HAMLET III)

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.

OPHELIA

There, my lord.

HAMLET I (STEPS TO O., THEN RETURNS)

Ha, ha! Are you honest?

OPHELIA

My lord?

HAMLET II (STEPS TO O. WITH LINE, THEN RETURNS)

Are you fair?

OPHELIA (STEPS BACK IN DISMAY)

What means your lordship?

(HAMLET III CROSSES DL TO CORNER OF
RAKE, HAMLETS I AND II FOLLOWING TO
FORM A NEW DIAGONAL AT FOOT OF RAKE,
FACING U TOWARD OPHELIA. OPHELIA
CROSSES D AND HANDS HAMLET II THE
"REMEMBRANCES")
(HAMLET I GLIMPSES POLONIOUS AND THE
KING IN THEIR HIDING PLACE)

(EACH HAMLET ANGRILY STEPS U AND
HURLS HIS LINES AT OPHELIA, THEN
STEPS BACK DOWN TO HIS ORIGINAL
POSITION)

HAMLET I

What means your lordship?

HAMLET III (STEPS TOWARDS OPHELIA)

That if you be honest and fair, your honesty
should admit no discourse to your beauty.

OPHELIA

Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

HAMLET I (CROSSING TO UR OF OPHELIA)

Aye, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from
what it is to a bawd that the force of honesty can translate beauty into
his likeness: this was sometimes a paradox, but now the time gives it proof.
I did love you once.

OPHELIA

Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

HAMLET III

You made me believe so.

HAMLET II (CROSSING TO UL OF OPHELIA)

You should **not** have believed me; for virtue cannot so innoculate
our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

OPHELIA

I was the more deceived.

HAMLET III

Get thee to a nunnery!

HAMLET I (ECHO)

Nunnery

Nunnery

Nunnery

Nunnery

HAMLET II (ECHO)

Nunnery

Nunnery

Nunnery

(WHEN III SAYS "NUNNERY" OPHELIA BEGINS A CIRCULAR TURN AT C IN WHICH SHE USES THE CLOTH SCARF OR STOLE TO EMPHASIZE HER MOVEMENTS BY MAKING IT FLOW AROUND HER WITH LARGE SWEEPING GESTURES OF HER ARMS. THE HAMLETS ECHOING THE WORD "NUNNERY" COVERS THIS MOVEMENT UNTIL OPHELIA IS THROUGH. OPHELIA IS DC AT CONCLUSION.)

HAMLET III

Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me.

HAMLET I (STEPS L TOWARDS OPHELIA)

I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious; with more offenses at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in,

HAMLET II

Imaginations to give them shape,

HAMLET III

Or time to act them in.

HAMLET I (CIRCLING OPHELIA)

Thoughts to put them in,

HAMLET II (CIRCLING OPHELIA)

Imaginations to give them shape,

(WITH EACH OF THESE LINES, A HAMLET STEPS IN AND ENCIRCLES OPHELIA, THEN STEPS QUICKLY OUT AGAIN, LIKE AN ANIMAL ATTACKING HIS PREY.)

HAMLET III (CIRCLING OPHELIA)

Or time to act them in.

HAMLET I (CIRCLES OPHELIA AND EXITS OPPOSITE ORIGINAL POSITION)

Thoughts to put them in,

HAMLET II (CIRCLES OPHELIA AND EXITS OPPOSITE ORIGINAL POSITION)

Imaginations to give them shape --

HAMLET III (CROSS TO R OF OPHELIA)

What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth!
We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways. (CROSSES TO RC)

HAMLETS I, II AND III

To a nunnery.

HAMLET III (GLANCING TOWARDS THE ARCH, STEPS UR)

Where's your father?

OPHELIA

At home, my lord.

HAMLET I (THROWING HIS VOICE SO POLONIOUS MUST HEAR)

Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool
no where but in's own house.

OPHELIA

O, help him, you sweet heavens!

HAMLETS I, II AND III

You sweet heavens! (I AND III TURN AWAY)

HAMLET I (CROSS TO OPHELIA)

If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell.

HAMLET II (CROSSING TO OPHELIA)

Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

To a nunnery, go! (I AND II TURN THEIR BACKS TO OPHELIA)

HAMLET II

And quickly too, farewell.

OPHELIA (KNEELS C, WITH ARMS OUTSTRETCHED)

O heavenly powers, restore him!

HAMLETS I, II AND III (MOCKING, ALL FACING AWAY FROM OPHELIA)

O heavenly powers, restore him!

HAMLET III (TURNING SHARPLY TO OPHELIA, HARSHLY)

I have heard of your paintings, too, well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another;

you jig, you amble, and you lisp,
and nickname God's creatures,

wantonness your ignorance.

Go to, I'll no more

on't.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

It hath made me mad!

(HAMLETS SPIN OPHELIA AROUND 180°)

HAMLET III

I say, we will have no more marriages; those that are married already,
all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

To a nunnery, go!

(HAMLETS I AND II FLING OPHELIA DL,
WHERE SHE FALLS, IN TEARS.)

OPHELIA

O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!

The courtier's . . . courtier's, soldier's,
scholar's, eye, tongue, sword:

(HAMLET III MIMES THE COURTIER,
HAMLET II MIMES THE SOLDIER)

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,

(HAMLET I MIMES THESE LINES)

The observed of all observers, quite, quite down! (HAMLETS I AND III MIME "OBSERVED OF ALL OBSERVERS." ON OPHELIA'S LINE "QUITE, QUITE DOWN" EACH HAMLET GOES DOWN ON ONE KNEE WITH HIS HAND OUTSTRETCHED TO OPHELIA.)

HAMLET I (SOFTLY)

And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,

OPHELIA

And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;

HAMLETS I, II AND III (RISING)

Out of tune and harsh.

OPHELIA

That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,

HAMLETS I, II AND III (SLOWLY CROSSING UL TO PLATFORM D)

O, woe is me,

OPHELIA

To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

HAMLETS I, II AND III

See what I see!

(HAMLET II CROSSES TO POSITION ON STEP BETWEEN PLATFORMS C AND D, III TAKES POSITION CL ON D, AND I IS AT POINT OF PLATFORM D, ON RAKE, BETWEEN THEM)

THE KING AND POLONIOUS MOVE OUT OF THE SHADOWS UNDER THE ARCH ON PLATFORM C, AND BEGIN THE DESCENT TO PLATFORM B. LIGHTS ON AREA B COME UP AS THE KING STEPS ONTO THE STAIRS, AND THE LIGHTS ON THE RAKE ARE DIMMED. THE HAMLETS, IN AREA D, ARE IN HALF-LIGHT.

KING (DISTRAUGHT)

Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little
Was not like madness.

HAMLET II

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause.

HAMLET III

Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will.

KING (L OF C ON PLATFORM B, POLONIOUS R)

There's something in his soul
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down -- he shall with speed to England.
What think you on't?

POLONIOUS

It shall do well; but yet I do believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief:
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

KING

It shall be so,
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

HAMLET III

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father.

HAMLET II

And the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,

(OPHELIA RISES AND CROSSES SLOWLY
R TO POLONIOUS AND THE KING)

(TAKING HER HANDS IN HIS, AND KISS-
ING HER FOREHEAD, POLONIOUS SENDS
OPHELIA OFF R. SHE EXITS)

(THE KING AND POLONIOUS EXIT OFF
REAR OF PLATFORM B. ALL LIGHTS GO
DOWN EXCEPT FOR ONE SPOT ON THE
THREE HAMLETS AS THEY STAND MOTION-
LESS UL)

(DURING THE FOLLOWING, WHEN HAM-
LET SPEAKS THE LINES OF OTHER
CHARACTERS, HE IS SIMPLY REMEMBER-
ING THEM, RATHER THAN PLAYING THAT
ROLE)

(II MIMES PULLING A DAGGER)

HAMLET III (POLONIOUS)

At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him,
If he loves her not . . .

HAMLET I (KING)

We will try it.

HAMLET II

But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will,

HAMLETS I, II AND III (RECALLING THE GHOST)

Adieu, adieu, adieu, remember me.

HAMLET II

And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?

HAMLET III

Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all,

HAMLET I

And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment,
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

(FREEZE. HOLD FOR THREE-COUNT)

ON THREE-COUNT, SPOT ON HAMLETS CROSS-FADES WITH LIGHTS IN AREA A WHICH COME UP TO INTERIOR LEVEL. HAMLETS RELAX AS HORATIO ENTERS FROM DL AND CROSSES ONTO RAKE.

HAMLET III (TURNING TO HORATIO)

What, ho, Horatio! (CROSSES DR ONTO RAKE)

HORATIO (CROSS UC TO I)

Here, sweet lord, at your service.

HAMLET I (THEY CLASP HANDS IN GREETING)

Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

HAMLET II (CROSSING TO L SIDE OF HORATIO)

Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of hearts,
As I do thee.

HAMLET I (MOVES TO R SIDE OF HORATIO)

There is a play tonight before the king:
One scene of it comes near to the circumstance
Which I have told thee, of my father's death.
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle.

HAMLET III (APART, DR)

Observe my uncle.

(TWO GUARDS, MARCELLUS AND BERNARDO OF
ACT ONE, SCENE TWO, ENTER UR AT REAR OF
PLATFORM B CARRYING THRONES. THEY POSI-
TION THEM AND THEN TAKE UP THEIR SPEARS
AND ASSUME POSITIONS L AND R OF THEM)

HAMLET I

If his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. (I MOVES UC SLIGHTLY, HORATIO FOLLOWS)

SCENE FOUR

HAMLET II

Vulcan's stithy. (MOVES US, TO CL)

HAMLET III

Vulcan's stithy. (MOVES US, TO CR)

HAMLET II

Give him heedful note,
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgements join
In censure of his seeming.

HAMLET I

Censure of his seeming.

HORATIO

Well, my lord,
If 'a steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

(THERE IS LAUGHTER, NOISE, AND A MUSICAL FANFARE OFFSTAGE R, AS THE COURT, THE KING AND QUEEN, POLONIOUS AND OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ENTER DR IN PROCESSION. OPHELIA NOW WEARS A LONG CAPE, ATTACHED AT THE SHOULDER, WHICH ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN HANDLE AS A TRAIN IN THE PROCESSION. THE KING AND QUEEN ADVANCE TO THE FOOT OF THE RAKE, R, WITH OPHELIA BEHIND, AND CONVERSE QUIETLY AMONG THEMSELVES AS POLONIOUS, ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ASCEND TO PLATFORM B. ONE OF THE GUARDS STANDING BEHIND THE THRONE TAKES UP NEW POSITION UNDER THE ARCH AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, RC, FACING FRONT. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ALSO TAKE POSITIONS ON THE STAIRS, GUILDENSTERN ABOVE ON THE FOURTH STEP, AND ROSENCRANTZ BELOW ON THE FIRST. AS PROCESSION BEGINS, ON SLOW FIVE-COUNT, LIGHTS UP ON B. SEE

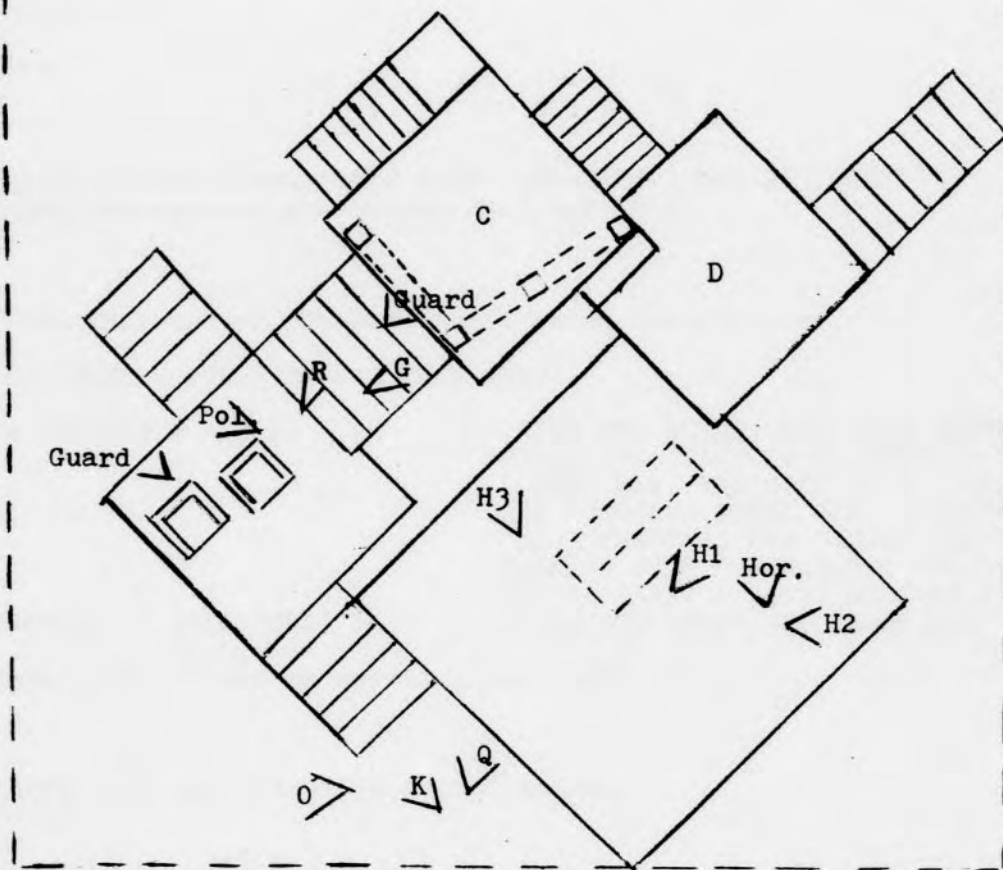


FIGURE 9

KING

How fares our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET II (MOCKING HIM)

Our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET III

Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish; (HAMLETS I AND II LAUGH)
I eat the air, promise-crammed: you cannot feed capons so.

KING

I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

HAMLET I (QUICKLY, BEFORE THE KING CAN TURN AWAY)

No, nor mine now. (TURNS AWAY, L)

(WITH THE QUEEN, THE KING ASCENDS THE STAIRS TO PLATFORM B. OPHELIA CROSSES L ONTO RAKE AND SITS IN LC CORNER, AS THE KING AND QUEEN SEAT THEMSELVES ON THEIR THRONES. POLONIOUS, WHO HAS BEEN TALKING WITH ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN, MAKES A LARGE GESTURE WITH HIS HANDS AND OPENS UP, LAUGHING)

HAMLET I (CROSSING C, TO POLONIOUS)

My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

POLONIOUS

That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor.

HAMLET II

What part did you enact?

POLONIOUS

I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

HAMLET I (TURNING TO HAMLET II)

Brutus killed me.

HAMLET III

It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. (HAMLETS GROAN AT THE PUN)
Be the players ready?

ROSENCRANTZ

Aye, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

QUEEN

Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

HAMLET II

Sit by me.

HAMLET I

No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

(ALL HAMLETS CROSS TO CL, AROUND
OPHELIA, WHO IS SEATED IN DL COR-
NER OF THE RAKE)

POLONIOUS (CROSSES TO THE KING)

O, ho! do you mark that?

HAMLET II (KNEELING UR OF OPHELIA)

Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

OPHELIA

No, my lord.

HAMLET III

I mean, my head upon your lap?

OPHELIA

Aye, my lord. (HAMLET II SPRAWLS AT OPHELIA'S FEET, HIS HEAD IN HER LAP)

HAMLET I (AS HE, HAMLET III, AND HORATIO SIT)

Do you think I meant country matters?

(OPHELIA IS DLC, II SLIGHTLY DR, RE-
CLINING, I UL OF HER, AND III UR OF
HER, CLOSE)

OPHELIA

I think nothing, my lord.

HAMLET III

Nothing, my lord.

HAMLET II

That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

OPHELIA

What is, my lord?

HAMLET III

Nothing.

OPHELIA

You are merry, my lord.

HAMLET I

Who, I?

OPHELIA

Aye, my lord.

HAMLET II (RAISES TO ONE KNEE, AND POINTS TO THE QUEEN)

O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

HAMLET I

Died within these two hours.

OPHELIA

Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

HAMLET III (RAISES TO KNEELING POSITION, THEN STANDS)

So long? Nay, then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables!

HAMLET II (SINKING BACK INTO OPHELIA'S LAP)

O heavens! die two months ago.

HAMLET I (UP ON HIS KNEES)

And not forgotten yet?

HAMLET III

Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: (CROSSES R, TO RC) but, by 'r lady, he must build churches then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

(MUSIC BEGINS AND LIGHTS COME UP ON PLATFORM D ON A THREE-COUNT AS PLAYERS ENTER TO BEGIN THE "DUMB SHOW." ALL OTHER LIGHTS ARE DIMMED TO HALF. THE PLAYER KING AND QUEEN ENTER FROM UL ON PLATFORM D AND EMBRACE EACH OTHER. SHE KNEELS AND MAKES SHOW OF PROTESTATION TO HIM. HE TAKES HER UP AND DECLINES HIS HEAD UPON HER NECK. SHE LAYS HIM DOWN, UR, AND, SEEING HIM ASLEEP, LEAVES HIM AND EXITS UL. THE VILLAIN, LUCIANUS, ENTERS FROM UR ON D WITH A VIAL OF POISON, CIRCLES ABOUT THE PLAYER KING AND POURS THE POISON IN HIS EAR. HE THEN RETIRES TO THE SHADOWS BEHIND THE ARCH ON PLATFORM C. THE PLAYER QUEEN RE-ENTERS UL, DISCOVERS THE DEAD KING, AND RELUCTANTLY IS WOODED BY THE POISONER WHO APPEARS UR. THE VILLAIN'S SUIT SUCCESSFUL, THEY EXIT ARM IN ARM, UL. THE SCENE ENDS AS THE LIGHTS CROSS FADE WITH AREAS A AND B, AND THE MUSIC FADES. THE PLAYER KING EXITS UR OFF PLATFORM D.)

(AS THE MUSIC BEGINS, HAMLET III CROSSES TO EDGE OF RAKE AND KNEELS JUST BELOW PLATFORM B)

(DURING THIS ACTION, THE REAL KING AND QUEEN ARE TALKING AND DRINKING, UNMINDFUL OF THE "DUMB SHOW." AS THE PLAYER QUEEN LEAVES THE PLAYER KING ASLEEP, THE REAL KING ATTEMPTS TO DRINK. HAMLET III, INTENT THAT THE KING SHOULD WATCH THE PLAY ATTENTIVELY, IMPULSIVELY WRESTS THE CUP FROM HIM AS LUCIANUS ENTERS. III THEN RETURNS TO HIS POSITION ON THE RAKE. SEE FIGURE 10.)

OPHELIA

What means this, my lord?

HAMLET I

Marry, this is miching mallechoe; it means mischief.

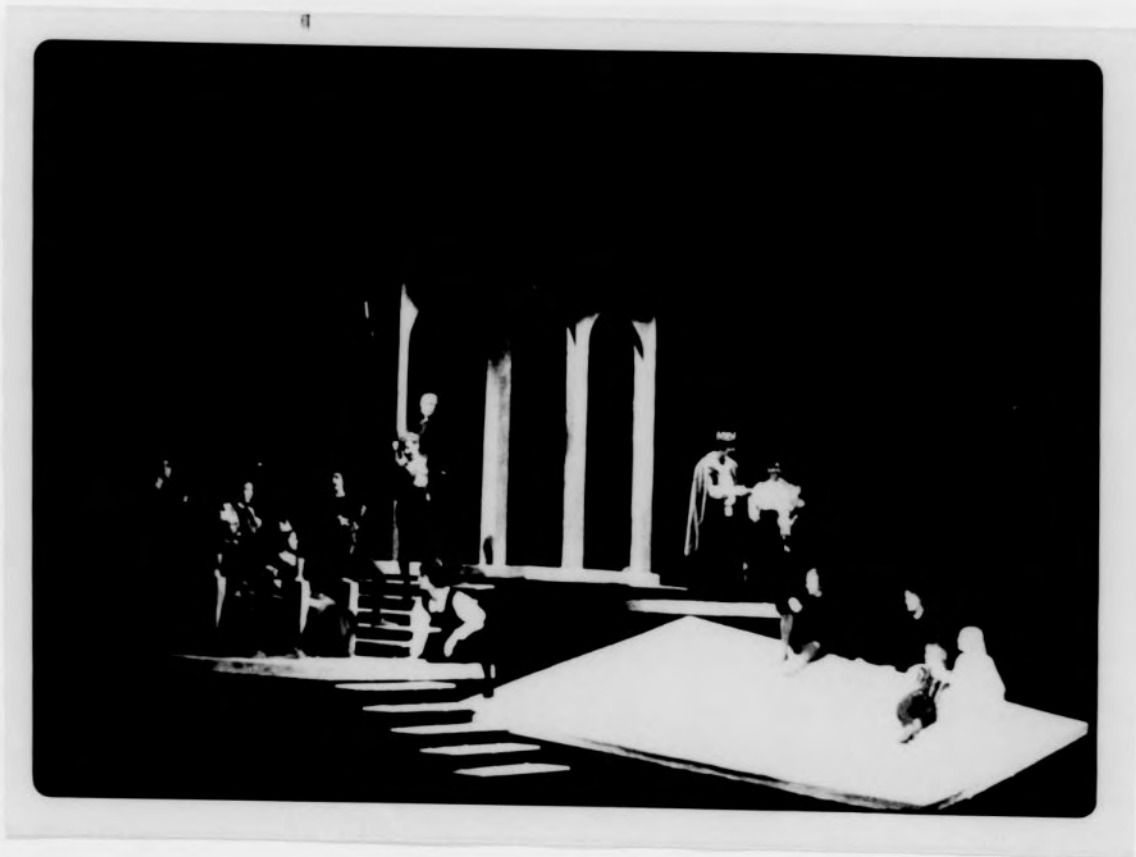


FIGURE 10

OPHELIA

Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

HAMLET II

We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep
counsel; they'll tell all. (HAMLET II BECKONS THE PROLOGUE
TO ENTER)

OPHELIA

Will he tell us what this show meant?

(PROLOGUE ENTERS, MAKES A LONG
CURVED MOVEMENT FROM UL TO DC,
TO RC IN FRONT OF KING AND QUEEN)

HAMLET III (CROSSING L TO OPHELIA)

Aye, or any show that you'll show him: be not you
ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

OPHELIA

You are naught, you are naught: I'll mark the play.

PROLOGUE (BOWING BEFORE THE KING AND QUEEN)

For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stopping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

(PROLOGUE HURRIES OFF, UL)

HAMLET I

Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

OPHELIA

'Tis brief, my lord.

HAMLETS II AND III (WITH GLANCES AT OPHELIA)

As woman's love.

PLAYER KING (STANDS C AS P.Q. CIRCLES)

Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite communal in most sacred bands.

PLAYER QUEEN (HANDS CLASPED, THEY TURN ONE ANOTHER)

So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!

PLAYER KING (STOPS, THEY OPEN OUT)

Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honor'd, beloved; and haply as one as kind
For husband shalt thou --

PLAYER QUEEN (ENTWINING P.K.)

O confound the rest.
Such love must needs be treason in my breast;
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

HAMLET III

That's wormwood, wormwood.

(HAMLET III CROSSES BACK TO RC AS
MUSIC AGAIN COMES UP AND LIGHTS IN
AREAS A AND B GO TO HALF; LIGHTS ON
D COME UP AS PLAYER KING AND QUEEN
ENTER FROM UR ON PLATFORM D. WHILE
DOING THE PLAY, THE PLAYER KING AND
QUEEN DO LARGE, MIMED MOVEMENTS RE-
PRESENTING THE ACTION OF THE PLAY.
IT IS ALMOST A DANCE.)

(P.Q. WOULD PROTEST, P.K. STOPS HER)
(BOTH FACE AWAY)

(P.Q. TURNS AWAY QUICKLY, UNRAVELING
HERSELF, PULLS P.K. TO HER IN EMBRACE)

(HAMLET III SNAPS HIS FINGERS AND ALL
ACTION FREEZES. HE CROSSES TO THE
QUEEN, DELIVERS HIS LINE AND RETURNS.
HE SNAPS HIS FINGERS AGAIN AND ALL
RESUMES)

PLAYER QUEEN (CIRCLING P.K., HANDS OVERHEAD)

The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of shrift, but none of love: (CHANGING HANDS AND DIRECTION)
A second time I'll kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed,

PLAYER KING (HANDS LOWERED, TURNING EACH OTHER ABOUT)

This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change.
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,
But die thy thought when thy first lord is dead. (MOVE IN TO EACH OTHER, AND APART)

PLAYER QUEEN

Nor earth to me give food nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

HAMLET I

If she should break it now!

PLAYER KING

'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a while;
My spirits grow dull.

(P.K. RECLINES WITH HIS HEAD
UPON STEP BETWEEN C AND D)

PLAYER QUEEN

Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain!

(P.Q. EXITS UL)

HAMLET II (TO THE QUEEN)

Madam, how like you this play?

QUEEN

The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

HAMLET III

O, but she'll keep her word.

KING

Have you heard the argument? Is there no offense in't?

HAMLET I

No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offense i' the world.

KING

What do you call the play?

HAMLET II

The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the Duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work; but what o' that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

(LUCIANUS ENTERS WITH A CURVED,
SWEEPING MOVEMENT AROUND THE
SLEEPING PLAYER KING)

OPHELIA

You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

HAMLET I

I could interpret between you and your lover, if I could see the puppets dallying.

OPHELIA

You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

HAMLET I

It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

OPHELIA

Still better and worse.

HAMLET II

So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer; pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

LUCIANUS

Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

(LIFTS HIGH THE VIAL OF POISON)

(LUCIANUS POURS THE POISON INTO
THE PLAYER KING'S EAR. BY THIS
TIME THE REAL KING IS ON THE EDGE
OF HIS CHAIR, WATCHING THE PLAY
CLOSELY)

HAMLET III

He poisons him i' the garden for his estate.

HAMLET I

His name's Gonzago.

HAMLET II

The story is extant, and written in very choice Italian.

HAMLET III

You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

OPHELIA

The King rises. (ALL RISE)

HAMLETS I, II AND III (SHOUTING)

What, frightened with false fire!

QUEEN

How fares my lord?

POLONIOUS

Give o'er the play.

KING

Give me some light.

(THROUGHOUT MOST OF THIS SCENE, AND ALL OF THIS SECTION, THE HAMLETS' ATTENTION IS DIRECTED TOWARDS THE REACTIONS OF THE KING AND QUEEN RATHER THAN TO ANYTHING THE PLAYERS ARE ABOUT.)

(THE PLAYER QUEEN ENTERS UL, AND FINDS HER HUSBAND DEAD. SHE RECOILS, THEN SEES LUCIANUS, TAKES HIS HAND, AND THEY MOVE DS FROM THE MURDERED PLAYER KING.)

(THE KING STARTS FROM HIS CHAIR, AND LURCHES L, DOWN STEPS, THE QUEEN AFTER. SEE FIGURE 11.)

(THE QUEEN TAKES THE KING'S ARM NEAR THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS)

(THE KING TEARS HIMSELF FROM THE QUEEN'S GRASP AND CHARGES OFF DL; THE QUEEN FOLLOWS)

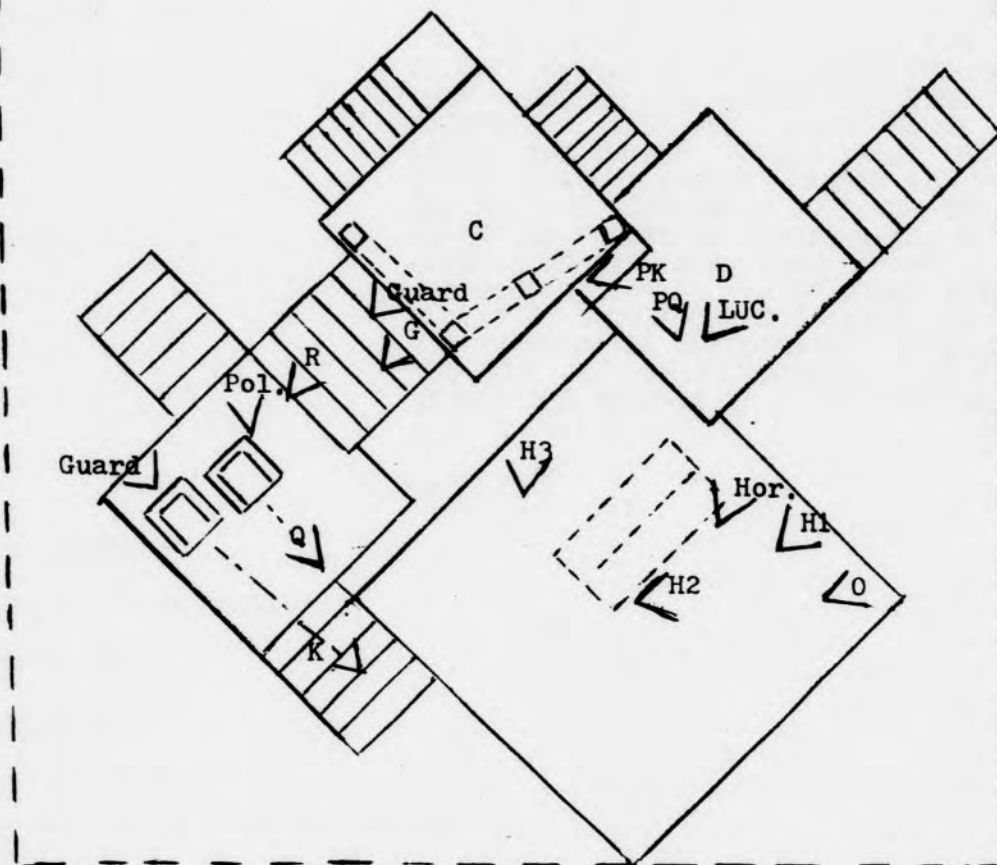


FIGURE 11

POLONIOUS

Lights, lights, lights!

ALL HAMLETS, COURTIER, PLAYERS

Lights, lights!

(BY THE TIME THE KING CALLS FOR LIGHTS, ALL STAGE LIGHTS ARE AT HALF SAVE FOR THOSE ON PLATFORM D, WHERE THE PLAY WAS BEING ENACTED. WHEN THE KING CALLS FOR LIGHTS, IT SETS OFF A CHAIN REACTION. EVERYONE ON STAGE BEGINS CALLING FOR LIGHTS AND AT THE SAME TIME STARTING TO MOVE TOWARD AN EXIT ACROSS THE STAGE FROM THEM. THE HAMLETS, ALMOST FRENZIED IN THEIR EXCITEMENT, CALL FOR LIGHTS, LAUGH AND LEAP AMIDST THE HUBBUB. LIGHTS ABOUT THE STAGE GO UP AND DOWN AT RANDOM. EXEUNT ALL BUT THE HAMLETS AND HORATIO AS FOLLOWS: THE KING AND QUEEN DL; POLONIOUS ACROSS RAKE, UL OFF D; OPHELIA DR OFF RAKE; PLAYER KING UL OFF D; PROLOGUE UR OFF C; PLAYER QUEEN ACROSS RAKE, UR OFF B; LUCIANUS ACROSS RAKE, DL ON FLOOR; ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN CROSS UL UNDER THE ARCH AND OFF C, TOGETHER. THE TWO GUARDS REMOVE THE THRONES ON B AND EXIT UR.)

SCENE FIVE

HAMLET III (CROSSING DL)

Why, let the stricken deer go weep.

HAMLET II (CROSSING DC)

The hart ungalled play;

HAMLET I CROSSING TO DRC)

For some must watch, while some must sleep;

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Thus runs the world away!

HAMLET I

Would not this, sir, and a forest
of feathers -- if the rest of my
fortunes turn Turk with me -- with
two Provincial roses

on my razed shoes, get me a
fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

HORATIO

Half a share.

HAMLET II (CROSSING DL WITH HORATIO)

A whole one, I.
For thou dost know, O Damon
dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns
here
A very, very pajock.

HORATIO

You might have rhymed.

HAMLET III (STEP TO HORATIO, WALK HIM DR AS II COUNTERS DL)

O good Horatio. Didst perceive?

(HORATIO MEETS THE HAMLETS AT C; IS SWUNG
ABOUT BY HAMLET III, AND AGAIN, BY HAMLET
II, SO THAT HE ENDS L OF HAMLET I)

HAMLET III

Two Provincial roses

Razed Shoes

HAMLETS I AND III

Pajock.

HORATIO

Very well, my lord.

HAMLET I (TAKES HORATIO, CROSSES DR TO C)

Upon the talk of the poisoning?

HORATIO

I did very well note him.

HAMLET II (DL, TAKES HORATIO AND CROSSES UC)

Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders!
For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.
Come, some music!

GUILDENSTERN (CROSSING TO DC ON RAKE)

Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

HAMLET I

A word with you.

HAMLET III (WITH ONE STEP FORWARD)

Sir, a whole history.

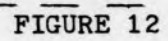
GUILDENSTERN (WITH ROSENCRANTZ, STEPS TO III)

The king, sir --

(PLAYER-MUSICIAN ENTERS UR ON D,
AND IN CROSSING TO EXIT UL, IS
NOTICED BY HAMLET II)

(PLAYER-MUSICIAN GOES OFF UL FOR
RECORDERS. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDEN-
STERN ENTER DL)

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE
ENCIRCLED BY THE HAMLETS. EACH TIME
A DIFFERENT HAMLET SPEAKS, THEY TURN
TO HIM. SEE FIGURE 12.)



HAMLET II

The king, sir --

HAMLET I

Aye, sir, what of him?

GUILDENSTERN (TOGETHER WITH ROSENCRANTZ, STEPS TO I)

Is in his retirement marvelous distempered.

HAMLET III

Marvelous distempered.

HAMLET II (CROSSING DL OF ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN)

With drink, sir?

GUILDENSTERN

No, my lord, rather with choler.

HAMLET I

Rather with choler.

HAMLET III (CROSSING R TO L OF ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENTSERN)

Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to the doctor,
for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

GUILDENSTERN (WITH ROSENCRANTZ, TURNS TO III)

Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my
affair.

HAMLET I

I am tame, sir: pronounce.

GUILDENSTERN

The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

HAMLET I

Hath sent me to you.

HAMLET II

You are welcome.

GUILDENSTERN (TO II)

Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

HAMLET III (TURNS AWAY, FACING DL)

Sir, I cannot.

GUILDENSTERN (TO III)

Cannot what, my lord?

HAMLET I (ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN TURN TO HIM AS HE SPEAKS)

Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased; but sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command.

ALL HAMLETS

Or rather, as you say, my mother:

HAMLET I

Therefore, no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say --

ROSENCRANTZ

Then thus she says; your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

HAMLET I

Amazement and admiration.

HAMLET II (ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN TURN TO II AS HE SPEAKS)

O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

ROSENCRANTZ

She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

HAMLET I

Ere you go to bed.

HAMLET III (ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN TURN TO III AS HE SPEAKS)

We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. She desires to speak with you in her closet. Have you any further trade with me? (CROSSES TO L OF ROSENCRANTZ)

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, you once did love me.

HAMLET I

So do I still, by these pickers and stealers (HOLDS UP HIS HANDS).

ROSENCRANTZ (TO I)

Good my lord, what is the cause of your distemper? You do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

HAMLET II (CROSSING UC)

Sir, I lack advancement.

ROSENCRANTZ (TO II)

How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

HAMLET III (ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN TURN TO HIM AS HE SPEAKS)

Aye, sir, but "while the grass grows," -- the proverb is something musty.

HAMLET II

She desires to speak with you in her closet.

(MUSICIAN ENTERS UL ON D WITH THREE RECORDERS)

HAMLET III (CROSSING UC TO D)

O, the recorders! Let me see one. To withdraw with you: -- why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN SHIFT FROM SR TO SL AS III GOES FOR RECORDERS. III STARTS DL, GIVING RECORDERS TO II, WHO PASSES ONE ON TO I. THE MUSICIAN EXITS OFF D, UR)

GUILDENSTERN

O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

HAMLET I

I do not well understand that. (CROSS TO L OF R.) Will you play upon this pipe?

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET III

My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET II (STEPS TOWARDS ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN)

I pray you.

GUILDENSTERN

Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET I

Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET III (STEPS DC)

I do beseech you.

GUILDENSTERN

I know no touch of it, my lord.

HAMLET I

It is as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb,

HAMLET II

Give it breath with your mouth.

HAMLET III

And it will discourse most eloquent music.

HAMLET I

Look you, these are the stops.

GUILDENSTERN

But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

HAMLET I

I have not the skill.

HAMLET II (BETWEEN R. AND G.)

Why, look you, how unworthy a
thing you make of me!
You would play upon me,
You would seem to know my
stops,
You would pluck out the heart of
my mystery;
you would sound me from my
lowest note to the
top of my compass; and there is
much music, excellent voice,
in this little organ; yet cannot
you make it speak.

HAMLETS I AND III

Play upon me
Know my stops

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN
FACING US, ARE BACKED DSC BY
THE HAMLETS WHO ADVANCE THREAT-
ENINGLY EACH TIME THAT THEY
SPEAK SIMULTANEOUSLY)

Much music, excellent voice

HAMLETS I, II AND III (LOUD AND ANGRY, II BREAKING HIS RECORDER IN TWO)

'Sblood!

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE OFF RAKE, DC)

HAMLET II

Do you think I am easier to be
played on that a pipe? Call me
what instrument you will, though
you can fret me, yet you cannot
play upon me.

HAMLETS I AND III

Play upon me.

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN RUN OFF DL AS HAMLET II TURNS AND CROSSES UC, III CROSSES
CR, AND I CROSSES CL. THE HAMLETS HAND RECORDERS TO PROP GIRLS AS THEY CROSS US.
HORATIO ALSO EXITS, UL, OFF PLATFORM D, AS POLONIOUS ENTERS DR ON FLOOR.

SCENE SIX

POLONIOUS (CROSSING TO HAMLET III)

My lord, my lord! God bless you, sir!

HAMLET I

God bless you, sir!

POLONIOUS

My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

HAMLET III (POINTING INTO THE AIR, L)

Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

POLONIOUS (HUMORING HAMLET, AGREES WITH HIM)

(HAMLETS BECOME INTERESTED
IN THE SKY AND ALL LOOK
INTENTLY TOWARD A CERTAIN
CLOUD IN THE AIR, UL)

By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

HAMLET II

'Tis like a camel, indeed. (II DRAWS OUT A HUMP IN THE AIR)

HAMLET I

Methinks it is like a weasel. (I MIMES A WEASEL WITH HIS HAND)

POLONIOUS

It is backed like a weasel.

HAMLET III

Backed like a weasel.

HAMLET II (LOUDLY, CROSSING TO POLONIOUS WITH ARMS OUTSTRETCHED)

Or like a whale!

POLONIOUS (FRIGHTENED, BACKING DC)

Or like a whale.

HAMLET II

Like a whale

Like a whale

HAMLETS I AND III

Whale

Whale

(HAMLETS ADVANCE A STEP TOWARDS
POLONIOUS WITH EACH REPETITION
OF THE WORD "WHALE")

POLONIOUS (DRAWING A WHALE ON THE RAKE WITH HIS STAFF)

Like a whale.

HAMLET III (TURNING AWAY FROM POLONIOUS)

Then I will come to my mother by and by.

HAMLET II (CROSSING TO HAMLET III)

She desires to speak with you in her closet.

HAMLET III

They fool me to the top of my bent.

(ANGRILY DISMISSING POLONIOUS) I will come by and by.

(POLONIOUS EXITS DL, OFF RAKE)

HAMLET I (MOVING TO L OF C)

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world:

(ON SLOW COUNT OF FIVE, ALL
LIGHTS FADE TO DARK EXCEPT ONE
DOWN SPOT ON THE THREE HAMLETS)

HAMLET II (TAKING UP POSITION C, ABOVE I)

Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on.

HAMLET III (MOVING TO R OF C, OPPOSITE I)

But soft. Now to my mother.

(AS THE SPEECH CONTINUES, THE HAMLETS
DRAW CLOSER AND CLOSER TOGETHER, SO
THAT BY THE LAST LINE THEIR HEADS ARE
ALMOST TOUCHING AND THE TENSION IS SO
GREAT THAT THEY MUST GRASP EACH OTHER'S
ARMS TO HOLD THEMSELVES UPRIGHT)

HAMLET I

She desires to speak with you in her closet.

HAMLET III

O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

Let me be cruel, not unnatural.

HAMLET I

I will speak daggers to her, but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;

HAMLET II

How in my words soever she be shent,

HAMLET I

She desires to speak with you in her closet.

HAMLET II

To give them seals never, my soul, consent!

HAMLETS I, II AND III (WHISPERING)

She desires to speak with you in her closet.

(HAMLETS SLOWLY BREAK APART AND EXIT
DL, OFF RAKE. ON SLOW COUNT OF FIVE,
THE SPOT CROSS-FADES WITH LIGHTS ON
AREA D WHICH COME UP AS THE KING,
ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ENTER
UR FROM REAR OF PLATFORM D)

SCENE SEVEN

KING (RC ON PLATFORM D)

I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you.
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,

And he to England shall along with you.
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near's as doth hourly grow
Out of his brows.

GUILDENSTERN

We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies

ROSENCRANTZ

safe
That live and feed upon your
majesty.

Upon your majesty.

(WITH BOW AND FLOURISH)

KING

Arm you, I pray you, to this
speedy voyage,
For we will fetters put about this
fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN

We will haste us.

(WITH BOW, ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN EXIT UL
OFF PLATFORM D AS POLONIOUS ENTERS UR)

POLONIOUS

My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras I'll convey myself
To hear the process. I'll warrant she'll tax him home,
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech of vantage. Fare you well, my liege.
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed
And tell you what I know.

(STEPS UP TO PLATFORM C)

(POLONIOUS EXITS UR, OFF C)

KING

Thanks, dear my lord.

(POLONIOUS EXITS UR, OFF C. WHEN HE IS ALONE,
THE KING KNEELS AND BEGINS TO PRAY. LIGHTS ON
AREA D DIM TO HALF.)

O, my offense is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will.
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
And like a man to double business bound
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offense?
And what's in prayer but this twofold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardoned being down? Then I'll look up.
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder?"
That cannot be, since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardoned and retain th' offense?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offense's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law. But 'tis not so above.
There is no shuffling; there the action lies
In his true nature, and we ourselves compelled,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? What rests?
Try what repentance can. What can it not?
Yet what can it when one cannot repent?

O wretched state! O bosom black as death! (RISES, CROSSING TO RAKE)
O limed soul, that struggling to be free
Art more engaged! Help angels! Make assay.
Bow stubborn knees (KNEELS), and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the newborn babe. (THE KING AGAIN ATTEMPTS TO PRAY)

LIGHTS ON AREA A FADE OUT AS A SMALL SPOT COMES UP TO HALF, ILLUMINATING THE KING, DL.
LIGHTS COME UP TO HALF ON AREAS C AND D AS THE HAMLETS ENTER FROM THE REAR OF PLATFORM
C AND CROSS R TO ARCH. HAMLETS I AND III APPEAR IN THE R ARCH, AND MAKE AS IF TO DESCEND
TO PLATFORM B, THEN STOP UPON SEEING THE KING. HAMLET II APPEARS IN THE L ARCH, AND
TOGETHER THEY DRAW THEIR DAGGERS.

HAMLET I

Now might I do it pat,

HAMLET II

Now 'a is a-praying.

HAMLET III (RACING L, ACROSS C, TO D) (III IS STOPPED ON D, BY I AND II)

And now I'll do't.

HAMLET II

And so I am revenged.

HAMLET III

That would be scanned.

HAMLET I

A villain kills my father, and for that
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

HAMLET II

Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.

HAMLET III (CROSSING D TO UC ON RAKE)

'A took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as may;

HAMLET I (CROSSING DC ON PLATFORM D)

And how stands his audit, who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him;

HAMLET II

And am I then revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and seasoned for his passage?

HAMLET III

No.
Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent.

(HAMLETS SHEATHE THEIR DAGGERS)

HAMLET I

When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,

HAMLET II

Or in th' incestuous pleasure of his bed,

HAMLET III

At some game a-swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't --

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,

HAMLET I

And that his soul may be as damned and black
As hell, whereto it goes.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

My mother stays.
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.

(HAMLETS EXIT UL, OFF PLATFORM D AS LIGHTS
ON AREAS C AND D FADE TO DARK ON THREE-COUNT)

KING (RISES)

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

(SPOT ON THE KING FADES ON TWO-COUNT AND
KING EXITS DL IN THE DARK)

BLACK-OUT IS HELD FOR THREE-COUNT SO THAT THE TWO GUARDS OF PREVIOUS SCENES CAN BRING ON A BROCADED MATTRESS WHICH THEY PLACE ON DR EDGE OF PLATFORM B. THE QUEEN ENTERS UR ON PLATFORM C, RELEASES THE "ARRAS" OVER THE R ARCH, AND DESCENDS THE STAIRS TO PLATFORM B AS LIGHTS COME UP ON B TO THREE-COUNT. HER BROCADED OVER-DRESS HAS BEEN REMOVED AND HER HAIR IS DOWN. HER UNDER-SKIRT IS SLIT UP THE SIDE. SHE RECLINES UPON HER MATTRESS, R, PRIMING WITH THE AID OF A HAND MIRROR. POLONIOUS ENTERS UR, AT REAR OF PLATFORM B.

SCENE EIGHT

POLONIOUS

'A will come straight. Look you lay home to him. (CROSSES TO STAIRS, L)
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your Grace hath screened and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll silence me even here. (AT TOP OF STAIRS)
Pray you be round with him.

THE HAMLETS ARE OFF L WITH A LIVE MICROPHONE. THEY BEGIN BY WHISPERING "MOTHER" INTO
THE MICROPHONE IN SEQUENCES THAT OVERLAP. EACH SEQUENCE BECOMES A LITTLE LOUDER
UNTIL IT ACTUALLY BECOMES A CALL. THE HAMLETS CONTINUE CALLING "MOTHER" UNTIL POLONIOUS
DISAPPEARS BEHIND THE ARRAS, WHEN THEY RUSH ONTO THE SCENE.

HAMLET I

Mother

HAMLET II

Mother

HAMLET III

Mother

QUEEN

I'll warrant you; fear me not.
Withdraw, I hear him coming

HAMLET I

Now, Mother, what's the matter?

(HAMLETS RUN ON DL, CROSS TO RC CORNER OF RAKE
AND KNEEL, FORMING A DIAGONAL FACING THE QUEEN)

HAMLET III

What's the matter?

QUEEN

Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

HAMLET II

Mother, you have my father much offended.

HAMLET I

Much offended.

QUEEN

Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

HAMLET II

Idle tongue.

HAMLET III

Go, Go, you answer with a wicked tongue.

QUEEN

Why, how now, Hamlet?

HAMLET I

Hamlet

HAMLET II

What's the matter now?

QUEEN

Have you forgot me?

HAMLET I

Forgot me?

HAMLET II (CROSSING TO QUEEN, ONTO PLATFORM B)

No, by the rood, not so!
You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife.

HAMLET I (CROSSING TO QUEEN, L OF II)

Your husband's brother's wife.

HAMLET III (CROSSING TO L OF QUEEN)

Your husband's brother's wife.

HAMLET II

And, would it were not so, you are my mother.

HAMLET III

You are my mother.

QUEEN (RISES)

Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

HAMLET II

Come, come, and sit you down. You shall not
budge.
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you!

(THE QUEEN STARTS FOR THE ARRAS, BUT
STOPS, NOT WANTING TO GIVE POLONIOUS
AWAY. SHE WOULD EXIT L, BUT HAMLET
III THROWS HER TO THE MATTRESS)

(HAMLETS I AND II ATTEMPT TO HOLD
HER AS HAMLET III SPREADS HER LEGS
APART AS IF TO RAPE HER)

QUEEN

What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?
Help, ho!

HAMLET III

Help, ho!

HAMLETS I AND II

Help, ho! Help, ho!

POLONIOUS

What, ho! Help!

(THE HAMLETS, HEARING POLONIOUS, STOP, TURN
AND LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER. THEY RISE AND PULL
THEIR DAGGERS. ON HIS LINE, III CROSSES TO
STAIRS, II AND II FOLLOWING; THEY FORM A LINE
ON THE STEPS, III AT THE TOP, I AND II BEHIND,
EACH STRADDLING A STEP, DAGGER HAND EXTENDED
THREATENINGLY)

HAMLET III (RISES)

How now? A rat? Dead for a ducat,

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Dead!

(TOGETHER, WITH ONE MOVEMENT, THE HAMLETS DRAW
BACK THEIR DAGGERS AND THEN LUNGE FORWARD,
STABBING POLONIOUS)

POLONIOUS

O, O, I am slain! (FALLS TO THE FLOOR, PULLING THE ARRAS OVER HIM)

QUEEN (RISES)

O me, what hast thou done?

HAMLET III

Nay, I know not.

HAMLETS I, II AND III (WHIRLING ON THE QUEEN, WITH DAGGERS STILL DRAWN; STEP D ONE STEP)

Is it the King?

QUEEN (TURNING AWAY, CROSSES DL TO STAIRS)

O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

HAMLET I

A bloody deed -- almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

QUEEN (ONE STEP DOWN)

As kill a king?

HAMLET II

Ay, lady, it was my word. (II CROSSES TO C, SEES POLONIOUS)

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better.

HAMLET III (TO POLONIOUS)

Take thy fortune.
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.
(TO QUEEN) Leave wringing of your hands.

HAMLET I (CROSSES TO QUEEN)

Peace, sit you down (QUEEN SITS ON DR CORNER OF B, I KNEELS BEHIND)
And let me wring your heart, for so I shall
If it be made of penetrable stuff,
If damned custom have not brazed it so
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

QUEEN

What have I done that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

HAMLET II (DESCENDING STAIRS TO PLATFORM B)

Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows
As false as dicer's oaths.

HAMLET III

O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words!

HAMLET I

Heaven's face does glow
O'er this solidity and compound mass
With heated visage, as against the doom
Is thought sick at the act.

QUEEN (CRYING)

Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud and thunders in the index?

HAMLET II (KNEELING, SLIGHTLY UL OF QUEEN)

Look here upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command,
A station like the herald Mercury
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill --
A combination and a form indeed
Where every god did seem to set his seal
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. Look you now what follows.
Here is your husband, like a mildewed ear
Blasting his wholesome brother.

HAMLET III (KNEELING DL OF QUEEN)

Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed
And batten on this moor? Ha! Have you eyes?
You cannot call it love, for at your age
The heyday in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgement, and what judgement
Would step from this to this?
What devil was it
That thus hath cozzened you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.
O shame, where is thy blush?

(II HAS MEDALLION WITH HIS FATHER'S
PICTURE ON IT. HIS MOTHER HAS ONE
WITH CLAUDIUS' PICTURE. II TEARS
BOTH MEDALLIONS OFF AND COMPARES
THE PICTURES. WHEN III TAKES OVER
THE LINES, HE ALSO TAKES THE TWO
PICTURES FROM II. ON "LOOK HERE
UPON THIS PICTURE," PROJECTION OF
KING HAMLET COMES UP ON CYC ON TWO-
COUNT.)

(PROJECTION NOW BECOMES CLAUDIUS)

(II RISES, COUNTERS UR SLIGHTLY)

(PROJECTION FADES ON THREE-COUNT)

QUEEN (CROSSING DL ONTO RAKE)

O Hamlet, speak no more.
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots (KNEELS
As will not leave their tinct.

HAMLET I (HAMLETS CROSSING TO QUEEN, ON RAKE)

Nay, but to live in the rank sweat of an enseamed bed.

HAMLET II (R OF QUEEN, GRABBING HER ARM)

Stewed in corruption.

HAMLET III (L OF QUEEN, GRABBING HER ARM)

Honeying and making love

HAMLETS I, II AND III (II AND III FLING QUEEN AWAY, DL)

Over the nasty sty.

QUEEN

O, speak to me no more.
These words like daggers enter in my ears.
(HOLDING UP HER HAND) No more, sweet Hamlet.

(III CROSSES TO QUEEN)

HAMLET I

(II CROSSES TO QUEEN'S OTHER SIDE)

A murderer and a villain,
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord. (TURNS AWAY, DL)

HAMLET III

A vice of kings,
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,

HAMLET II

That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,

HAMLET III

And put it in his pocket!

QUEEN (SOBBING)

No more!

HAMLET II

A king of shreds and patches!

Save me and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?

QUEEN

Alas, he's mad.

HAMLET III (TO GHOST)

Do you not come your tardy so to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
Th' important acting of your dread command?
O say!

(II AND III THROW QUEEN TO THE
GROUND, DR OF THEM. I TAKES THE
DEATH-MASK FROM PROP GIRL, RC)

(FEELING THE GHOST, III TOUCHES
THE ARM OF II TO MAKE HIM FEEL
ITS PRESENCE. II TURNS TO SEE
THE DEATH-MASK HELD BY I)

HAMLET I (AS GHOST)

Do not forget. This visitation --

(I MOVES UC)

HAMLET II (STEPPING BACK)

This visitation

HAMLET III

This visitation

HAMLET I (AS GHOST)

Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But look, amazement on thy mother sits.
O, step between her and her fighting soul!
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.
Speak to her, Hamlet.

(GESTURES BROADLY, BUT SLOWLY)

HAMLET II

How is it with you, lady?

(HAMLETS II AND III STRETCH OUT THEIR
HANDS TO THE QUEEN)

QUEEN (RISES, CROSSING TO R SIDE OF II)

Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?

HAMLET III

And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?

QUEEN

Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep,
And as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm
Your bedded hair like life in excrements
Start up and stand on end.

HAMLET II

Start up and stand on end.

QUEEN (CROSSING TO R OF III, NOT SEEING GHOST)

O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

HAMLET III

On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoined, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.

HAMLET II (TURNING AWAY)

Do not look upon me,
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects. Then what I have to do
Will want true color: tears perchance for blood.

QUEEN (CROSSING TO R OF II)

To whom do you speak this?

HAMLET III

Do you see nothing there?

QUEEN

Nothing at all; yet all there is I see.

HAMLET I

Nor did you nothing hear?

QUEEN

No, nothing but ourselves.

HAMLET II (CROSSING R OF C WITH QUEEN)

Why, look you there! look how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look where he goes even now out at the portal!

(I CROSSES R TO EDGE OF PLATFORM,
TURNS AWAY TO HAND PROP GIRL DEATH-
MASK, AND TURNS BACK AS HIMSELF)

QUEEN (CROSSING DC)

This is the very coinage of your brain.

HAMLET II

Coinage of your brain.

QUEEN

This bodiless creation

HAMLET I

Bodiless creation

QUEEN

Ecstasy is very cunning in.

HAMLET I

Cunning in

HAMLET II

Cunning in

HAMLET III

Cunning in

HAMLET I (CROSSING TO QUEEN)

Ecstasy? (WALKS THE QUEEN BACK TO B, AND GENTLY SITS HER DOWN)

My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time

And makes as healthful music. It is not madness (I SITS BEHIND THE QUEEN, HOLDING
That I have uttered. Bring me to the test, HER GENTLY)

And I the matter will reword, which madness

Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,

Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,

That not your trespass but my madness speaks.

It will but skin and film the uncerous place

Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,

Infects unseen.

HAMLET II (CROSSING INTO RC CORNER OF RAKE, KNEELS)

Confess yourself to heaven,

Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,

And do not spread the compost on the weeds

To make them ranker.

HAMLET III (CROSSING DR, TO FOOT OF STAIRS, KNEELS) (SEE FIGURE 13)

Forgive me this my virtue.
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yes, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

QUEEN

O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

HAMLET I (RISES, CROSSING R ON PLATFORM B)

O, throw away the worser part of it.
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night.

HAMLET II (RISES, STEPS TO B, R OF QUEEN)

But go not to my uncle's bed.
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.

HAMLET III (RISES, STEPS TO B, UL SLIGHTLY OF QUEEN)

Refrain tonight,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy;

HAMLET I

Once more, good night,
And when you are desirous to be blest,
I'll blessing beg of you.

HAMLET II (CROSSES UL TO ARCH ON C, BY POLONIOUS)

For this same lord,



FIGURE 13

I do repent; but heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.

HAMLET III (ASCENDS STAIRS, TO LAST STEP)

I will bestow him and will answer well
The death I gave him.

HAMLET I (CROSSES TO FIRST STEP, TURNS)

So again, good night.
I must be cruel only to be kind.

HAMLET II

Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

One word more, good lady.

HAMLET II (STEPS R TO TOP OF STAIRS, DOWN ONE STEP)

I must to England, you know that?

QUEEN

Alack, I had forgot. 'Tis so concluded on.

HAMLET I

This man shall set me packing:
I'll lug the guts into a neighbor room.

(II WRAPS THE BODY IN THE ARRAS TO
HAUL IT FROM THE ROOM)

(I AND III ASCEND STAIRS TO C)

(II REJOINS I AND III ON C)

HAMLET II

I'll lug the guts into the neighbor room.

HAMLET III (APPEARING IN THE L ARCH ON C)

Mother, good night. Indeed, this counselor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

HAMLETS I, III, AND II

Come sir, to draw toward an end with you.
Good night, Mother.

THE HAMLETS EXIT UR, CARRYING THE BODY OFF STAGE. MUSIC COMES UP SOFTLY AS THE QUEEN
EXITS DL, CALLING "MY LORD, MY LORD!" TWO GUARDS STRIKE THE MATTRESS. HAMLETS
IMMEDIATELY RE-ENTER DL, DRAGGING THE WRAPPED BODY ACROSS THE RAKE AND UP TO PLATFORM
D. THE HAMLETS STAND HUDDLED AROUND POLONIOUS' BODY, BACKS TURNED TO THE AUDIENCE,
DURING THE NEXT SCENE. THE KING ENTERS DR, WITH THE QUEEN RIGHT AFTER HIM. MUSIC FADES.

SCENE NINE

QUEEN (CROSSING TO KING, DC)

Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen tonight!

KING

What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

QUEEN

Mad as the sea and wind when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,

Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries "A rat, a rat!"

HAMLET I, II AND III

A rat, a rat!

QUEEN

And in this brainish apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.

KING

O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Had we been there.

KING

His liberty is full of threats to all,
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answered?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrained, and out of haunt
This mad young man.
Where is he gone?

QUEEN

To draw apart the body he hath killed;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure. 'A weeps for what is done.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

'A weeps for what is done.

KING

O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch
But we will ship him hence.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

We will ship him hence.

KING (CROSSING R, UP STAIRS TO PLATFORM B)

And this vile deed
We must with all our majesty and skill
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ENTER
UR, AT REAR OF PLATFORM B)

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
And from his mother's closet hath he dragged him.
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you haste in this.
Come, Gertrude, O, come away!

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN EXIT
AS THEY CAME IN. GERTRUDE CROSSES
TO KING)

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Come, Gertrude, O, come away.

KING

My soul is full of discord and dismay.

(KING AND QUEEN EXIT UR, OFF PLATFORM
B AFTER ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN)

HAMLETS I, II AND III

My soul is full of discord and dismay.

HAMLET I

Safely stowed.

(MAKING MUCH CEREMONY OF IT, THE HAMLETS
LIFT THE ARRAS-COVERED BODY AND HEAVE IT
OFF THE REAR OF PLATFORM D. THE ACTUAL
BODY HAS BEEN SUBSTITUTED WITH SAND-BAGS,
SIMILARLY WRAPPED.)

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN (ENTERING DL, CROSS TO DLC ON RAKE)

Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

HAMLET III (CROSSING ONTO RAKE, UC)

But soft, what noise?

HAMLET I

Who calls on Hamlet?

HAMLET II (CROSSING ONTO RAKE)

O, here they come.

ROSENCRANTZ

What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

HAMLET III

With the dead body?

HAMLET I

Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

ROSENCRANTZ

Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

HAMLET II

And bear it to the chapel.

HAMLET III (CROSSING DC)

Do not believe it.

ROSENCRANTZ

Believe what?

HAMLET I (UC, ON RAKE)

That I can keep your command and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a
sponge, what replication should be made by the son of a king?

ROSENCRANTZ

Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

HAMLET II (CIRCLING R. AND G., HAMLETS CROSS U AND TO THE L, ENDING DLC)

Ay, sir, that soaks up the King's countenance, his rewards, his authorities.
But such officers do the King best service in the end.
He keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw, first mouthed, to be
last swallowed.

HAMLET III

When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Squeezing you and, sponge,

HAMLET III

You shall be dry again.

ROSENCRANTZ

I understand you not, my lord.

HAMLET I

I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Foolish ear.

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, you must tell us where the body is and go with us to the King.

HAMLET II

(HAMLETS FEIGN MADNESS, LAUGH AND
MAKE RUDE GESTURES)

The body is with the King.

HAMLET III

But the King is not with the body.

HAMLET I

The King is a thing --

GUILDENSTERN

A thing, my lord?

HAMLET II

Of nothing. Bring me to him.

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN CROSS UL
TO PLATFORM D AND EXIT OFF THE REAR OF
IT)

HAMLET III

Hide fox, and all after.

HAMLETS I AND II

Hide fox, and all after.

(HAMLETS SPRINT AFTER AND ALSO EXIT OFF
REAR OF PLATFORM D)

ON THREE-COUNT, LIGHTS ON AREAS A AND D CROSS-FADE WITH THOSE ON AREA B, WHICH COME UP AS THE KING AND TWO SOLDIERS ENTER FROM THE REAR OF PLATFORM B. THE SOLDIERS ARE CARRYING LONG SPEARS. FROM R AND L OF THE KING, AS HAMLET'S APPROACH IS HEARD, THEY LOWER THEIR SPEARS AND STAND WITH THEM POINTING TOWARD THE DL ENTRANCE WHERE THE HAMLETS ENTER, RUNNING. HAMLET I STOPS IN DR CORNER OF RAKE; III AT FOOT OF STAIRS, ON FLOOR; AND II IS R OF PLATFORM B, ON FLOOR. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DLC ON RAKE.

SCENE TEN

KING

Now, Hamlet, where's Polonious?

HAMLET I

At supper.

KING

At supper? Where?

HAMLET II

Not where he eats, but where 'a is eaten.

HAMLET III

A certain conversation of politic worm are e'en at him.

HAMLET I

Your worm is your only emperor for diet.

HAMLET II

We fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots.

HAMLET III

Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable
Service -- two dishes, but to one table.

HAMLET I

That's the end.

KING

Alas, alas!

HAMLET II

A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king,

HAMLET III

And eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

KING

What dost thou mean by this?

HAMLET I

Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

KING

Where is Polonious?

(HAMLETS COME TOGETHER AT FOOT OF STAIRS,
AS IN A FOOTBALL HUDDLE)

HAMLET II

In heaven.

(THEY ALL POINT UPWARD)

Send thither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek
him in the other place yourself.

(THEY ALL POINT DOWNWARD)

HAMLET III (CROSSING ONTO RAKE, C)

But if indeed you find him not within this month, you shall
nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

KING

Go seek him there.

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN CROSS TO
PLATFORM D)

HAMLET I

'A will stay till you come.

(ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN EXIT OFF
PLATFORM D, UR)

KING

Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,
Which we do tender as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, must send thee hence
With fiery quickness. Therefore prepare yourself.
The bark is ready and the wind is at help,
Th' associates tend, and everything is bent
For England.

HAMLET I

For England?

KING

Ay, Hamlet.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Good!

KING

So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

HAMLET III

I see a cherub theat sees them.

HAMLETS I AND II

I see a cherub that sees them.

HAMLET III

But come, for England! Farewell, dear Mother. (HAMLETS CROSS TO DL OF RAKE)

HAMLETS I AND II

Mother.

KING

Thy loving father, Hamlet.

(HAMLETS STOP AT THE SOUND OF HIS VOICE)

HAMLET I

My mother -- father and mother is man and wife.

HAMLET II

Man and wife is one flesh

HAMLETS I, II AND III

And so, my mother. Come, for England!

(HAMLETS EXIT DL)

KING (TO SOLDIERS)

Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard.
Delay it not; I'll have him hence tonight.
Away! For everything is sealed and done
That else leans on th' affair. Pray you make haste.

(SOLDIERS EXIT DL, AFTER HAMLETS)

And England, if my love thou hold'st at aught --
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
By letters congruing to that effect
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England,
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,
How'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

(ON THREE-COUNT, B AREA LIGHTS
FADE TO DARK EXCEPT FOR ONE LIGHT
ON KING AT CENTER OF PLATFORM B)

(KING EXITS OFF REAR OF B AS LIGHTS
FADE)

HOUSE LIGHTS UP. HOLD FOR A SLOW COUNT OF FIVE, THEN BRING CURTAIN DOWN. DURING INTERMISSION, ARCH ON PLATFORM B IS REMOVED. WHEN THE STAGE IS CLEARED, THE CURTAIN IS RAISED AND THE CYC LIGHTS COME UP.

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

THREE MINUTES AND FORTY-FIVE SECONDS TO CURTAIN, INTRODUCTORY MUSIC COMES UP. ON CUE FROM THE STAGE MANAGER, HOUSE LIGHTS ARE FADED TO HALF ON A THREE-COUNT, HELD FOR A COUNT OF FIVE, THEN, WITH THE CYC LIGHTS, ARE FADED TO DARK ON A THREE-COUNT. THE KING TAKES HIS POSITION AT CENTER OF PLATFORM D DURING THE BLACK-OUT. LIGHTS COME UP ON THREE-COUNT AND MUSIC FADES.

KING

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions: first, Ophelia's father slain;
Next, Hamlet gone, and he most violent author
Of his own just remove; the people muddied
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers
For good Polonious' death, and we have done but freenly
In hyggermugger to inter him; poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgement,
Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts;
Last and as much containing as all these, (CROSSING ONTO RAKE, DL, AS LIGHTS UP ON A)
Her brother is in secret come from France.

MESSENGER (ENTERS FROM REAR OF PLATFORM B)

Young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The
rabble call him lord.
They cry, "Choose we! Laertes
shall be king.
Laertes shall be king. Laertes
king!

KING

Laertes king.

(MESSENGER EXITS AS HE CAME IN)

KING

Feeds on his wonder

LAERTES (CRYING FROM OFF-STAGE, R)

O thou vile King,
Give me my father.
That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard,
Cries cuckold to my father.

KING

With pestilent speeches of his father's death.

LAERTES (ENTERING DR, CROSSES L ONTO RAKE AND STOPS R OF KING)

Where is my father?

KING

Dead.

LAERTES

How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
Only I'll be revenged, most thoroughly for my father.

KING

I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it. (LAERTES TURNS AWAY)
Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.

If by direct or by collateral hand
They find me touched, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labor with your soul
To give it due content.

LAERTES (TURNING TO THE KING, CALMER NOW)

Let this be so.
His means of death, his obscure funeral --
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call't in question.

KING

So you shall;
And where the offense is, let the great ax fall.
Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith have you heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath our noble father slain
Pursued my life.

(ENTER MESSENGER DL WITH LETTERS.
HE CROSSES UP TO THE KING AND BOWS)

How now! What news?

MESSENGER

Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
These to your majesty; this to the Queen.

KING

From Hamlet? Who brought them?

MESSENGER

Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not.
They were given me by Claudio; he received them
Of him that brought them.

KING

Laertes, you shall hear them --
(TO MESSENGER) Leave us.

"High and mighty . . ."

(MESSENGER EXITS DL, AS HAMLET I APPEARS IN THE
SHADOWS ON THE STAIRS UL OFF PLATFORM D. THE KING
BEGINS TO READ THE LETTERS)

HAMLET I

"High and mighty, you shall know
I am set naked on your kingdom.
Tomorrow shall I beg leave to see
your kingly eyes; when I shall
(first asking your pardon there-
unto) recount the occasion of my
sudden and more strange return.
Hamlet"

KING

"Hamlet"

KING

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

LAERTES

Know you the hand?

KING

'Tis Hamlet's character. "Naked"

And in a postscript here, he says "alone."
Can you devise me?

LAERTES (EXAMINES THE LETTER)

I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come.
It warms the very sickness in my heart.
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus did'st thou."

POLONIOUS

Beware of entrance to a quarrel.

KING (CROSSES TO LAERTES)

If it be so, Laertes
(As how should it be so? How otherwise?)
Will you be ruled by me?

LAERTES

Ay, my lord,
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

KING

To thine own peace,
I will work him
To an exploit now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
And call it accident.

(STEPS AWAY, R)

(POLONIOUS APPEARS C OF PLATFORM C,
AND A SMALL SPOT COMES UP ON HIM THERE)

(PLACING HIS HANDS ON LAERTES'
SHOULDERS)

(KING AND LAERTES CROSS DR)

LAERTES

My lord, I will be ruled;
The rather if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

POLONIOUS

Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgement.

KING (PACES, SCHEMING)

It falls right.
You have been talked of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein they say you shine.

LAERTES

What part is that, my lord?

KING (STOPS, TURNS TO LAERTES)

A Norman

LAERTES

Upon my life, Lamord.

KING (CROSS BACK TO LAERTES)

He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defense,
And for your rapier most especial,
That he cried out 'twould be a sight indeed

If one could match you. The scrimers of their nation
He swore had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming over to play with you.
Now, out of this -- (PLACING AN ARM ABOUT LAERTES SHOULDER, STEPS R)

LAERTES (STOPS)

What out of this, my lord?

KING (RELEASES LAERTES)

Hamlet comes back; what would you undertake
To show yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words?

LAERTES (DRAWS DAGGER)

To cut his throat i' th' church!

POLONIOUS

To thine own self be true.

KING

No place indeed should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this? Keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet returned shall know you are come home.
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together
And wager on your heads. He, being remiss,

Most generous, and free from all conniving,
Will not peruse the foils, so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
Require him for your father.

LAERTES

I will do't.
And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.

POLONIOUS

Thou can'st not then be false to any man.

LAERTES (CONSPIRATORILY, DRAWING CLOSE TO THE KING)

I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
That is but scratched withal. I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

KING (RESUMES PACING DR)

Soft, let me see.
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings --
I ha't!
When in your motion you are hot and dry --
As make your bouts more violent to that end--
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

(STOPS AND TURNS, FACING UC)

SCENE TWO

QUEEN (ENTERING DL)

My lord. . .

KING (TURNS TO THE SOUND)

But stay, what noise?

QUEEN (ONTO RAKE, CROSSES TO BETWEEN KING AND LAERTES)

One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow. Your sister's drowned, Laertes. (TURNS TO LAERTES)

LAERTES (CROSSES DL)

Drowned! O, where?

QUEEN (CROSSING U, TO JUST LEFT OF C)

There is a willow grows askant the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream:
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crowflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.
But our cold maids do dead man's fingers call them.

OPHELIA (CROSSES TO QUEEN)

There's rosemary, that's for remembrance.
Pray you, love, remember. And there is pansies, that's for thoughts. (TO LAERTES)

QUEEN

There is a willow

(AS "WILLOW SPEECH" BEGINS, LIGHTS
CROSS-FADE WITH BLUE WATER EFFECT
AND PROJECTION COMES UP BATHING
THE STAGE IN AN ABSTRACTION OF BLUE-
GREEN SEA WEED. MUSIC BEGINS SOFTLY
AND SPOT COMES UP ON PLATFORM C AS
OPHELIA ENTERS THERE, UC.)

(OPHELIA CROSSES ONTO RAKE, STREW-
ING IMAGINARY FLOWERS ABOUT THE
OTHERS, WHO DO NOT SEE OPHELIA)

OPHELIA (CROSSES TO KING)

There's fennel for you

QUEEN

grows askant the brook

OPHELIA (ALSO TO KING)

and columbines,

QUEEN

that shows his hoar leaves

OPHELIA (CROSSES TO QUEEN)

There's rue for you

QUEEN

in the glassy stream.

OPHELIA

and here's some for me.

QUEEN

Therewith . . .

OPHELIA (CROSSING TO L OF QUEEN)

We may call it herb of grace o' Sundays.

QUEEN

Fantastic garlands did she make
crowflowers, nettles

OPHELIA (CROSSES TO KING)

There's a daisy.

QUEEN

daisies.

OPHELIA

I would give you some violets, but they withered all
when my father died. They say he made a good end.
(SINGS) For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

(OPHELIA REMOVES HER CAPE AND
SPREADS IT ON THE GROUND, C. SHE
CONTINUES HER SOFT SINGING
THROUGH THE QUEEN'S SPEECH)

QUEEN

There on the pendant bough her crownet weeds
Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide, (OPHELIA LIES DOWN ON HER CAPE)
And mermaidlike awhile they bore her up,
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes.

OPHELIA

They bore him barefaced on the bier

QUEEN

There on the pendant boughs . . .

OPHELIA (SINGING)

Hey nony nony. Hey nony nony . . .

QUEEN

her crownet weeds . . .

OPHELIA

And in his grave rained many a tear . . .
Fare you well, my dove.

QUEEN

clamb'ring to hang.

OPHELIA (RISING)

you must sing "a-down a-down, and you call
him a-down-a."
And will he not come again?

QUEEN

an envious sliver broke

OPHELIA (CIRCLING THE QUEEN, WITH HER CAPE DRAGGED BEHIND HER)

And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy deathbed,
He never will come again.

QUEEN

when down her weedy trophies and herself

OPHELIA

His beard was as white as snow,

QUEEN

fell

OPHELIA

All flaxen was his poll.

QUEEN

in the weeping brook.

OPHELIA (BACKING UC, ON RAKE)

He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan.
God have mercy on his soul
And of all Christian souls, I pray God.
God bye you.

QUEEN

As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and endued
Unto that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

(OPHELIA STEPS U ONTO PLATFORM D AND
ACROSS TO PLATFORM C, IN THE SPOT.
SHE CONTINUES TO REPEAT HER FARE-
WELLS SOFTLY, SADLY, AND MUSICALLY.)

OPHELIA

Good night, ladies, good night,
Sweet ladies, good night, good night.

(OPHELIA EXITS UC, OFF PLATFORM C, AS
BLUE WATER EFFECT CROSS-FADES WITH AREA
LIGHTS AND PROJECTION FADES ON FIVE-
COUNT. MUSIC ALSO FADES.)

LAERTES (STEPS U, TOWARDS QUEEN)

Alas, then she is drowned?

QUEEN

Drowned . . . drowned.

LAERTES (CROSSING UR, BETWEEN KING AND QUEEN)

Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears; but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The worst will be out. Adieu, my lord,
I have a speech of fire, that fain would balze,
But that this folly drowns it.

(LAERTES CROSSES DL, OFF RAKE, THEN
STOPS AND TURNS TO THE KING)

(LAERTES EXITS QUICKLY DL)

KING (CROSSING DL ON RAKE)

How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore, let's follow.

(THE QUEEN JOINS HIM DL, AND
TOGETHER THEY EXIT DL OFF RAKE)

LIGHTS FADE TO DARK ON SLOW COUNT OF FOUR. THERE IS A BEAT'S PAUSE AND THEN ALMOST
IMMEDIATELY THE FIRST GRAVEDIGGER IS HEARD SINGING UNDER THE RAKE. WITH A SMALL
LANTERN IN ONE HAND, THE FIRST GRAVEDIGGER OPENS THE US SIDE OF THE TRAP, UC ON
THE RAKE. HE SETS THE LANTERN DOWN ON THE OPENED TRAP DOOR, AND OPENS THE OTHER
SIDE AS LIGHTS COME UP DIMLY ABOUT THE STAGE AND ON THE CYC. IT IS DUSK.

SCENE THREE

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

In youth when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet
To contract - O - the time for my behove
O - methought there -a- was nothing -a- meet.
But age with his stealing steps
Hath clawed me in his clutch
And hath shipped me into the land
As if I had never been such.

HAMLET I (TO HORATIO)

Has this fellow no feeling of his business?
He sings in gravemaking.

HORATIO

Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

HAMLET II

'Tis e'en so. The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER (SHOVELING)

Is she to be buried in Christian burial when she willfully seeks her own salvation?

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER (STANDING UP SUDDENLY IN THE TRAP, BESIDE FIRST GRAVEDIGGER)

I tell thee she is. Therefore make her grave straight. The crowner hath sate on her,
and finds it a Christain burial. (PULLS HIMSELF FROM THE TRAP, STANDS L OF IT)

(AS HE SINGS, FIRST GRAVEDIGGER
PRODUCES A SPADE, A PICK, AND
THREE SKULLS FROM THE TRAP. HE
LINES THE SKULLS UP ALONG THE DS
EDGE OF THE TRAP AND MAKES MERRY
WITH THEM AS IF LEADING THEM IN
SONG. HAMLETS AND HORATIO APPEAR
AT REAR OF PLATFORM C; HAMLET I
AND HORATIO CROSS TO STEP BETWEEN
PLATFORMS C AND D, HAMLET SITTING
ON EDGE OF STEP, HORATIO ON ONE
KNEE UL OF HIM ON C. HAMLETS II
AND III REMAIN UC ON PLATFORM C.)

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defense?

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER (MOVES TO SQUAT POSITION)

Why, 'tis found so.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

It must be "se offendendo," it cannot be else. For here lies the point:
If I dorwn myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches --
It is to act, to do, and to perform. Argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER

Nay, but hear you, Goodman Delver,

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Give me leave. Here lies the water -- good?

(FIRST GRAVEDIGGER GESTURES INTO
THE TRAP AS THE WATER)

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER

Good!

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Here stands the man -- good.

(FIRST GRAVEDIGGER PLACES HIS
PICK UPSIDE DOWN ON THE DS EDGE OF
THE TRAP, SIGNIFYING MAN. HE MIMES
THE DROWNING OF THE MAN WITH THE PICK.)

If the man go to this water and drown himself --
It is will he nill he, he goes; mark you that.

But if the water come to him and drown him --
he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not
guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

(HE MIMES THIS ACTION)

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER

But is this law?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Ay, marry, is't -- crowner's quest law.
I'll put a question to thee.

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER (MOVES TO THOUGHTFUL, SITTING POSITION, HAND UNDER HIS CHIN)

Go to.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

What is he that builds stronger than either the
masons, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

(FIRST GRAVEDIGGER LOOKS WITH
EXPECTATION FOR A MOMENT AT THE
SECOND GRAVEDIGGER, WHO THINKS
LONG AND HARD. ALLOWING MORE TIME,
FIRST GOES BACK TO HIS DIGGING.
SECOND GRAVEDIGGER FINALLY THINKS
OF AN ANSWER.)

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER (RISING)

The gallowsmaker! for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

I like thy wit well, in good faith. The gallows does well. But how does it
well? It does well to those that do ill. Now thou dost ill to say the gallows
is built stronger than the church. Argal, the gallows may do well to thee.
To't again. Come.

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER

Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER (WITH SUDDEN CONFIDENCE)

Marry, now I can tell.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

To't.

SECOND GRAVEDIGGER (CRESTFALLEN)

Mass, I cannot tell. (SECOND GRAVEDIGGER TAKES OFF HIS HAT AND BEATS HIS HEAD WITH IT)

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass
will not mend his pace with beating. And when you are asked
this question next, say "a gravemaker."

HAMLET II

A gravemaker!

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

The houses he makes lasts till doomsday.
Go get thee in, and fetch me a stoup of liquor.

(SINGS)

In youth when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet
To contract -O- the time for -a- my behove,
O, methought there -a- was nothing -a- meet.

(SECOND GRAVEDIGGER EXITS DL REPEAT-
ING "GRAVEMAKER" SOFTLY AND LAUGHING)

(HAMLET III CROSSES TO PLATFORM D AS
GRAVEDIGGER DIGS GRAVE. AT VERSE'S
END, GRAVEDIGGER PULLS OUT SKULL.)

HAMLET III

That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if 'twere Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder!

HAMLET I

This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'erreaches, one that would circumvent God, might it not?

HORATIO

It might, my lord.

HAMLET II

Or of a courtier, which could say "Good morrow, sweet lord!"

HAMLET III

Or "Man delights not me; nor woman neither . . ."

HAMLET I

Or "I have of late lost all my mirth."

HAMLET II

"How dost thou, sweet lord?"

This might be my Lord Such-a-one, that praised my Lord Such-a-one's horse when 'a went to beg it, might it not?

HORATIO

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET III

Why, e'en so, and now my Lady Worm's, chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to play at loggers with them? Mine ache to think on't.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER (SINGING)

A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,
Fir and a shrouding sheet;
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

HAMLET I

I will speak to this fellow.
Whose grave is this, sirrah?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER (TO THE SKULL)

Whose grave, sirrah?

Mine, sir!

(SINGS)

O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

HAMLET II

I think it be thine indeed, for thou liest in it.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

You lie out on it, sir, and therefore 'tis not yours.
For my part, I do not lie in it, yet it is mine.

(HE PULLS OUT ANOTHER SKULL AND SETS IT
DC, AT FOOT OF TRAP. HE IS FACING R.)
HAMLET I STEPS OFF PLATFORM D ONTO RAKE
AND CROSSES TO UL CORNER OF TRAP. UPON
BEING QUESTIONED, THE GRAVEDIGGER SLOWLY
RAISES HIS HEAD OUT OF THE GRAVE AND
LOOKS AT THE SKULL HE HAS JUST PLACED
GRAVESIDE, THINKING THAT IT IS THE SKULL
WHICH HAS SPOKEN. HAMLET I CLEARS HIS
THROAT TO ATTRACT HIS ATTENTION. PEEVED
THAT HE HAS BEEN TRICKED, THE GRAVEDIGGER
ANSWERS CURTLY AND RETURNS TO HIS DIGGING.)

(HAMLETS AND HORATIO CROSS ONTO RAKE;
HAMLETS TO THE R OF GRAVEDIGGER, HORATIO
US OF HIM.)

HAMLET III

Thou dost lie in it, to be in it and say it is thine.
'Tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER (TOPPED FOR AN INSTANT, HE PAUSES)

'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again from me to you.

HAMLET I

What man dost thou dig it for?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

For no man, sir.

HAMLET II

Why, what woman, then?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

For none neither.

HAMLET III

Who is to be buried in it?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul -- she's dead.

HAMLET I

How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. How long hast thou been a gravemaker?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Of all the days i' th' year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

HAMLET II

How long is that since?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born -- he that is mad, and sent into England.

HAMLET III

Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Why, because 'a was mad. 'A shall recover his wits there; or, if 'a do not, 'tis no great matter there.

HAMLET I

Why?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

'Twill not be seen in him there. There the men are as mad as he.

HAMLET II

How came he mad?

HAMLET III

"Seems, Madam? Nay, it is. I know not seems."

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Very strangely, they say.

HAMLET I

How strangely?

HAMLET II

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio."

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

HAMLET III

Upon what ground?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Why . . .

HAMLET I

"O that this too, too solid flesh . . ."

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

HAMLET II

How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Faith, if 'a be not rotten before he die (as we have many pocky corses nowadays that will scarce hold the laying in), 'a will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

HAMLET III

Why he, more than another?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade that 'a will keep out water a great while, and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now hath lien you i' th' earth three and twenty years.

HAMLET I

Whose was it?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

A whoreson mad fell's it was. Whose do you think it was? (HOLDS SKULL OUT TO HAMLETS)

HAMLET II

Nay, I know not.

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'A poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was, sir, Yorick's skull, the King's jester.

HAMLET III

This?

FIRST GRAVEDIGGER

E'en that.

HAMLET III

Let me see.

Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him well, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy . . .

HAMLET I

Excellent fancy.

HAMLET III

He hath borne me on his back a thousand times . . .

HAMLET II

A thousand times.

HAMLET III

And now how abhorred in my
imagination it is!

My gorge rises at it. Here hung
those lips that I have kissed . . .

HAMLET II

Have kissed

HAMLET I

Kissed

kissed,
I know not how oft. Where be
your gibes now?

(THE REPETITION OF THE WORD "KISSED" IS DONE LIKE
AN ECHO)

HAMLET I

Where be your gibes now?

HAMLET III

Your gambols, your songs . . .

(III HANDS SKULL TO HAMLET I)

HAMLET II

Your gambols, your songs . . .

HAMLET III

Your flashes of merriment . . .

HAMLET I

Merriment . . .

(I HANDS SKULL TO HAMLET II)

HAMLET III

That were wont to set the table on a roar?
Not one now to mock your own grinning?

HAMLET II

To mock your own grinning?

(II HANDS SKULL TO HAMLET III)

HAMLET III

Quite chapfall'n?

HAMLET I

Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick --
Remember me . . .

HAMLET II

Remember me . . .

HAMLET III

. . . remember me.

HAMLET I

To this favor she must come.

HAMLET III

To this favor she must come.

HAMLET II

Make her laugh at that.

(HAMLETS LAUGH IRONICALLY AND CROSS US
BY HORATIO. II TAKES SKULL FROM III.)

Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

HORATIO

What's that, my lord?

HAMLET III

Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion in the earth?

HORATIO

E'en so.

HAMLET I

And smelt so? Pah!

HORATIO

E'en so, my lord.

HAMLET II

To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander til he find it stopping a bung-hole?

HORATIO

'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

HAMLET III

No, faith, not a jot, but to follow him hither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus:

HAMLET I

Alexander died . . .

HAMLET II

Alexander was buried . . .

HAMLET III

Alexander returneth to dust.

HAMLET I

The dust is earth . . .

HAMLET II

. . . of earth we make loam . . .

HAMLET III

. . . and why of the loam whereto he was converted might they not stop a beer barrel?

HAMLET I (STEPS TO II, TAKES SKULL)

Imperious Caesar, dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
O, that that earth which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!

HAMLET II (CROSSING TO RC ON THE RAKE)

But soft, but soft awhile
Here comes the King,

HAMLET I (FOLLOWING II)

The Queen,

HAMLET III (JOINING GROUP RC, WITH HORATIO)

The courtiers,

HAMLET II

Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corpse they follow did with desperate hand

(HALFWAY THROUGH THE "IMPERIOUS CAESAR" SPEECH, A LOW HUM, ALMOST THE MONOTONE OF A CHANT, IS HEARD OFF R. THE KING AND QUEEN, A DOCTOR, LAERTES, TWO COURTIER, TWO PROP GIRLS AND TWO GUARDS ENTER DR IN PROCESSION, CARRYING A HUGE SILKEN CLOTH MEASURING THE WIDTH OF THE RAKE. IT IS ROLLED AND MEMBERS OF THE PROCESSION CARRY THE ROLL ON THEIR SHOULDERS SO THAT IT SWAGS BETWEEN THEM AS THEY WALK. THE PROCESSION CROSSES L, ONTO THE RAKE, AND CIRCLES US OF THE TRAP AT THE TOP OF THE RAKE. DURING HAMLET'S LINES THE CLOTH IS STRETCHED OUT THE WIDTH OF THE RAKE.)

(GRAVEDIGGER PULLS HIMSELF FROM THE TRAP, FIRST CLOSING DS SIDE, AND JOINS HAMLETS AND HORATIO RC CARRYING HIS LANTERN, PICK, AND SPADE.)

Fordo its own life. 'Twas of some estate.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Couch we awhile and mark.

LAERTES

What ceremony else?

HAMLET III (TO HORATIO)

That is Laertes,
A very noble youth. Mark.

LAERTES (STEPPING U TOWARDS DOCTOR)

What ceremony else?

DOCTOR

Her obsequies have been as far enlarged
As we have warranty. Her death was doubtful,
And, but that great comman o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified been lodged
Till the last trumpet. For charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her.
Yet here she is allowed her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

(HAMLETS AND HORATIO CROSS TO PLATFORM B
AS PROCESSION STARTS UP RAKE. II IS UC
STANDING, WITH HORATIO STANDING R OF HIM,
III ON ONE KNEE L OF HIM, AND I SQUATTING
SLIGHTLY DL. GRAVEDIGGER CROSSES TO STAIR
UNIT AND RESTS MIDWAY BETWEEN PLATFORM B
AND PLATFORM C. THE PROCESSION HAS REACHED
ITS DESTINATION: THE KING AND QUEEN ARE
UR OF THE TRAP; LAERTES IS R OF IT, FACING
U TOWARD THE DOCTOR, WHO STANDS AT THE
HEAD OF THE TRAP; THE PROP GIRLS ARE UC,
BETWEEN KING AND QUEEN AND THE DOCTOR; THE
COURTIERS ARE LC AND DC; AND THE GUARDS
ARE DR AND DL, ON THE FLOOR. SEE FIGURE 14.)

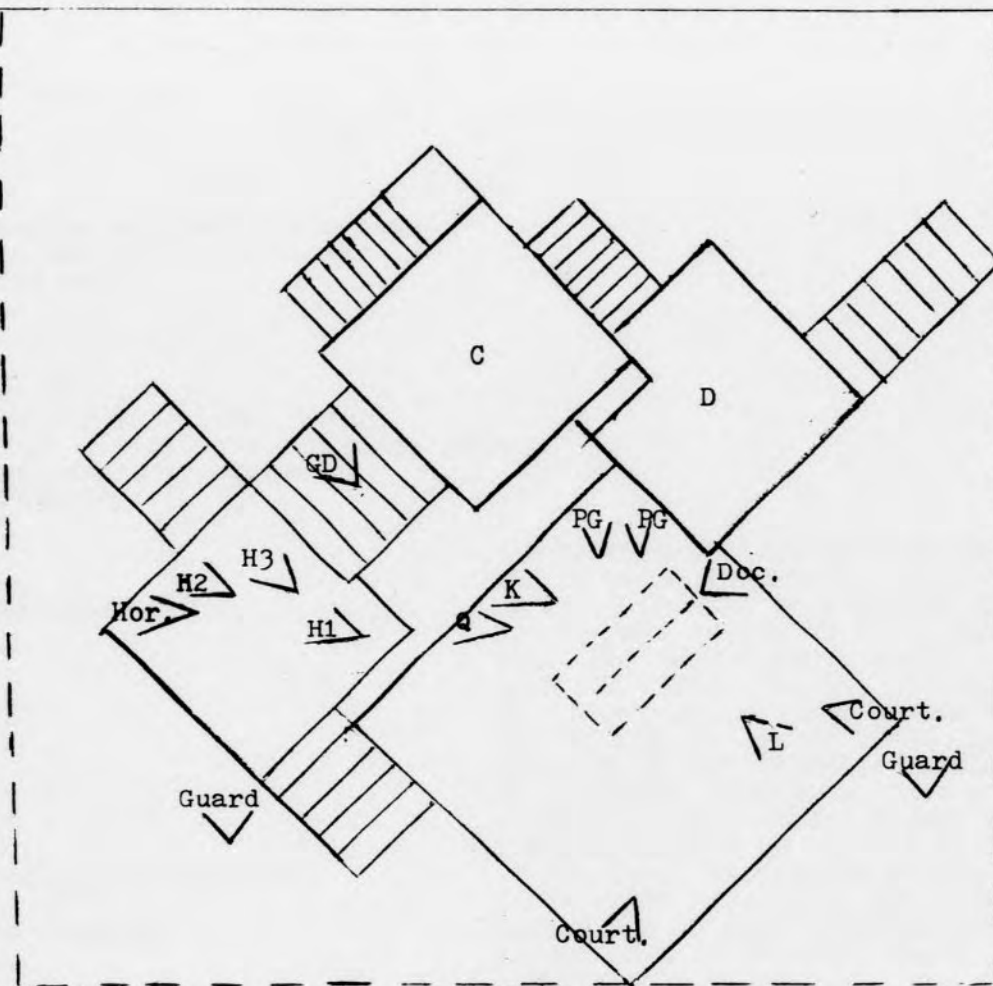


FIGURE 14

LAERTES

Must there be no more done?

DOCTOR

No more be done.
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

LAERTES

Lay her in the earth,
And from her hair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be
When thou liest howling!

HAMLET I

What, the fair Ophelia?

HAMLET II

The fair Ophelia.

HAMLET III

The fair Ophelia.

HAMLETS I, II AND III (AD LIBBING)

Ophelia, Ophelia, Ophelia

(AS HAMLETS REALIZE THAT IT IS OPHELIA WHO IS TO BE BURIED, I MOVES TO L CORNER OF B; II CROSSES TO R CORNER OF RAKE, AND III CROSSES TO STAIRS TO C. THE PROP GIRLS UNFOLD THE CLOTH ALONG R EDGE OF RAKE AND UNROLL IT, DS, SO THAT THE RAKE IS COVERED AND MEMBERS OF THE PROCESSION ARE HOLDING IT BY THE EDGES. HAMLETS CONTINUE TO CRY "OPHELIA" UNTIL THE CLOTH IS UNFOLDED. OPHELIA APPEARS AT REAR OF PLATFORM D AND CROSSES D ONTO THE CLOTH. SHE LIES DOWN C OF THE CLOTH, ON THE EDGE OF THE TRAP. PROCESSION MEMBERS HOLD THE CLOTH WAIST HIGH. KING AND QUEEN CROSS TO PLATFORM C AS AREA LIGHTING DIMS AND BLUE LIGHTS COME UP ON RAKE. GRAVEDIGGER EXITS OFF PLATFORM B, UR.)

QUEEN (MIMING THE THROWING OF FLOWERS)

Sweets to the sweet! Farewell.
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife,
I thought thy bride bed to have decked, sweet maid,
And not have strewed thy grave.

LAERTES

O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Til I have caught her once more in mine arms.

HAMLET I

Once more in my arms.

LAERTES

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead
Til of this flat a mountain you have made
T'o'ertop old Pelion or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

HAMLET II

What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis, whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers?

HAMLETS I, II AND III (SHOUTING)

This is I, Hamlet the Dane!

(PROCESSION MEMBERS HOLDING THE
EDGES OF THE BURIAL CLOTH LIFT AND
LOWER THEIR ARMS SO THE CLOTH BILLOWS
ABOUT OPHELIA, BUT STOP AS LAERTES
STEPS TO OPHELIA ON CLOTH. HE LIFTS
HER BODY TO HIM IN EMBRACE, AND THEN
RETURNS TO HIS POSITION L. BILLOWING
RESUMES.)

(HAMLET II RUSHES FORWARD TOWARDS
LAERTES, BUT THE CLOTH CATCHES HIM
AND HOLDS HIM BACK AS THE CROWD
MURMURS. SEE FIGURE 15.)

(THE CLOTH BILLOWS STRONGLY.)



FIGURE 15

LAERTES

The devil take thy soul!

HAMLET III

Thou pray'st not well
I prithee take thy fingers from my
throat
For, though I am not splenitive
and rash,
Yet have I in me something
dangerous
Hold off thy hand.

KING

Pluck them asunder.

QUEEN

Hamlet, Hamlet!

HORATIO

Good my lord, be quiet.

HAMLET I

Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

QUEEN

O my son, what theme?

(LAERTES STRETCHES TOWARD HAMLET ACROSS
THE CLOTH, THEN QUICKLY CROSSES U AROUND
THE EDGES OF THE CLOTH, AND HAMLET CROSSES
D SO THEY ARE CIRCLING ONE ANOTHER.)

HAMLETS I AND II

From my throat

Something dangerous

Hold off thy hand

HAMLET II (DC)

I loved Ophelia!

HAMLET I

I loved Ophelia!

HAMLET II

Forty thousand brothers
Could not with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

HAMLET I

What wilt thou do for her?

KING

O, he is mad, Laertes.

QUEEN (CROSSES TO STEP BETWEEN C AND D)

For love of God forbear him.

HAMLET I

'Swounds, show me what thou't do.
Woo't weep? Woo't fight?

HAMLET II

Woo't fast? Woo't tear thyself?

HAMLET III

Woo't drink up eisel? Eat a crocodile? I'll do't.

HAMLET II (CROSSING TO LC)

Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?

HAMLET III

Be buried quick with her, and so will I.

HAMLET II

Nay and thou'lt mouth . . .

HAMLET III

I'll rant as well as thou.

QUEEN

This is mere madness;
And thus a while the fit will
work . . .

HAMLETS I, II AND III

The cat will mew, and dog will
have his day.
(AD LIB) The cat will mew, and
dog will have his day.

HAMLET III

Hear you, sir.
What is the reason that you use
me thus?
I loved you ever. But it is no
matter.
Let Hercules himself do what he
may,

(HAMLETS EXIT RUNNING: I AND III OFF REAR OF PLAT-
FORM B, II CROSSES DR OFF RAKE AND EXITS DR)

KING

I pray thee, good Horatio, wait
upon him,

(HORATIO FOLLOWS HAMLET OFF PLATFORM B)

AGAIN TAKING UP THE MONOTONOUS TONE OR CHANT WITH WHICH THEY ENTERED, THE PROCESSION PLACES OPHELIA IN HER GRAVE AND "POURS" THE HUGE CLOTH IN AFTER HER. THE TRAP IS CLOSED WHILE HIDDEN FROM THE AUDIENCE'S VIEW. STILL CHANTING, THE DOCTOR, COURTIER, PROP GIRLS AND SOLDIERS, FORM A PROCESSION AND EXIT DR ON THE FLOOR AS BLUE LIGHTS CROSS-FADE WITH AREA LIGHTS ON FIVE-COUNT. THE KING AND QUEEN COME DOWN FROM PLATFORM C ONTO THE RAKE, AND WHEN THE STAGE IS CLEARED EXCEPT FOR THEMSELVES AND LAERTES, THE KING SPEAKS.

KING (CROSSING DR ON RAKE, THE QUEEN ON HIS R)

Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech.
We'll put the matter to the present push.
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living monument,
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then in patience our proceeding be.

(KING STOPS AND LAERTES CROSSES FROM
L OF THE GRAVE TO THE KING)

(LAERTES BOWS STIFFLY, CIRCLES U
AROUND THE GRAVE AND EXITS SLOWLY DR.
KING AND QUEEN EXIT AFTER HIM, DR,
AS AREA LIGHTS AND CYC FADE ON FIVE-
COUNT.)

SCENE FOUR

ON THREE-COUNT LIGHTS COME UP ON AREAS C AND D AS HAMLETS AND HORATIO ENTER FROM THE REAR OF PLATFORM C. HAMLET II AND HORATIO ENTER FIRST AND CROSS TO PLATFORM D; I AND III REMAIN ON PLATFORM C.

HAMLET II

Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting

That would not let me sleep.
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

HORATIO

That is most certain.
So, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern go to it.

HAMLET III (CROSSING L TO EDGE OF PLATFORM C)

Why, man, they did make love to this employment.
They are not near my conscience; their
Defeat does by their own insinuation grow.
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

HORATIO

Why, what a king is this!

HAMLET I

Does it not, think thee, stand me
now upon
He that hath killed my King

HAMLET II

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's
hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at
once dispatched.

HAMLET III

And whored my mother

HAMLET I

O, horrible, horrible, most
horrible!

HAMLET II

Popped in between the election
and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my
proper life,
And with such cozenage -- is't not
perfect conscience
To quit him with this arm?

(HAMLET II AND HORATIO MOVE ONTO RAKE, CL,
AS LIGHTS COME UP IN AREA A ON THREE-COUNT)

HAMLET III (CROSSING TO PLATFORM D)

And is't not to be damned
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

HAMLET I (CROSSING TO D)

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!

HORATIO

It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there?

HAMLET II

It will be short; the interim's mine,
And a man's life is no more than to say "one."

HAMLET III (CROSSING ONTO RAKE, UC)

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself.
For by the image of my cause I see
The portraiture of his.

HAMLET I (ALSO CROSSING TO RAKE, UC)

I'll court his favors.
But sure the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

OSRIC (ENTERING DR)

My lord, my lord!

HORATIO

Peace, who comes here?

(HAMLET III GETS OSRIC HAT FROM PROP
GIRL, DR, HORATIO AND HAMLET II STEP
DR TOWARDS ENTERING OSRIC)

OSRIC (CROSSING ONTO RAKE, MOVES CL, BOWS)

Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

(OSRIC STEPS UR, FANNING HIMSELF
WITH HIS HAT. III CROSSES TO RC.)

HAMLET II

I humbly thank you, sir.
(ASIDE TO HORATIO) Dost thou know this waterfly?

HORATIO

No, my good lord.

HAMLET I (STEPS D)

Thy state is the more gracious, for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much
land and fertile.
Let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess.

HAMLET II

'Tis a chough, but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

OSRIC (CROSSES TO II)

Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his Majesty.

HAMLET II

A thing to you from his Majesty.

(OSRIC TURNS TO EACH HAMLET AS HE IS SPOKEN TO; HE SPINS AROUND EACH TIME AS IF HE HAD BEEN PINCHED ON THE BUTTOCKS.)

HAMLET I

I will receive it, sir, with all the diligence of spirit.

HAMLET II

Put your bonnet to his right use. 'Tis for the head.

OSRIC

I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

HAMLET III

It is very hot.

HAMLET I

No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

OSRIC

It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

HAMLET III

Indeed.

HAMLET II

But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

OSRIC

Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, as 'twere --
I cannot tell how. But, my lord . . .

HAMLET III

But, my lord . . .

OSRIC

His Majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head.
Sir, this is the matter --

HAMLET II

Beseech you remember.

(II MOTIONS FOR OSRIC TO PUT HIS HAT ON)

HAMLET I (STEPS TOWARDS III)

If it be now,

HAMLET III

'Tis not to come.

OSRIC

Nay, good my lord, for my ease, in good faith.
Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes --

HAMLET III (PLAYING OSRIC, AS OSRIC MOUTHS THE WORDS)

Believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing.

OSRIC

Indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

HAMLET I

Well, sir?

OSRIC

You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is.

HAMLET II

If it be not to come, it will be now . . .

HAMLET I

I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well were to know himself.

OSRIC

I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

HAMLET III

In his meed he's unfellowed.

HAMLET II

If it be not now, yet it will come.

HAMLET I

What's his weapon?

OSRIC

Rapier and dagger.

HAMLET III

Rapier and dagger.

HAMLET I (CROSSING TO BETWEEN OSRIC AND HAMLET III)

That's two of his weapons, but well.

OSRIC

The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses, against the which he has impawned, as I take it.

HAMLET III

Six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so.

OSRIC

Three of the carriages, in faith,
are very dear to fancy.

HAMLET III

Carriages.

HAMLET III

Dear to fancy.

OSRIC

Very responsive to the hilts,

HAMLET III

Very responsive to the hilts.

OSRIC

Most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

HAMLET II (TURNING TO OSRIC)

What call you the carriages?

HORATIO

I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

OSRIC

The carriages, sir, are the hangers. (CROSSES TO II)

HAMLET I

The readiness is all.

HAMLET II

The phrase would be more germane to the matter if we could carry a cannon by our sides. I would it might be hangers till then. But on!

HAMLET I

Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-

conceited carriages -- that's the French bet against the Danish.

HAMLET II

Why is this all impawned, as you call it?

OSRIC

The King, sir . . .

HAMLET III

Hath laid, sir . . .

OSRIC

That in a dozen passes between yourself and him he shall not exceed you three hits.

HAMLET III

He hath laid on twelve for nine,
and it would come to immediate
trial if your lordship would vouch-
safe the answer.

OSRIC

Lordship

OSRIC

Vouchsafe the answer.

(HAMLET III THROWS THE OSRIC HAT TO THE
PROP GIRL, AND STEPS IN TOWARDS I)

HAMLETS I AND III

We were sent for . . . vouchsafe the answer.

HAMLET II

How if I answer no?

OSRIC

I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

HAMLET I

Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please his Majesty, it is the breathing time of the day with me.

HAMLET II

Let the foils be brought, the gentlman willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can.

HAMLET III

If not, I will gain nothing but by my shame and the odd hits.

OSRIC

Shall I deliver you e'en so?

HAMLET I

Since no man of aught he leaves knows . . .

HAMLET II

What is't to leave betimes?

HAMLET III

To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will. (HAMLETS CHUCKLE AFTER
"FLOURISH," OSRIC JOINS)

OSRIC

I commend my duty to your lordship.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Yours, yours.

(OSRIC EXITS DL. HAMLETS I AND II STEP DL AS
HORATIO COUNTERS L.)

HAMLET I

He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for his turn.

HORATIO (TO HAMLET II)

This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

HAMLET II

'A did comply, sir, with his dug before 'a sucked it.

HAMLET III

There is special providence in the fall of a sparrow.

HORATIO

You will lose this wager, my lord.

(GUARDS BRING ON THRONES, PLACE THEM ON C)

HAMLET I

I do not think so. Since he went into France I have been in continual practice. I shall win at the odds. But thou shouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart. But it is no matter.

HORATIO

Nay, good my lord --

HAMLET II (CROSSING TO R OF HORATIO)

It is but foolery, but it is such a kind of gaingiving as would perhaps

trouble a woman.

HORATIO

If your mind dislike anything, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither and say you are not fit.

HAMLET III

Not a whit, we defy augury. There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow.

HAMLET II

If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now;
If it be not now, yet it will come.
The readiness is all.

(HORATIO CROSSES UC AND EXITS OFF REAR OF
PLATFORM D; HAMLET II CROSSES TO C)

HAMLET I

Since no man of aught he leaves knows,
what is't to leave betimes?

(HAMLETS SLOWLY MOVE INTO POSITIONS THEY
HELD AT PLAY'S OPENING: II IS DC, WITH
III SLIGHTLY UL, AND I SLIGHTLY UR OF HIM.)

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Let be. Let be.

HAMLETS I AND III

Let be.

SCENE FIVE

MUSIC AND NOISE IS HEARD OFF L AS PROCESSION ENTERS. THE KING AND QUEEN, LAERTES, OSRIC,
TWO COURTIER, TWO PROP GIRLS, AND TWO SOLDIERS ENTER DL IN PROCESSION, AND CROSS ONTO

RAKE TO UC. OSRIC IS CARRYING THE SWORDS. AS PROCESSION ENTERS, ON FIVE-COUNT, LIGHTS ON AREAS B, C, AND D COME UP TO INTERIOR LEVELS. HAMLET II IS MOTIONLESS AT C ON THE RAKE; I SPEAKS AS THE KING.

HAMLET I (AS KING)

Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green.

KING (UC ON RAKE; TO PROP GIRLS IN PROCESSIONAL)

Set me the stoops of wine upon that table.

HAMLET I (AS KING)

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire.

KING

The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath.

HAMLET I (AS KING)

And in the cup an onion shall he throw
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn.

KING

Give me the cups.

HAMLET III (AS KING)

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,

(PROP GIRLS CROSS UC TO PLATFORM C AND PLACE SMALL TABLE WITH GOBLETS BETWEEN THE THRONES AND TAKE UP POSITIONS BEHIND THE THRONES.)

(ONCE PROP GIRLS HAVE MOVED US, THE PROCESSION CONTINUES: KING AND QUEEN CROSS TO PLATFORM C, BEFORE THEIR THRONES; LAERTES TO PLATFORM D, LC; COURTIER TO PLATFORM B, AND A GUARD UC ON D, AND UR ON PLATFORM B. OSRIC REMAINS LC ON RAKE. SEE FIGURE 16.)

(KING PRODUCES LARGE PEARL WHICH HE DISPLAYS TO THE MURMURS OF APPROVAL FROM THE COURT.)

(PROP GIRL BRINGS GOBLETS TO R OF THE KING; THE KING TAKES ONE.)

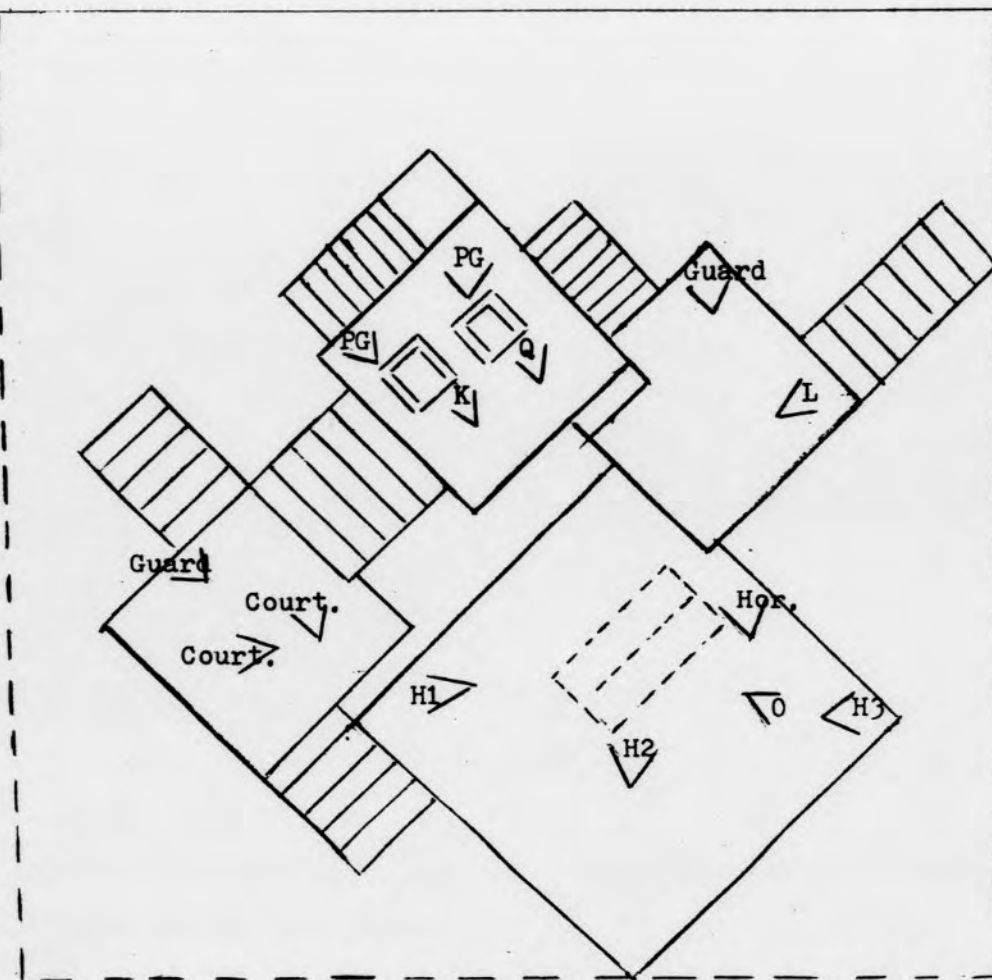


FIGURE 16

the trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannon to the heavens, the heaven to earth.

KING

"Now the King drinks to Hamlet." Come, begin.

(KING AND QUEEN SIT; OSRIC STARTS
CROSS UR)

HAMLET III (AS KING)

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

KING (RISING, CROSSES L TOWARDS LAERTES)

Come, Hamlet, come, and take his hand from me.

HAMLET II (LOOPS ABOUT TO THE R TO UC EDGE OF RAKE; LAERTES IS DR ON PALTFORM D)

Give me your pardon, sir, I have done you wrong; (THEY EXCHANGE HAND CLASPS)

But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.

What I have done

That might your nature, honor, and exception

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet.

Who does it then? His madness. If't be so,

Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged;

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

LAERTES

I am satisfied in nature.

HAMLET III (AS LAERTES, CROSSING DR OF II)

(LAERTES MOUTHS THE LINES WITH III)

I do receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it.

HAMLET I

I embrace it freely,
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.

KING

Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

HAMLET II

Very well, my lord.
Your grace has laid the odds o' th' weaker side.

KING

I do not fear it, I have seen you both;
But since he is bettered, we have therefore odds.

LAERTES

This is too heavy; let me see another.

HAMLET II

This likes me well. These foils have all a length?

OSRIC

Aye, my lord.

HAMLET II

Come on, sir.

(KING RETURNS TO PLATFORM C; II
CROSSES TO UL ON RAKE; LAERTES
STEPS D ONTO RAKE, CROSSES CR; I
AND III CROSS TO PLATFORM B; OSRIC
MOVES TO UC.)

(HAMLET II, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF
HORATIO, REMOVES HIS VEST, DONS GLOVE;
LAERTES REMOVES HIS DOUBLET.)

(HAMLET II CHOOSES A SWORD FROM
OSRIC AND TESTS IT AS LAERTES DOES
LIKEWISE.)

LAERTES

Come, my lord.

OSRIC

Advance.

HAMLET II

One!

LAERTES

No.

HAMLET II (TURNING TO OSRIC)

Judgement?

OSRIC

A hit, a very palpable hit.

(THERE IS APPLAUSE FROM THE COURT)

LAERTES

Well, again.

KING (RISES)

Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine.
Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.

(KING PLACES LARGE PEARL IN CUP)

HAMLET II

I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
Come.

(KING HANDS CUP TO OSRIC, WHO HANDS IT
TO HAMLET II; II SETS IT ON DS EDGE OF
PLATFORM C)

OSRIC

Advance.

HAMLET II

Another hit. What say you?

LAERTES

A touch, a touch; I do confess it.

KING

Our son shall win.

HAMLET III (AS QUEEN)

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off.
He's fat and scant of breath.

(OSRIC RETURNS TO UC RAKE TO "BREAK"
FOR LAERTES AND II, AND RETREATS TO
PLATFORM D. THERE IS A MUCH LONGER
BOUT THAN THE FIRST ONE, BUT ENDING
WITH HAMLET GAINING ANOTHER HIT ON
LAERTES. HAMLET II IS DL, LAERTES DR.)

(THE QUEEN RISES)

QUEEN

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows.

(HAMLET II CROSSES TO QUEEN, FACING UR,
AND PERMITS HER TO WIPE HIS FOREHEAD AS
THE KING RISES AND DESCENDS STAIRS TO
PLATFORM B. LAERTES CROSSES DR TO THE
KING. THE QUEEN THEN TURNS TO GO, AND
ON THE STEP BETWEEN C AND D, TAKES UP
THE CUP HAMLET II HAD PLACED AT EDGE
OF PLATFORM C. SHE TAKES THE CUP AND
DRINKS. THE KING, CONFERRING QUIETLY
DR WITH LAERTES, SEES THIS TOO LATE.)

The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet!

HAMLET II (BOWING IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT)

Good Madam!

KING (SUDDENLY, LOUD)

Gertrude, do not drink!

QUEEN

I will, my lord; I pray you pardon me.

HAMLET III (AS QUEEN)

I pray you pardon me.

KING (ASIDE TO LAERTES)

It is the poisoned cup; it is too late. (THE QUEEN OFFERS THE CUP TO HAMLET)

HAMLET II

I dare not drink yet, madam -- by and by.

HAMLET III (AS QUEEN)

And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

QUEEN (CROSSING D TO II, ON RAKE)

Come, let me wipe thy face.

LAERTES (TO KING)

My lord, I'll hit him now.

KING

I do not think't.

HAMLET I (AS KING)

I do not think't.

LAERTES

And yet it is almost against my conscience. (THE QUEEN HAS FINISHED WITH II, AND
CROSSES BACK US)

HAMLET I (AS KING)

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?

HAMLET II (CROSSING DL)

Come for the third, Laertes. You do but dally.
I pray you pass with your best violence.

(THE KING RETURNS TO PLATFORM C)

HAMLET I

I am sure you make a wanton of me.

HAMLET II

Wanton of me.

LAERTES

Say you so? Come on.

(THEY PLAY A SHORT VIOLENT BOUT IN WHICH
THERE ARE NO HITS. LAERTES ENDS DR, HAM-
LET IS C.)

OSRIC (STEPPING ONTO RAKE, THEN RETURNS)

Nothing either way.

(HAMLET II TURNS HIS BACK ON LAERTES AND
CROSSES U TO PLATFORM D TO SPEAK WITH
HORATIO. BEFORE HAMLET CAN REACH HORATIO,
HOWEVER, LAERTES HAS STEPPED FORWARD WITH-
IN SWORD'S REACH OF HAMLET.)

LAERTES

Have at you now!

KING

Part them. They are Incensed!

HAMLET II

Nay, come -- again!

OSRIC

Look to the Queen there, ho!

HORATIO (URC, WITH HAMLET II)

They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?

OSRIC (DLC, WITH LAERTES)

How is't, Laertes?

(LAERTES LUNGES FORWARD AND CUTS HAMLET ON THE ARM. A HUSH FALLS OVER THE COURT. HAMLET II GRASPS HIS ARM AND TURNS TO FACE LAERTES. THEY FALL TO FIGHTING FURIOUSLY, BUT EMPLOYING SABRE TACTICS, HAMLET II WRESTS LAERTES' FOIL FROM HIM AND LOOKS CLOSELY AT THE POINT. FINDING NO BATE ON THE POINT, HAMLET THROWS LAERTES HIS OWN BATED SWORD. THE FIGHTING THEN RESUMES IN EARNEST: IN SWASHBUCKLING FASHION, LAERTES PURSUES HAMLET ACROSS THE RAKE TO PLATFORM B, AND UP THE STAIRS TO PLATFORM C. ONCE AGAIN ON THE RAKE, LAERTES IS LEAPED UPON BY HAMLET II FROM THE HEIGHT OF PLATFORM C. HAMLET II RECOVERS THE ADVANTAGE, AND ON A FEINT RUNS LAERTES THROUGH. LAERTES FALLS DLC; HAMLET IS UR OF HIM. OSRIC IMMEDIATELY CROSSES TO LAERTES, HORATIO TO HAMLET II.)

(UC, AT EDGE OF STEP BETWEEN PLATFORMS C AND D, THE QUEEN GASPS AND FALLS. III IS UP THE RAKE AND TO HER ALMOST AS SHE HITS THE GROUND. PROP GIRLS RUSH TO HER ALSO, BUT ARE WAVED BACK BY HAMLET III. THERE IS AGITATED MOVEMENT AND LOUD MURMURING AMONG THE COURT. SEE FIGURE 17.)

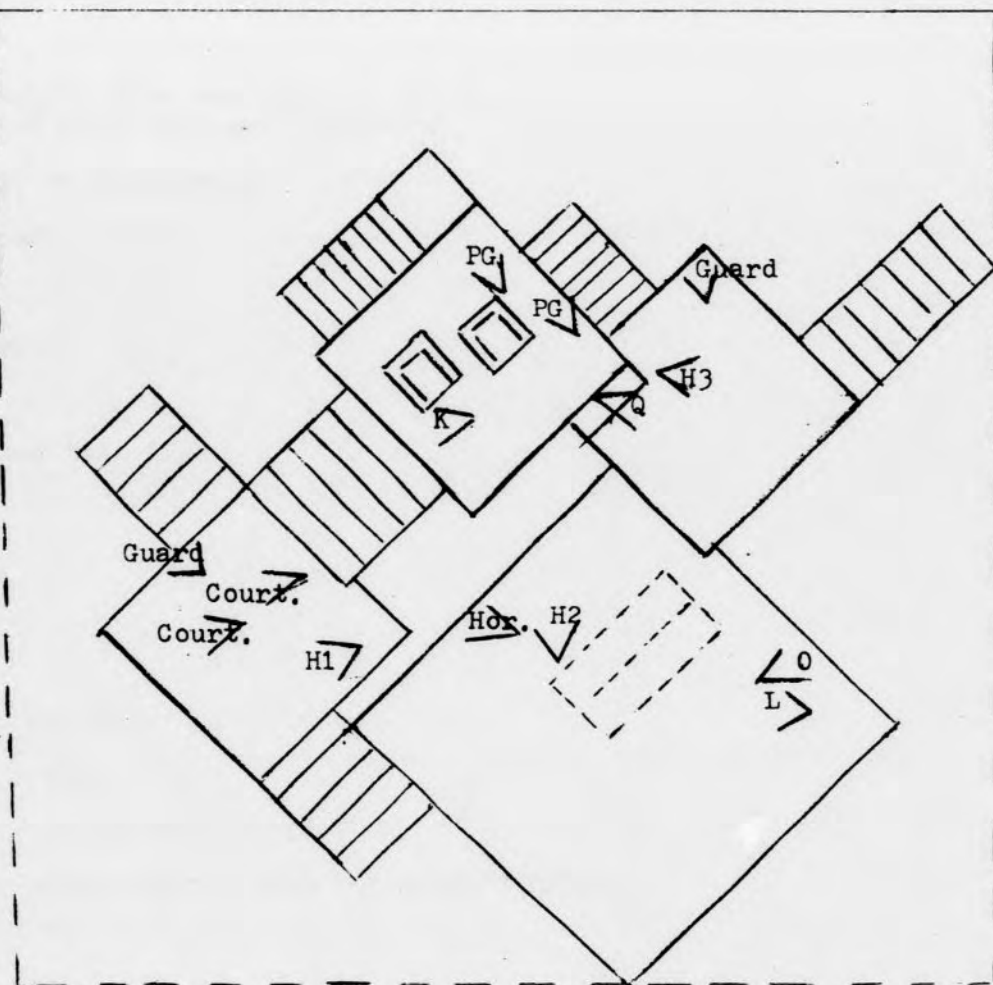


FIGURE 17

LAERTES

Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric.
I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

HAMLET I (AT EDGE OF PLATFORM B)

How does the Queen?

HAMLET II

How does the Queen?

KING (UP)

She swounds to see them bleed.

QUEEN

No, no!

HAMLET III

No, no!

QUEEN (GRASPING THE CUP)

The drink, the drink!

HAMLET III (WITH SUDDEN REALIZATION)

The drink! (III TAKES THE CUP FROM THE QUEEN'S HANDS)

QUEEN

O my dear Hamlet!

The drink, the drink! I am poisoned!

(THE QUEEN DIES IN THE ARMS OF HAMLET III)

HAMLET I (ON PLATFORM B)

Villainy! Ho! Let the door be locked.
Treachery! Seek it out.

LAERTES

It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenomed. The foul practice
Hath turned itself on me. Lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poisoned.
I can no more. The King, the King's to blame.

HAMLET II

The point envenomed too?
Then, venom, to thy work.

HAMLET I

Treason! Treason!

KING (STAGGERING ONTO B, AND UP STAIRS TO C)

O, yet defend me, friends! I am but hurt.

HAMLET III (UC ON D, CROSSES TO C)

Here, thou incestuous, murdr'ous, damned Dane!

HAMLET I

Drink off this potion. Is thy onion here?

(THE COURT ERUPTS INTO NOISE AS ALL
RUN FOR THE NEAREST EXIT. EXEUNT ALL
BUT KING, QUEEN, HAMLETS, LAERTES,
AND HORATIO.)

(HAMLET II AND HORATIO CROSS TO THE
DYING LAERTES. AS LAERTES SPEAKS,
THE KING CROSSES D, ACROSS B, AND
ONTO RAKE TOWARDS LAERTES TO SILENCE
HIM.)

(SEEING THE KING, HAMLET II ADVANCES
ON HIM, BACKING THE KING INTO THE DR
CORNER OF THE RAKE WHERE HE IS RUN
THROUGH BY HAMLET.)

(THE KING FALLS AT THE FOOT OF HIS
THRONE. HAMLET III CROSSES TO HIM
WITH THE CUP OF POISON. I JOINS III
OVER THE KING. I PULLS THE KING UP
AND HOLDS HIS HEAD AS III POURS
LIQUID FROM THE CUP DOWN THE KING'S
THROAT. HAMLET I TAKES THE CUP.)

HAMLET II (C ON RAKE)

Follow my mother.

LAERTES

He is justly served.
It is a poison tempered by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet.
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me!

HAMLET I

Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio.

HAMLET II (CLEARLY AND SIMPLY)

To die, to sleep --
No more -- and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to! 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished.

HAMLET III (CROSSES TO L EDGE OF C, OVER QUEEN)

Wretched Queen, adieu!
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes of audience to this act;
Had I but time (as this fell sergeant, Death
Is strict in his arrest) O, I could tell you --
But let it be.

(SEE FIGURE 18)

(THE KING STRUGGLES TO HIS FEET,
HALF-STAGGERS AND HALF-FALLS D
STEPS TO PLATFORM B, AND THERE
FALLS FIRST TO HIS KNEES AND THEN
SPRAWLS FORWARD ON HIS FACE, DEAD.
HAMLET II CROSSES TO LAERTES, WHO
FORCES HIMSELF UP ON ONE ARM.

(LAERTES GENTLY PULLS THE FADING
HAMLET D TO HIM; HAMLET PROPS HIM-
SELF UP WITH LAERTES' HEAD IN HIS
LAP. LAERTES DIES IN HAMLET'S ARMS.

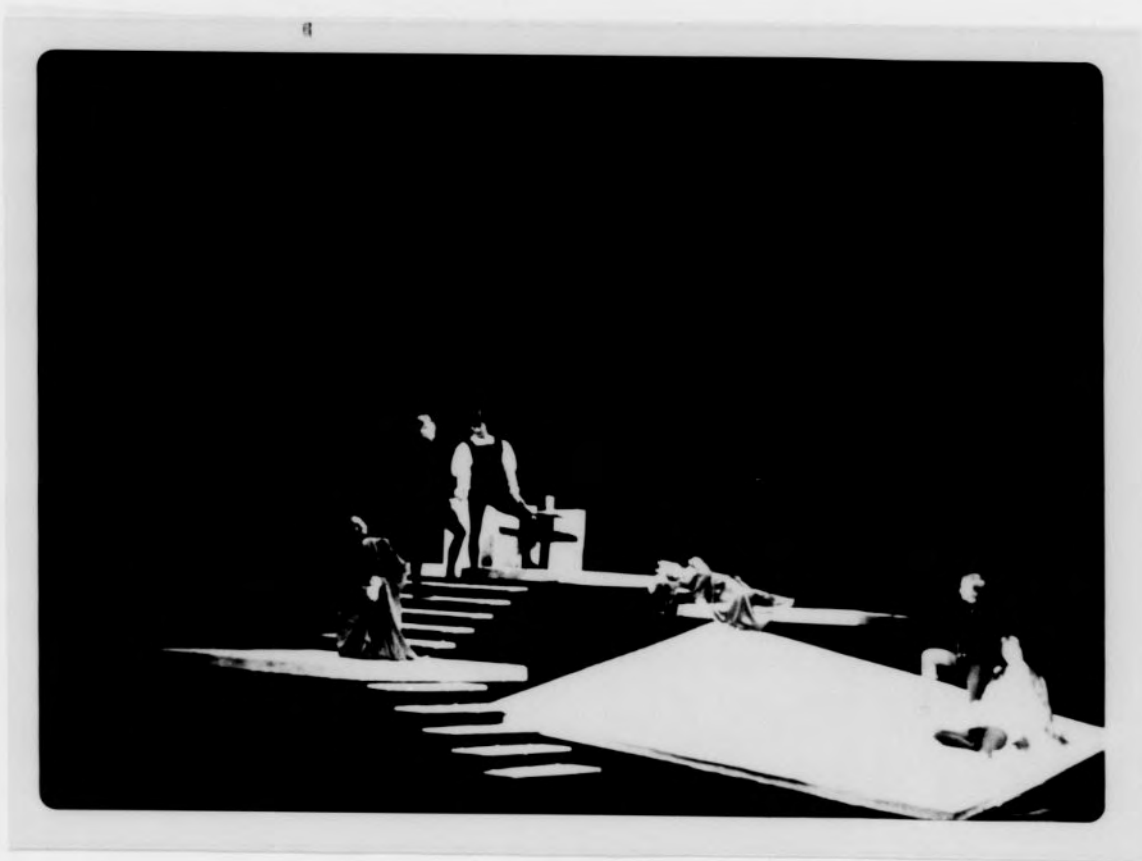


FIGURE 18

HAMLET I (CROSSING TO RC ON RAKE)

Horatio, I am dead;
Thou livest, report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

HORATIO (LC BY HAMLET II; CROSSES TO I)

Never believe it.
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
Here's yet some liquor left.

(HORATIO WRESTS THE CUP FROM HAMLET
I AND TRIES TO DRINK)

HAMLET I

As thou art a man,
Give me the cup. Let go. By heaven, I'll ha't!
O God, Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown shall live behind me!

(THEY STRUGGLE OVER THE CUP, BUT
HAMLET RETAINS POSSESSION. HE FALLS.)

HAMLET II

To die, to sleep --
To sleep -- perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub,
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause.

HAMLET III (CROSSES D ONTO RAKE, UL OF HORATIO)

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.

HAMLET I

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love; the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin?

HAMLET III

What warlike noise is this?

OSRIC (OFF, R)

Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland
To th' ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Oooooo, I die, Horatio.

HAMLET II

The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit.
I cannot live to hear the news from England,
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras. He has my dying voice.
So tell him, with th' occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited.

(MARTIAL SOUNDING DRUM ROLLS ARE
HEARD OFF R. HORATIO CROSSES DR OFF
RAKE TO SEE.)

(HORATIO NOW TURNS US TO FACE THE
THREE HAMLETS. THE HAMLETS, STANDING,
ARE DR OF C. HORATIO KNEELS IN FRONT
OF THEM, LENDING A SUPPORTING HAND
TO HAMLETS I AND II. III IS BETWEEN
I AND II. HORATIO'S BACK IS TO THE
AUDIENCE. MUSIC FADES.)

HAMLET III

Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will.

HORATIO

Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet Prince.
Good night, sweet Prince.

Good night, sweet Prince,
And flights of angels wing thee to thy rest.

HAMLET I

To be, or not to be: that is the question.

HORATIO (WHISPERING)

Good night . . .

POLONIOUS

The best actors in the world, either for tragedy-comedy, comedy-tragedy.

HAMLET II

(HAMLETS SLOWLY RELEASE HORATIO'S
ARMS AND TURN TO FACE US. HORATIO
RISES AND TURNS TO AUDIENCE

(THE KING, THE QUEEN, AND LAERTES
SLOWLY RISE AND CROSS TO PLATFORM C.
KING AND QUEEN TAKE POSITIONS C ON
PLATFORM C; LAERTES IS ON STEP BE-
TWEEN C AND D. POLONIOUS AND OPHELIA
APPEAR AT REAR OF PLATFORM D AND
STAND C. ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN
APPEAR AT REAR OF PLATFORM B AND ALSO
STAND C. HORATIO CROSSES TO STAIRS
LEADING TO B, AND TAKES POSITION
THERE ON SECOND STEP AS HAMLETS
SLOWLY TURN AROUND TO FACE AUDIENCE.
SEE FIGURE 19.)

(HAMLETS BEGIN TO BACK DIRECTLY US)

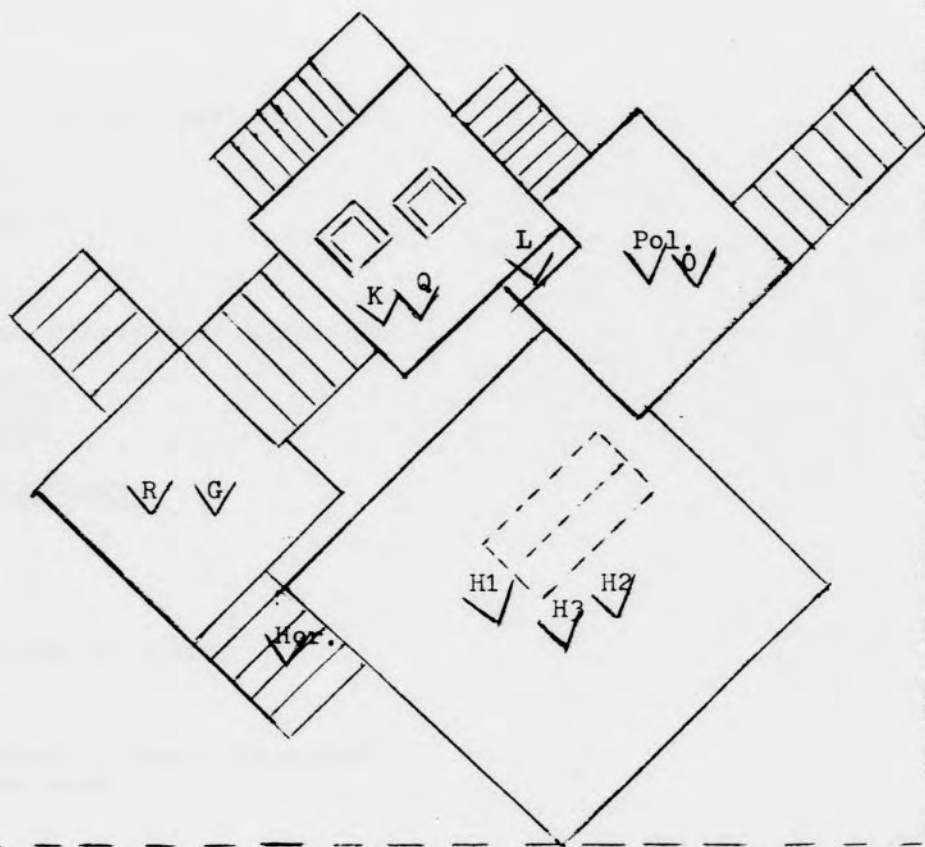


FIGURE 19

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer.

HORATIO (WHISPERING)

Sweet Prince.

QUEEN

O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

KING

O, my offense is rank.

HAMLET III

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

HORATIO (WHISPERING)

And flights of angels . . .

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN

We were sent for.

LAERTES

And therefore, I forbid my tears.

HAMLET I

Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing, end them.

HORATIO (WHISPERING)

Sing thee to thy rest.

OPHELIA

O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown.

HAMLETS I, II AND III

Adieu, adieu -- remember me.

HORATIO

Good night, sweet Prince.
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

(HAMLETS RAISE THEIR HANDS IN FARE-
WELL, ALMOST IN BENEDICTION. LIGHTS
CROSS-FADE ON SLOW FIVE-COUNT WITH
PROJECTION COMING UP ON THE RAKE.
THE PROJECTION IS A BUST OF HAMLET:
THE REPRESENTATIVE AND ETERNAL
HAMLET WHO EXISTS IN US ALL.)

LIGHTS GO TO DARK AS PROJECTION COMES UP FULLY ON THE RAKE. ACTORS EXIT IN THE DARK.
WHEN THE STAGE IS CLEAR, THE PROJECTION IS FADED ON FIVE-COUNT. HOUSE AND CYC LIGHTS
COME UP ON THREE-COUNT WITH MUSIC. MUSIC IS PLAYED TO ITS CONCLUSION AT HALF VOLUME.

FINIS.

CRITICAL EVALUATION

CRITICAL EVALUATION

CHAPTER THREE:

CRITICAL EVALUATION

Wickham, "The World's Most Difficultly Readable,"
 The Challenge Magazine, Jan. 1979, p. 10.

1979.

CRITICAL EVALUATION

Audience Reaction

Audience reaction to Hamlet ESP tended to be not so much mixed as divided--favorable towards the production and critical of the adaptation. Some felt that Shakespeare was ill served by Baker's tampering with the Bard, while others simply felt that nothing was gained from it. Dick Banks, of The Charlotte Observer wrote that "by intensifying the vividness of Hamlet, the strength of the other characters is diminished. And the magnificence of Shakespeare's dramatic proportions goes down the drain."⁸ But Mr. Banks earlier admitted that "taking Shakespeare's superb lines out of their all-too familiar context and presenting them in a new way tends to restore their power and depth of meaning."⁹ Similarly, Pam Smith writing in The Carolinian, described Hamlet ESP as a "dubious" script, citing difficulties in identifying the various aspects of the divided Hamlet, and in determining which of Hamlet's actions were real and which imaginary, but went on to praise Baker's juxtaposition of scenes and concluded by saying: "Hamlet ESP should not be missed. It provides a genuine challenge, a sort of dramatic

⁸Dick Banks, "Triplicate Hamlet Definitely Far-Out," The Charlotte Observer, June 21, 1974, p. 6D.

⁹Ibid.

anagram, especially for Shakespearean students."¹⁰

Joe Knox of the Greensboro Daily News had fewest reservations about the adaptation, calling it "undiluted:" "The meat of them (the lines) is intact, and the force of them is powerful."¹¹ But it was W.C. Burton of the Greensboro Record who summed up the consensus:

I am not fully persuaded that Baker served Shakespeare particularly well by making Hamlet triplets, but the results are interesting, often theatrically, and even more often poetically compelling.¹²

Critical response to the performance, however, was generally laudatory; the Greensboro Daily News calling it "truly masterful" and "excellent theatre."¹³ The three Hamlets were singled out for their performances, alternately described as "excellent" and "superb," with the Greensboro Record going so far as to make favorable comparison with Evans and Gielgud in the instance of one Hamlet.¹⁴ The Carolinian ranked their performances "among the finest that have been seen on the UNC-G stage."¹⁵

¹⁰Pam Smith, "'Hamlet ESP' Succeeds In Spite of Dubious Script," The Carolinian, June, 1974, p. 3.

¹¹Joe Knox, "UNC-G's 'Hamlet ESP' Is Masterful, Undiluted Adaptation," Greensboro Daily News, June 21, 1974, p. A16.

¹²W.C. Burton, "'Hamlet' Casting Superb," Greensboro Record, June 21, 1974, p. 5D.

¹³Knox, p. A16.

¹⁴Burton, p. 5D.

¹⁵Smith, p. 3.

The cast, as a whole, received substantial praise from a majority of the newspaper reviewers, with particular mention made of their effectiveness in the crucial area of language:

It is a rare pleasure to hear Shakespeare spoken as well as this company does it....There is surely evidence of careful, intelligent and effective speech coaching on the part of Director Fowlkes in Hamlet ESP...¹⁶

Audiences, albeit smaller than hoped for, were responsive and quite appreciative. Older members of the audience, those comfortable with unadulterated Shakespeare, staunchly maintained that "Hamlet" need not be adapted, yet nevertheless took new pleasure in dissecting the now expanded personality and enigma of Hamlet. And younger people expressed the opinion that this production was at once more compelling and palatable than a traditional staging of "Hamlet." In proof of this, there were those who returned for a second, and even a third performance, bringing new friends on each occasion.

Mention might also be made of the fact that in the audience were many who do not make their home in Greensboro; educational and community theatre people from around the state as well as students and teachers of Shakespeare who were drawn either by the reputation of Paul Baker and his play, or the desire to glean whatever insight or elucidation on "Hamlet" that the play or its production might afford.

¹⁶Burton, p. 5D.

Most of these were well pleased with the production and highly complimentary of the acting, staging, and technical achievements. Ironically, Dick Banks was lured all the way from Charlotte to review this unique work, only to declare it " ...too esoteric for the run-of-the-mill showgoer."¹⁷

That the play has value and appeal for students of drama and Shakespeare did not go unnoticed by the press. Even Mr. Banks acknowledged that the work " ...is a great training piece for drama students."¹⁸ And others responded in like fashion: " ...a rare opportunity for playgoers and students of Shakespeare...Anyone who has studied Hamlet should be attracted by this fine production"¹⁹ and " ...especially for Shakespearean students."²⁰ All of which leads to the conclusion that, while thoroughly justified for Summer Repertory, the play might have enjoyed greater popular success if produced during the regular season when it could benefit from the attention and support of the academic community.

Technical Considerations

With the director doubling as designer, the usual pressures surrounding summer repertory production seemed

¹⁷Banks, p. 6D.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Knox, p. 16A.

²⁰Smith, p. 3.

especially great. Knowing that the director/designer's time would be sorely divided, and all too aware of his lack of expertise in the area of construction, much of the responsibility for the implementation of the set design was delegated to the Technical Director--with his full consent.

One of these responsibilities was to devise a method whereby the 14-foot square rake and its surrounding platforms might be made portable. Another was to provide an alternative to flying the second act arch unit, in the absence of suitable or convenient fly-lines. The result in each case was unsatisfactory. Efforts to mobilize the rake proved futile, and in the end, the cast and crew, before and after each night's performance, were commandeered to manhandle the rake and platform units into position. Similarly, it remained for the stage crew to lift and carry the second act arch unit into place; no small feat considering that the Technical Director elected to construct it, not with flat-tag with thicknesses on the sides, but of two-by-fours and gypsum board. In the face of already awesome demands on their time and energies, these practices served only to undermine the morale of cast and crew.

Especially disappointing to the Designer was the substitution of white scrim as cyc for the black scrim called for in the design. Given to understand from the outset that a black scrim was available, the set was con-

ceived of as a series of encrusted metallic platforms floating before a black scrim. It was subsequently learned that the only existing black scrim had been cut and painted for use in another production, and that a replacement was not available either to rent or to borrow. Thus the floating effect was diminished, and much of the visual impact of richly costumed figures moving in relief against the darker background was lost.

Efforts to use sound, or rather amplification, to augment the auditory patterning of the show were also largely thwarted by technical limitations. It was the director's intent to implement five microphones, three of which were to be mobile, on or about the set in order to differentiate, through the use of amplified sound, between what was transpiring in fact, and what in Hamlet's fancy. The actual, ongoing action of Shakespeare's play was to be done entirely without amplification, while all mental activity--including soliloquies (which are, after all, conversations with one's self), flash-backs, premonitions, memories, and Hamlet's fertile imaginings--was to be amplified for the audience. It was thought that this procedure might afford some clarity in questionable areas of the script and provide some unusual opportunities for the dramatic use of sound.

The major requirements for this procedure were five hand-held microphones, sufficient cord to traverse the stage, and amplifiers with controls which would permit the

independent operation of each microphone. With some finagling, all of the necessary equipment was obtained. The only other foreseeable problem was the use and handling of the microphones by the actors while on stage, a situation provided for in pre-production planning and incorporated into the blocking. Throughout rehearsals this was accepted as an integral part of the production concept, and posed no real problems for actors or director.

Unfortunately, the operation of the equipment involved proved to be too much for the sound technician. Despite the fact that this technician was strategically located just off-stage so that he might have a full view of the stage and everyone on it, and in particular all that transpired regarding the microphones, he insisted on receiving both "warn" and "go" cues from the stage manager for every simple operation of his equipment. Failing to receive one or the other, he refused to activate the microphones--even when he could clearly see a character on stage speaking into a dead microphone.

His simple refusal to take sight cues persisted through dress rehearsals and the first week of performances, and resulted in delayed sound or no sound at all. This, in turn, produced tremendous anxiety, frustration, and even anger among the cast. When it became apparent that co-operation was not forthcoming, and that the lack of it was damaging the over-all effectiveness of the show, the entire concept was regretfully scrapped.

The use of projections was employed by the Director as visible re-inforcement, and enhancement, of the stream-of-consciousness nature of the script, providing visual counter-point to Hamlet's spoken and imagined fancies, memories, and images. As originally conceived, the concept called for the use of film, delayed video projections, and rear projections to heighten emotional climaxes, underline motivation, and illuminate subtext. Anxious to pursue the possibilities, contact was made first with the University's Department of Radio and Television, and subsequently with all of the local television stations, with much the same results: no one had video projectors, and in any event assured us that the cost would be prohibitive.

Film remained the only viable alternative, but after careful consideration of the time and expense involved, the decision was made to forego the use of film and to strive for much the same effect through the use of slides. The slides which were made, when properly used, were essentially effective, though not nearly so all-encompassing.

Again, the problems which evolved stemmed not from the concept itself, or the feasibility of its use, but rather from human error. The projectionist, unlike the sound technician, made every effort to comply with the Director's wishes, but still experienced some difficulties. In a series, the timing was often off, and although the slides were placed in the projectors in sequential order,

the wrong slides would sometimes appear--only to be hastily backed up or pushed forward in search of the correct one, and all in full view of the audience. Every effort was made to rectify this situation, short of replacing the projectionist, but right up to the last performance, a problem remained. Thus an idea designed to provide clarity and illumination, on occasion, unfortunately, served only to cloud and confuse.

The costumes were largely successful. Pulled for the most part from existing stock, re-built, fitted, and dyed, they nonetheless achieved a unity of style, line, and fabric, well suited to this production. The cod-pieces, which proved a distraction for some, were inspired by those used by American Conservatory Theatre in their distinctive staging of "The Taming of the Shrew." The Director cum Designer provided the Costumer with photographs from this production for use as models, only to view with some chagrin the end result. Had he the time to oversee every detail of construction, or the expertise to provide more explicit instructions and patterning--as should the designer--this excess might have been avoided. However, not finding them offensive, and inasmuch as they were all completed, the decision was made to let them pass. The director/designer assumes full responsibility.

Ophelia's costume also bothered some, and again the responsibility falls to the director/designer. Because

Ophelia is, in the Director's eye and Hamlet's mind, a floating, evanescent character, more symbolic than real, the decision was made to vary from the heavy velvets used in almost every other costume and to dress her in lightweight material which would flow with her body movements, and seem to "float." Of the same, or similar, material were the handkerchief, scarf, cape, train, and shroud which we associate with her, and through which she progressed on her way to "muddy death." Her costume was deliberately too short, and too young, to re-inforce Hamlet's image of her as a young woman locked in her childhood, and to permit the balletic movement the Director desired of her.

Happily, thanks to bright and talented lighting technicians, lighting design and execution were everything the director/designer wished for. Confession must be made, however, that in the press of readying other aspects of the show for opening night, a detailed lighting plot was not completed, and the director/designer spent opening night in the lighting booth giving cues to his crew.

The Acting

Auditions for Hamlet ESP were held both at UNC-G and the Southeastern Theatre Conference. Unfortunately, the Director was unable to attend the conference, and thus could not personally consider those persons auditioning there. As a result, although the majority of the cast were

students familiar to the Director, a number of principals were cast sight-unseen--including two of the leading Hamlets. The dancing, female Polonious, first cast with a UNC-G actress admired by the Director and well suited to his conception of the role, was later entrusted to another of the unknown Southeastern Theatre Conference auditionees. Others, principals in the other half of the repertory season whom we were obligated to use, made some of the casting less than ideal. That they were, for the most part, so successful in realizing their characters and adapting to the Director's needs and desires, is a credit to their generally high level of ability.

It is interesting to note, however, that as a whole, the UNC-G students surpassed all others in their professionalism, and dedication to their work. Well prepared, quick studies, and eager to work for the highest possible level of achievement, UNC-G students provided a vivid contrast with those hired from outside who came to rehearsals woefully unprepared (one Hamlet admitting after the first few rehearsals that he still had not read the entire script), who were painfully slow in committing their parts to memory, and who were unwilling to exert more than the minimum required effort in rehearsals. On those occasions when rehearsals ran past the appointed hour, a certain few would cease any resemblance of cooperation and merely walk robot-like through their lines, loudly reminding the Director

that "Equity" required their working only so many hours per day, or that they were not paid for overtime.

This problem was not unique to Hamlet ESP, but existed as part of an organised resistance on the part of those who felt that the summer repertory schedule was too demanding and ought to be curtailed. As it was, some valuable rehearsal time was freed for the personal use of the acting company.

It goes without saying that relations were somewhat strained by these events, but as it rested primarily with a few and was tempered with patience, efforts to mediate, and a sincere attempt to use rehearsal time wisely and well, no real damage was evidenced in the production.

As always in summer repertory, time proved to be an unwavering tyrant--acutely so for a production of this nature. Admittedly longer and more complex than usual summer fare, the show demanded much of its actors in terms of language, movement, and sheer volume of lines to be learned. Hamlet II and Laertes had the additional burden of having to learn how to fence on their own time. With energies divided between this and another show, three weeks seemed scarcely enough time to bring the show to performance level.

The first few performances suffered from lingering insecurities with lines, and sluggish pacing. Some cuts were made after opening, but real improvement was only a

matter of time. As the cast acquired confidence, pacing quite naturally improved and the show developed a momentum all its own. That the critics, viewing opening night's performance with all its problems, still found so much good to say about it was immensely gratifying.

Individual performances were varied, but the Director was generally well pleased. The three Hamlets were particularly effective, and worked well together. That all three were more than adequate as actors is not to be questioned. One, however, deserves mention for his singular lack of professionalism, his truculence, and his intractability. Rehearsals with him were a trial, and due to the fact that he was the uncrowned head of a faction within the cast from the same home-school (University of Virginia), his attitude and behavior were contagious. That he was the instigator of the resistance to the established work schedule should come as no surprise. He was a demoralizing influence on the cast, and in the Director's opinion, a marked liability to the show and to the season.

The actress who was hired for Polonious on the basis of her Southeastern Theatre Conference audition, had the range to play the older man's role, but unfortunately was no dancer. The entire concept of the character revolved around vaudeville-like exaggeration of movement, and the ability to literally dance out the rhythm of her lines. This actress, with all due respect to her acting ability,

was simply not equipped to meet the demands of the Director's original conception of the role. As she was hired specifically for this role, and had only a small part in the other half of the season, we were obligated to use her. Adapted for this actress, the role was but a shadow of its original conception, and yet we still worked to retain as much movement as possible--capitalizing where possible on her very awkwardness. Unfortunately, even this was eventually denied us, as less than half way through the run, the actress sustained a broken ankle while helping to move the would-be-portable rake. What remained, thereafter, was a young woman hobbling through a man's character role.

The Director was not unhappy with the portrayal of Gertrude, but all too aware of her chronological and vocal immaturity. For her age and experience, the actress portraying Gertrude did a fine job. But opposite an older man portraying Claudius, who the Director thought should be Gertrude's junior and not vice versa, the illusion did not carry.

The entire cast was successful in mastering Shakespeare's language and making it intelligible for the general audience--a primary objective for this director. They looked and moved well, related well one to another, and for the most part succeeded admirably in their roles.

Conclusion

Perhaps too large an undertaking for summer repertory, and perhaps not quite the multi-media event originally envisioned, Hamlet ESP was nonetheless a distinctive production marked by outstanding performances, unusual staging and technical achievements, and warm critical and audience response. The Director feels that the result was a theatrically rich and emotionally vivid experience for participants and audiences alike; one which served to illuminate and enhance the greatness of Shakespeare's original. It is hoped that Hamlet ESP will be remembered, not as a distortion of "Hamlet," but as an echo that will long reverberate in the mind of its audiences.

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APPENDIX

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SUMMER

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