

Shakespeare Videography (available in Sawyer Library)

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The videos for each play are listed in the order of my preference. I've included a few notes, mostly to remind myself what I liked or didn't like. I would be happy to receive any comments *you* have on any of the versions you watch. Just send them to me by e-mail. **Videos marked with * are on 2-hour reserve in the library and may not leave the building.**

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

- PR 2827 ***Live performance in NYC Central Park 1982.** Prod. Joseph Papp. Dir.
A2 P361 James Lapine. With William Hurt. Modern-ish garb. Very hostile and
1988 suspicious Hippolyta. Best and fullest representation of text. (165 min)
- PN 1997 **1935 motion picture.** Big on music, choreography, and special effects to make
M547 dazzling scenes of fairy spectacle. Cuts the text drastically and takes many
1984 many liberties, but it's a lavish romp with some surprisingly modern insights
 into the darker comedy. With James Cagney, Joe E. Brown, Dick Powell, Jean
 Muir, Olivia de Haviland, and a very young Mickey Rooney as Puck. (117 min)
- PR2827 **1999 motion picture.** Kevin Kline, Michelle Pfeiffer. Gives Bottom a wife
A23 H64 and makes him too much of an idealistic dreamer, but otherwise lots of fun.
1999
- PR 2827 **BBC television production from 1960's (b&w).** Very amorous Theseus and
A2 R95 Hippolyta. Mendelssohn music for fairies. Classical garb. (111 min)
1984
- PR 2827 **1968 movie by Royal Shakespeare Company.** Dir. Peter Hall, with Diana
A2H35 Rigg, Ian Richardson, Judi Dench. Somewhat oppressive production. Fairies
1993 look like diabolical swamp children. Woods not an escape into license but into
 nightmare. (124 min)

HENRY IV, PART I

- PR 2803 ***BBC television production 1970s.** Prod. Cedric Messina. Dir. David Giles.
A2 R65 With Jon Finch, Anthony Quayle, David Gwillim. Period costumes.
1989 Relationship between Hal and Falstaff fairly dark and negative rather than
 comic and farcical. (153 min)
- PR 2810 **Live performance by English Theatre Company at Swanse (England) ca**
A2 E55 **1988.** Dir. Michael Bogdanov and Michael Pennington, with Pennington as
1994 Hal. Library seems to have three or four versions of this with different call
also numbers. Modern military dress. Hotspur is a shaved-head Cockney
A2 E74 punk in a bandana. Takes enormous liberties with text--e.g. substitutes for
1990 Henry's opening contrast of Hotspur and Hal a diatribe about the *effete* Hal (!!!).
 (172 min)

AS YOU LIKE IT

- PR 2803 ***Stratford Festival Canada—live performance 1986.** Prod. Sam Levene,
A2 R65 dir. Herb Roland, with Roberta Maxwell, Andrew Gillies, Rosemary Dunsmore,
1986 Nicholas Pennell. Modern-ish garb. Spirited and energetic. Especially good on
 relationship between Celia and Rosalind, and stylized ritual of ending. Very

much a fairy tale—wicked wear black, good wear light colors. Great music. (158 min)

PR 2803
A2 B33
1986 **BBC television production 1978.** Prod. Cedric Messina, dir. Basil Coleman, with Helen Mirren, Brian Stirner, Richard Pasco, Angharad Rees, James Bolam. Period costumes, music, settings. A lovely and conscientious performance that somehow never comes to life. Good for showing the artificiality of women in the court vs. their freedom in the woods. (150 min)

PR 2803
A2 C95
1984 **1936 motion picture (b&w).** Prod. And dir. Paul Czinner, with Laurence Olivier, Elisabeth Bergner, Sophie Stewart, Felix Aylmer, Leon Quartermaine, Henry Ainley. Has lots going for it. (97 min)

TWELFTH NIGHT

PR 2837
A2 N86
1997 ***1996 movie dir. Trevor Nunn.** With Helena Bonham Carter, Richard E. Grant, Nigel Hawthorne, Mel Smith, Toby Stephens, Imogen Stubbs, and Ben Kingsley as a wonderful Feste. Modern-ish dress. Takes lots of liberties in re-arranging, juxtaposing, and even inventing scenes, but it's got the spirit of the comedy just right, and captures the whole range of complex emotions from giddy hilarity to bittersweet nostalgia to dark anger and desperation. (133 min)

PR 2837
A2 R47
1989 **1990 stage performance dir. Kenneth Branagh.** Renaissance Theatre Company, with Richard Briers, Frances Barber, Caroline Langrishe, Christopher Ravenscroft, James Saxon. Musical contributions by Paul McCartney. Modern-ish dress. Shot in tones of blue/white/gray. Most scenes take place outdoors in a bleak, snowy, desolate, crumbling courtyard. This is a very dark and cold version of the play. (165 min)

PR 2837
A23 T84
1987 **BBC television production 1979.** Prod. Cedric Messina, dir. John Gorrie, with Alec McCowen, Robert Hardy, Felicity Kendal, Sinead Cusack, Trevor Peacock, Clive Arrindell. (128 min)

HAMLET

PR 2807
A23 B73
1997 ***1996 movie by Kenneth Branagh.** With Branagh as Hamlet, Julie Christie, Gerard Depardieu, Charlton Heston, Derek Jacobi, Jack Lemmon, Billy Crystal, Robin Williams, Kate Winslet. Stunning attention to nuance and detail. Hands down the best *Hamlet*, and possibly the best Shakespeare I have seen—**but LONG.** (242 min)

PR 2807
A2 Z44
1989 ***1990 movie by Franco Zeffirelli.** Mel Gibson as Hamlet, with Glenn Close, Helena Bonham Carter, Alan Bests, Paul Scofield, Ian Holm. Takes many liberties both with the order of scenes and their content. Omits Hamlet's conversation with the actor and Priam's speech about Pyrrhus. *Very* sexual scene between Hamlet and Gertrude. Superb graveyard scene. Lush realistic settings. (135 min)

PR 2807
A23 R53
1988 **1988 movie by Tony Richardson.** Nicol Williamson as an older Hamlet, Anthony Hopkins, Marianne Faithfull. Ophelia is extremely sexy and sexual. Never shows ghost. Good graveyard scene. (114 min)

PR 2807
A2 B8
1995 **Film of live 1964 Broadway performance (b&w).** Dir. John Gielgud, with Richard Burton as Hamlet. Staged in a rehearsal room, modern dress. (190 min)

PN 1997
H355 **1948 movie (b&w) dir. Laurence Olivier.** Olivier as Hamlet, with Jean Simmons, Eileen Herlie, Felix Aylmer. (155 min)

1988

OTHELLO

PN 1997
O84355
1988 ***1995 movie, dir. Oliver Parker, with Laurence Fishburne as Othello,**
Kenneth Branagh as Iago, Irene Jacob as Desdemona. Takes more liberties with
text than preceding two versions, but strong powerful performances. (124 min)

PR 2829
A2 S84
1988 ***Film of 1987 Market Theatre performance dir. by Janet Suzman in**
Johannesburg, South Africa. Tony winner John Kani as Othello, Richard
Haddon Haines as Iago, Joanna Weinberg as Desdemona. A very powerful
performance. Very sexual relationship between Othello and Desdemona.
Haines's Iago is one of the more vehemently devilish and obscene. 2 copies.
(187 min)

PR 2829
A23
1995 ***Royal Shakespeare Company dir. Trevor Nunn.** BBC tv adaptation of
original stage performance. A minimalist production, almost claustrophobic in
its confinement to military barracks, conference rooms, etc., but absolutely
superb. Ian McKellan is a bitter, lower class, cynical Iago. Michael Grandages
is a stately dignified Othello. Imogen Stubbs is a spirited, strong-willed
Desdemona who seems a tragically plausible target for Iago's insinuations and
Othello's suspicions. 2 copies. (210 min)

PR 2829
A23 M45
1981 **Bard Productions, dir. Franklin Melton.** Williams Marshall, Ron Moody,
Jenny Agutter. 16th century costumes, music, and staging. Acting a bit stilted at
times, but good solid performance. (195 min)

PR 2829
A2 O45
1996 **1965 movie with Laurence Olivier as Othello,** Maggie Smith as Desdemona,
Frank Finlay as Iago. National Theatre of Great Britain, dir Stuart Burge.
Olivier in blackface is almost inevitably jarring at this point in time, but it's a
classic performance. (167 min)

PR 2829
A2 W45
1992 **1952 movie by Orson Welles (b&w).** Winner 1952 Cannes Film Festival.
More revealing about Orson Welles than Shakespeare, but beautiful and artistic
rendering of the play. (93 min)

KING LEAR

PR 2819
A23 E44
1984 ***1984 movie dir. by and starring Laurence Olivier.** Stonehenge as backdrop
conveys ancient pre-Christian time period. Olivier's Lear is frail, emotionally
needy, appealing in the beginning, and grows in depth and stature even as he is
stripped of his material accommodations and dignity. (158 min)

PR 2819
A23 B76
1971 **1971 movie (b&w) dir. Peter Brook with Paul Scofield as Lear.** Set in cold,
barren, snowy Siberia with a storm scene that looks and feels like the
apocalypse. Scofield's Lear is a fierce domineering man whose stripping down
is brutal and terrifying. (138 min)

PR 2819
A23 D38
1990 **1988 Thames television production with Patrick Magee as Lear.** (110 min).
Perfectly respectable, but nothing outstanding about this production.

PR 2819
A23 E974
1998 **Royal National Theatre production for BBC tv and WGBH Boston.** Dir.
Richard Eyre, with Ian Holm as Lear. (150 min)

PR 2819
A23 C66 **Bard productions, taped 1982.** Dir. Alan Cooke, with Mike Kellin as Lear.
16th century staging. (182 min)

1983

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

PR 2802 ***Royal Shakespeare Company, staged for television by Trevor Nunn.** Dir.
 A2 S36 Jon Scoffield, with Janet Suzman, Richard Johnson, and Star Trek's Patrick
 1993 Stewart as Enobarbus. (161 min). Not great, but there aren't a lot of choices on
 this one.

PR 2802 **Bard Productions.** Dir. Lawrence Carra, with Lynn Redgrave and Timothy
 A2 C37 Dalton. (183 min)
 1983

PR 2802 **1972 movie dir. by and starring Charlton Heston.** (160 min). Doesn't have
 A2 C37 much to do with the play—as I recall—but I may be wrong.
 1985

THE TEMPEST

PR 2833 ***Bard Productions.** Dir. Williams Woodman, with Efrem Zimbalist, Jr.,
 A2 W66 William H. Bassett, Ted Sorel. Film of live stage production. (127 min).
 1983 Again not a great production, but there aren't many other choices.

PR 2833 **Television adaptation by John Edward Friend.** Dir. George Schaefer, with
 A23 F55 Maurice Evans, Richard Burton, Roddy McDowell. Films for the Humanities.
 1983 (76 min)