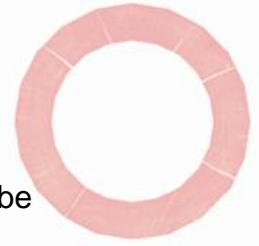


Globe Terminology

Faculty will be aided by the key terms listed below, which should be incorporated into teaching practice.



The Three A's

The relationship between the actor, the audience, and the architecture. This is our unique selling point and a term which also helps us to articulate what we mean by 'Globe Performance Practice'.

Wooden O

<https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/discover/blogs-and-features/2020/01/21/this-wooden-o-the-history-of-our-unique-shape/>

Shared Light

The roofless Globe Theatre means that, unlike modern theatre convention, the actor and the audience are in the same light.

Social Verticality

Elizabethan culture was concerned with social hierarchy and privilege. Social verticality is mirrored in the architecture and audience configuration: with groundlings paying the least and the audiences on the central and top galleries occupying the most privileged seats that cost more.

This Distracted Globe

The Globe is a 'distracted' space. It is a sentiment common to both Elizabethan audiences and attendees at the reconstructed Globe today. Our outdoor playhouse allows us to consider the disruptive, affective, and generative potential of distraction in contemporary Globe performance.

*Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!* **Hamlet**, Act 1, Scene 5

The Yard

Standing area which holds 700 people (very likely more in Shakespeare's time and it cost only 1penny to enter the Yard).

Groundlings

A groundling is a small fish with a large gaping mouth that lurks at the bottom of rivers. Hamlet alludes to standing audiences when he uses the term. In Shakespeare's time, the working citizens/classes stood in the yard.

Gentlemen's Rooms

The seating area closest to the stage in the Middle Gallery and the second most expensive place to sit in Shakespeare's time.

Lords Rooms

The two boxes on either side of what we now call the Musician's Gallery. It would have been considered the most expensive place to sit as it is positioned above and directly behind the actors; these audience members enjoyed being seen.

The Power Spot

The term used by modern Globe actors for the most powerful place on stage. The position is in front of the central double doors.

The Tiring House

Short for attiring or retiring. Actors would have used it for getting dressed into costume and for quick changes.

Heaven, Earth, and Hell

The stage canopy is called the **Heavens**. "This majestic roof, fretted with golden fire" – *Hamlet*. The gilded ribs of the Heavens divide the canopy into panels. The painted sky is adorned with the sun, the moon, signs of the zodiac and the central panel hides a trapdoor. **Earth** is the stage itself, representing human life. **Hell** is below the stage and can be accessed via the trap door – witches and ghosts would have entered from here.

Frons Scaenae

The scenic wall elaborately decorated and serves as the permanent architectural backdrop to the stage.

Trompe L'oeil

French for 'trick of the eye', which is used to describe an optical illusion. Painting architectural features to appear more expensive and classical as opposed to vernacular was a popular decorative technique in Elizabethan England. The main pillars, for example, are two hollowed out oak trees painted to look like marble.

The Pillars

Hold up the canopy over the stage and are 28ft high – serve as useful devices in performance as opposed to an obstruction or inconvenience.

Valley of Death

The term used by modern Globe actors for when the action gets 'stuck' between the pillars during a performance. The pillars give the illusion that this is a safe place to be due to the framing they provide. It encourages proscenium arch playing, which is dangerous, as it can exclude around a third of the audience watching.

We acknowledge and should always be mindful of the ableist language we use when describing performance practice at the Globe (e.g. 'sight lines', 'blind spot', 'standing area', etc), especially when working with any students who are D/deaf, visually impaired/blind and/or who identify as disabled.

Please reach out to the Higher Education Team if you have any questions or concerns about the above.

Quick Facts

These 'facts' are a response to some of the most Frequently Asked Questions.

The Original Globe (1599)

- The original Globe theatre opened in 1599. The first Shakespeare play to be performed there was probably *Julius Caesar*, however, some contend that it was *Henry V* or *As You Like It*.
- The first Globe was built by Shakespeare's company known as the 'Lord Chamberlain's Men', using the dismantled fabric of James Burbage's original amphitheatre in Shoreditch called 'The Theatre'.
- On 29 June 1613, during a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, a small cannon was fired. They didn't use cannon balls, but they did use gunpowder held down by wadding. A piece of burning wadding set fire to the thatch. The theatre burned down within a few hours.

The Rebuilt Globe (1614)

- The company rebuilt the Globe in 1614 – with a tiled roof, at which point, it is believed, Shakespeare left the company, which is why the reconstructed Globe is based on the 1599 theatre. The second Globe was operated by the King's Men (the second iteration of Shakespeare's company) until it was closed down by parliamentary decree in 1642.

Historical Context

- It is thought that plays were originally performed during the day between 2 and 4pm, drawing working citizens away from their trades. This may be one reason why the City authorities were uncomfortable with commercial theatres, as well as the crowding and threat of riots.
- Bankside was a manufacturing and entertainment area populated by immigrant communities as well as English guild workers. In addition to the theatres (such as the Globe, the Rose and the Swan), there were also bear baiting arenas, cockpits, and brothels.
- Shows were announced in two ways; raising the flag on the day that a show was to happen, and three blasts of a trumpet to announce the start of the show.

Our Globe Theatre (1997)

- The third Globe theatre was founded by Sam Wanamaker and opened its doors in 1997.

- The third Globe was built from materials available in the 1590s – English green oak, lime plaster and thatch. The construction methods to build the theatre were modelled on Elizabethan practice.
- The new Globe is the first building in London to have a thatched roof since the Great Fire of 1666. We have a sprinkler system installed and the thatch has been treated with fire resistant chemicals.

Our Globe – Statistics & Facts

- The theatre can hold 1,570 people; 700 standing and the rest seated. It is expected that this was roughly half the capacity during Shakespeare's time.
- The original Globe theatre site is approximately 230 metres from the third Globe site.
- The stage is 44ft wide and 25ft deep.
- In the 16th Century there would have only been one entrance/exit for the audience. Today we have four for modern health and safety reasons.