

*On the Character of Time:
At the Crease of Theology and Drama
in Cheek by Jowl's 2016 Bam Harvey
Theater Production of The Winter's Tale*

Theater review of William Shakespeare's *The Winter Tale*. Directed by Declan Donnellan, performance by Orlando James, Edward Sayer, Natalie Radmall-Quirke, Eleanor McCloughlin, Joy Richardson, Grace Andrews, David Carr, Ryan Donaldson, Sam Woolf, Peter Moreton, Sam McArdle, Joseph Black, Guy Hughes, and Tom Cawte, BAM Harvey Theater, Brooklyn, New York, 10 Dec. 2016.

[Shakespeare's] last plays attend primarily to mortality's consequences for the human community. – Cynthia Marshall

The final plays are concerned with restoration rather than loss, with rebirth and new beginning rather than with endings and the finality of death. – John Spencer Hill

The character Time is omnipresent in Cheek by Jowl's December 2016 BAM Harvey Theater production of William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. Cheek by Jowl is an acting company based in London that specializes in Shakespeare. As part of the 2016 Next Wave Festival, Cheek by Jowl director, Declan Donnellan, and set designer, Nick Ormerod, produced *The Winter's Tale* from December 6th-11th, 2016 at the BAM Harvey Theater, an off-Broadway theatre located in Brooklyn, New York. The specific performance this paper talks about happened December 10th, 2016.

This paper examines how Donnellan reimagines Time's nature and purpose by setting Time within the context of a history of literary criticism and offers a few closing remarks about how Time in Donnellan's production explores who God is, who humans are, and how we know God, and if that is even a possibility. In its most simple form, this paper is a close reading of one ephemeral production, and it is my hope that in writing about the play, that which is fleeting might live on, if only for a little while longer.¹ Donnellan has shown literary scholars, theatre scholars, play critics, and play attendees alike how the character Time is a hermeneutic for *The Winter's Tale*. Although we can think of Time as immutable, Donnellan has not let Time remain the same. Many theatre reviews of Donnellan's newest rendition of *The Winter's Tale*, however, do not speak about Time.² Time is

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1. I would like to thank Mary Judith Dunbar for her great archival work done specifically on the past hundred years or so of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. Your book was a great source for me to continue the work you started in writing about Declan Donnellan's Maly production of *The Winter's Tale*.
 2. Molly Grogan reviews the BAM Harvey Theater production of *The Winter's Tale*, but does so through a racial critique: she argues that the play avows its subtext of "white supremacism." She critiques Donnellan's actor-driven physically nuanced acting "technique," relating it to "whole cans of paint thrown in heavy arcs that splatter on impact." She calls Cheek by Jowl's set design "scenographic minimalism," and discusses how Leontes' torment fills the sparse stage. She summarizes the final seconds of the play: "the dying stage lights linger in an almost mystical mood; they frame Leontes' joyful – or crazy – gaze as he repossesses his miraculously resurrected queen." Time escapes her critical attention.

Erik Abbott reviews the Luxembourg production of *The Winter's Tale* performed in early March of 2016. He summarizes the play's plot, and at the most in depth point of his review, he analyzes Leontes' "deranged" character in the first three acts, and "grief and regret" in the final act. The other actors and the play's setting receive a brief gloss. Time makes no appearance in his review.

Peter Kirwan reviews the dress rehearsals of *The Winter's Tale* from December of 2015 on into early January of 2016. His review hones in on Cheek by Jowl's decision to "foreground" the first three acts around "Leontes' experience." He highlights Cheek by Jowl's decision to not lead the audience on with tangible reasons for Leontes' jealousy. Instead, the audience witnesses Leontes' "fantasies of control" over his wife's and his friend's physical bodies. Time avoids his review, although "an isolated and ghostly Mamillius" who walks on stage at the play's end receives critical attention. For Kirwan, Cheek by Jowl's formula of *The Winter's Tale* is about "loss," but Time is not a factor for the death and human search for God that matures from act to act in Cheek by Jowl's production.

one of Shakespeare's most forgotten characters. But, because of Donnellan's work with *The Winter's Tale* throughout the past twenty years, Time has become a Shakespearean character of anthropological and theological weight.

Time's appearance at the beginning of *The Winter's Tale*, in what Mary Dunbar calls a "directorial invention"³, is not new to Cheek by Jowl director Declan Donnellan. Cheek by Jowl produced *The Winter's Tale* in St. Petersburg, Russia at the Maly Drama Theatre in the late 1990s, only, Time in the prologue of those performances, instead of dressing in a winter coat, dressed in the shawls of an old Russian grandmother. "[T]he production's beginning," writes Dunbar, "presented a freeze-frame tableau of Leontes' court...One figure was in motion, a kind of Grandmother Time – the babushka, with head covering, shawl, and... broom...sweeping the stage"⁴. The Maly production framed Russian cultural idiosyncrasies, while at the same time, it avoided heavy handed "didactic comments on Russia" (*Financial Times*, 25 April 1999).

Ben Brantley reviews the New York based production of *The Winter's Tale* performed at the BAM Harvey Theater. His review focuses on the "viscerally charged" displays of lustful affection and violent romping. With the mention of a brief critique aimed at the ruling classes in contemporary society, and with a few short notes on Polixenes, Hermione, Autolycus, Perdita, Mamillius, and Folorizel, the review comes to a close. Time escapes Brantley's pen.

Helen Shaw writes a sharp review of the BAM Harvey production of *The Winter's Tale*: a sharp review in terms of her keen insight and cutting commentary. Her review's most perceptive moment delivers the observation that the script of *The Winter's Tale* did not align with the actors' actions: when Leontes looks upon Hermione and speaks, "O thus she stood," Hermione is "sitting down." She bashes Donnellan's critical interpretation of *The Winter's Tale* because Leontes errs too much on the side of insanity, and leaves no room for redemption. Her review passed over any work Time performed in the production.

JK Clark's review of the BAM Harvey production of *The Winter's Tale* touches on the second opening scene – not traditionally scripted. After the lights come up and go out on Time, sitting as if cold on a bench, Leontes and Polixenes roughhouse on stage; they have no dialogue and only their guttural laughs and scuffling feet create sound. Clark's reviews borders sentimentalism at certain points: Mamillius is "innocent," the play's ending is "happy," and Leontes experiences "bursts of enthusiasm." The end of Clark's review covers Mamillius' return, but does not mention Time's role in his return.

3. Mary Judith Dunbar, *The Winter's Tale: Shakespeare in Performance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 199.

4. Dunbar, 199.

In the BAM Harvey production, Ormerod sets up his minimalist stage with a white crate the size of a shipping container and a three-part white bench resting in front of the crate. Unlike Donnellan's Maly production of *The Winter's Tale*, the setting is not at once associated with Leontes' palace. With the stage set, now we turn to the prologue. A character we later come to know as Time sits alone on Ormerod's white bench. Her head hangs low as if she is sad or defeated, and her red winter coat attracts the audience's eyes, while the white stage lights accentuate not only her coat, but also her baggy, mossy green pants. Time's clothes resist the imagined cold that surrounds her body, conveying the idea that her eternal reality is a physically, emotionally, and spiritually cold place. Her clothing, stage location, isolated presentation on stage, and Ormerod's haunting white set all build on one another, raising the questions of who Time is, where she is, and why she is cold. The questions are theological and anthropological because Time is the author and thief of life, the human's guide into an eternal country, and is how human's understand their experience of life and death. Time appears once again in Act IV scene i, and we discover that Time is both a beautiful young woman and is wearing a long and white summer dress. Even though Time in Shakespeare's script is a man, the exchange of Father Time for Mother Time is not too shocking, especially when considering Donnellan's 1990s production in which he interpreted Act IV scene i in a similar way. Time's final physical appearance comes at the end of Act V scene iii. With the production's final line spoken by Leontes, "Good Paulina, / Lead us from hence, where we may leisurely / Each one demand an answer to his part / Perform'd in this wide gap of time since first / We were dissever'd: hastily lead away," the stage pulses dense silence out to the audience. The same red winter coat dresses and the white light captures Time as she enters the stage's silence and leads the deceased Mamillius to Leontes. Mamillius has a moment with his father, and then walks off stage with Time into what appears to be a bleak afterlife. Time bookends Donnellan's BAM Harvey production of *The Winter's Tale*.

From the Maly production to the BAM Harvey production, Donnellan reimagines Time's tasks, demeanor, and stage presence. At the end of Act III scene iii, and after the clown and shepherd end their conversation to go and see if the bear has finished eating Antigonus, the babushka Time enters the stage to sweep, as if cleaning up the mess Leontes made in the first three acts: or more to

the point, sweeping away Antigonus' remains. Her presence gestures towards dark, innocent humor; humor because the petty task of sweeping away human remains is outlandish and the lighthearted conversation between the shepherd and the clown, unexpected. Their blithe commentary and actions create a humorous synergy. Whereas Donnellan gives the babushka, Time, stage direction at the end of Act III in the Maly production, he cuts this invented scene in the BAM Harvey production. Because of his excision, he has done away with a small part of the humor from his earlier directorial choices; and rather, he has emphasized the character split between laughing Time in a summer dress and mourning Time in a winter coat.

While Donnellan shows artistic originality in light of a long history of *The Winter's Tale* performances, in Act IV scene i, as far as we concern Time's cued stage directions, he changes very little from the Maly production to the BAM Harvey production. Dunbar summarizes Act IV scene i of the Maly production in saying, "Time reentered, sweeping, she was at first bent as if old; then, having reached centre stage, she removed her head covering and appeared transformed, as a young woman with golden hair [sic.]"⁵. Likewise, Time's hair in the BAM Harvey production is long and blond. She slowly confronts center stage, her head hung low, while the red hood of her coat covers her head. White, yellow, and blue lights reminiscent of summer's midday come up and frame her as she lifts her head, removes the coat hood, and takes off her winter clothing, unveiling her white summer dress. Perhaps Donnellan seems to have spent less creative effort on Time in this scene for the fact that Shakespeare has written Time into this scene. Time speaks sixteen couplets that both characterize herself and sets forth the following scene. Emitting brilliant blue, yellow, and white lights onto the stage, the stage lights exhibited the life and livelihood in the scene as Bohemians danced around Time the poet. With the Bohemians coming onto the stage in droves, Donnellan made possible the illusion that Time in some way creates a joyous and raucous world and a happy and rambunctious human, as opposed to the blank white and jealous green lights that construed the straightjacketed, volatile world and human of Sicilia. Less time is spent here conveying Act IV scene i because it seems to be a scene that Donnellan himself did not emphasize revising.

5. Dunbar, 199.

Where Donnellan's interpretation of Act IV scene i maintains a thread of constancy from the 1990s to the 2010s, his imaginative reworking of Act V scene iii is a tour de force of theatric adaptation and development. The BAM Harvey production evidenced Donnellan's masterful work in bending and filling silence with theological and anthropological precedents through the character Time. In other words, the actor embodies silence in such a way that silence and Time meet and become one character. If Time is silent in Act V scene iii, what is her role, who is she, and why has Donnellan not only focused his 1990s and 2010s production on Leontes, but surprisingly, also on Time? Raymond Rundus reads through the literary criticism on the character of Time in *The Winter's Tale* from as early as 1892 and as late as 1968. He concludes that literary scholars in the late nineteenth and on into the mid-twentieth century criticized Time. For instance, W. J. Rolfe calls Shakespeare's inclusion of Time an "uninspired moment," and Erwin Panofsky undercuts Time as a "mere device"⁶. Rolfe's and Panofsky's observations, however, derive from their years studying the textual tradition of Shakespeare, most specifically of *The Winter's Tale*, and no director had yet incorporated Time as Donnellan has done since the 1990s. Literary scholars from the late 1900s into the mid-1960s could not accept Time because Shakespeare's text did not clearly warrant Time's acceptance. Panofsky wrote his critique in 1962, and by comparison, theater directors were still innovating methods of portraying Leontes' consciousness in the first three acts, essentially, directors were thinking through symbolic ways to convey Leontes' jealous delusions. Their answer: to freeze every actor on stage apart from Leontes. This mode of representing Leontes is now commonplace in modern productions of *The Winter's Tale*, but in the late 1960s, Trevor Nunn's directorial invention was cutting edge. Dunbar compares how effectively Donnellan in his 1990s production used Nunn's invention: "Selected actors freezing as Leontes delivers his asides has become common in productions of *The Winter's Tale* since Nunn's daring (and partially different) use of the technique in 1969; but, as Charles Spencer observed, though at times 'overused', the 'device is

6. Raymond J. Rundus, "Time and His 'Glass' in the Winter's Tale," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (1974): 123, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2868889>.

highly effective”⁷. Although Donnellan does not write new lines, he writes in old characters – new.

The transformations of Declan Donnellan’s directorial choices in Act V scene iii from the Maly production to BAM Harvey production change the theological and anthropological trajectory of the conclusion of *The Winter’s Tale*. Cynthia Marshall suggests that Hermione’s return to Leontes shows “the danger of an earthly image of heaven.” She continues to argue that, “The image offers a kind of imaginative fulfillment but offers nothing to believe in but the power of theatre”⁸. Her explanation draws upon both the theological and anthropological images because she reads Hermione as a merger of heaven and human, similar to the archetypal Christ figure. For her, Hermione’s return falls short of any true sense of redemption. It leaves the reader with only an impression, or to go even further, a fallacy of a restored human community with one another and with God. Declan Donnellan in May of 1999, however, as he reflects on his motives for choosing *The Winter’s Tale*, says, “I chose a play I wanted to do anyway, but which is about people looking back – it’s about *forgiveness* and *redemption* after a long period of estrangement [emphasis added]”⁹. John Hill Spencer, likewise in his book *Infinity, Faith, and Time* (1997), argues that “the final plays are concerned with restoration rather than loss, with rebirth and new beginnings rather than with ending and the finality of death”¹⁰.

Each critic’s and director’s arguments hinge on Time’s identity, and her identity is somewhat bound within Act IV scene I of *The Winter’s Tale* the textual form originally written down by Shakespeare, given that eighteen of the thirty-two lines are about her, and fourteen of the thirty-two lines set the oncoming scene. We can also consider Shakespeare’s sonnets in which he wrote on Time so that we can have a clearer sense for who she is. Time rides through the entirety of Shakespeare’s sonnets as a “never-resting Time

7. Dunbar, *The Winter’s Tale: Shakespeare in Performance*, 201.

8. Cynthia Marshall, *Last Things and Last Plays: Shakespearean Eschatology* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), 59.

9. Dunbar, *The Winter’s Tale: Shakespeare in Performance*, 195–96.

10. John Spencer Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time: Christian Humanism and Renaissance Literature* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 119.

[who] leads summer on to hideous winter," as the "bloody tyrant, Time," as "Devouring Time," as one who "decays [his friend's beauty]," and as one "whose millioned accidents / Creep in twixt vows"¹¹. Shakespeare does not shy away from personifying Time in the same way as he does death: "So shalt thou [soul] feed on *Death, that feeds on men*" (sonnet 146). Sonnet 146 images Death, like Time in sonnet 19, as a devourer of human mortality. Only live theater can turn around Time's threat to human mortality, and it can do this through the actress's physical body, her costume, and her actions. Spencer seems to have had a sense for live theater's potential for miracles. "*The Winter's Tale*," he writes, "tests the limits of criticism because it must be experienced rather than comprehended, because, in order to succeed, it must become a miracle in the full effect of which we, whether readers *or spectators*, willingly and actively participate [emphasis added]"¹². Where Marshall concludes her argument with the idea that Hermione's return leaves Shakespeare's reader with nothing more to believe in than the power of theater, Spencer begins his argument, and finishes with his idea that a theatrical presentation of *The Winter's Tale*, most especially its conclusion, has the power to illuminate both the human and the divine: human errs, human loss, and human suffering, and divine grace.

While Time at the end of Act V scene iii in the Maly production realized Hill's and Donnellan's interpretations of redemption and forgiveness, Time in the BAM Harvey production identifies with the human experiences of lust, loss, and, death. Donnellan enmeshed the BAM Harvey's theatrical space with Time through his use of pauses, or asides. Leontes' sadness from saying goodbye to Polixenes in Act I, manifests as jealousy. His sadness manipulates his sense of reality, and Time then comes to aid him in his "fantasies of control" over his wife, Hermione, and his childhood friend, Polixenes (Kirwan). Green lights cast an envious tinge onto three white objects: Orlando James' white button up shirt, Nick Ormerod's white crate placed upstage of James, and the white benches on which James plays out his sexual nightmare. Because of Time, the white shirt, crate, and benches

11. David Bevington, ed., *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 7th ed. (London: Pearson, 2014). Quoted from sonnets 5, 16, 19, 65, 115.

12. Hill, *Infinity, Faith, and Time: Christian Humanism and Renaissance Literature*, 126.

are blank theatrical and costume spaces with which Leontes can manifest his obscured impressions of reality. Time allows him to exit Hermione's and Polixenes' dramatic space and to reign over his newfound territory. New York Times reviewer, Ben Brantley, describes how "viscerally charged" the stark shift from the conversation Leontes, Hermione, and Polixenes are having to Leontes' dreamscape, which displays Leontes' sexual anxiety (Brantley). Leontes moves Hermione's and Polixenes' bodies in such a way that Hermione, on her hands and knees like a dog, extends her rear towards Polixenes' crotch. Polixenes fixes his hands onto Hermione's hips. Leontes stands behind Polixenes, and he then thrusts into Polixenes, who thrusts into Hermione, her head throttling up and down in accordance with each of Leontes' pumps. Time is not the innocent babushka of the 1990s, sweeping the palace floors. She is Leontes' conspirator, helping him to realize in the flesh of Natalie Radmall-Quirke (Hermione) and Edward Sayer (Polixenes) his lustful machinations.

In the BAM Harvey production, Time does not come on stage at the end of Act III; instead, she enters the conclusion of Act III through a sound scape. Donnellan's reformation of Time in the BAM Harvey production tends to underemphasize the "transformative magic" that Michael Billington saw in the Maly production in general, and Time in particular (Billington). Billington's redemptive analysis of the character Time becomes evident as he links Time's unveiling of herself from the end of Act III to the beginning of Act IV to the Hermione statue scene, a scene in which some critics and audiences view as a miracle.

It...contained one breathtaking moment when an old woman who swept the stage between scenes turned into the symbolic figure of Time and threw back her cloak to reveal herself as young and beautiful. That was as potent as the always-moving image of Hermione's statue coming to life and reminded us this is a play about transformative magic.¹³

13. Michael Billington, "Best Shakespeare Productions: The Winter's Tale," *The Guardian*, May 8, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/may/08/best-shakespeare-productions-the-winters-tale>.

If the BAM Harvey production has transformative magic at the end of Act III, its theology is of a different nature. Antigonus boards a Sicilian ship with Hermione's daughter, as of yet – unnamed, and sets sail for Bohemia, while Hermione's dead body remains behind in Sicilia. White flashes of lightning streak across the black stage, while the sound designer plays sounds of tumultuous seafaring rain, which crash against Antigonus and his ship. He arrives at Bohemia, and departing from the ship, he speaks, "I do believe / Hermione hath suffered death, and that / Apollo would, this being indeed the issue / of King Polixenes, it should here be laid, / Either for life or death, upon the earth / Of its right father" (3.3.40-45). Over the rainfall, the stage speakers emit one word that perhaps comes from Hermione's voice, but Time's voice is also a possibility: "Perdita, Perdita, Perdita..." echoes, soft, as if in a cave, beginning with loudness and declining to silence. Antigonus hears the voice which raises questions about whether or not Antigonus' conscience conceived the voice, especially when considering his torment over Hermione's death and his own task to leave her child alone "Either for life or death" in the wilderness (3.3.44). Although Time returns Hermione's voice from the grace in this scene, Time does not reconstitute Hermione's body. Hermione exists only in Time's sound space, which could exist within Antigonus' psyche, or be Hermione's actual words from her residence in death. In any case, the return of her voice sharpens her absence, and forces the BAM Harvey audience to grapple with her death in ways that the Maly production did not: for it is easy enough to forget that the mother, Hermione, can neither hold nor name her second child. To carry the voice of the supposed dead Hermione up from the grave and to the island of Bohemia could be termed magic, and maybe even transformative because her dead desire to name her child reawakens.

Act V scene iii of the BAM Harvey production stages the human's experience with the end of things in order to act out the collision of theology and anthropology. The play seeks to understand the infinitude of human death and the eternal resting place of humans once they die and does so through human community on stage. On the one hand, Cynthia Marshall in her reflection on Shakespeare's last plays, argues that Shakespeare focuses more so on death and human bonds, rather than on death and eternity.

“[T]he last plays,” she writes, “attend primarily to mortality’s consequences for the human community”¹⁴. On the other hand, Sean Benson argues that Shakespeare’s comedies and tragedies explore the pagan and Christian origins of the resurrection. “Shakespeare,” Benson explains, “delves into the resurrection of the dead with a seriousness that manifests his interest in the human desire to transcend death and *live reunited and reconciled with others* [emphasis added]”¹⁵. While Marshall does not explore the theological implications of death, and while Benson affirms the theological reading of reconciliation, the BAM Harvey production underscores how the presence of death’s eternity presses down on top of and enters into human community. The supernatural conjoins with the natural, or the eternal enmeshes with the mortal. Time is responsible for this harsh commingling in the BAM Harvey production.

Donnellan made Hermione’s state of existence less complicated in the Maly production: she clearly was not a statue, but pretended to be one. Natalia Kolotova, the Assistant Director of the Maly production, explains Hermione’s stage direction, “When they all stand with their backs to the audience and to the plinth in the center, *Hermione enters* and sits in a chair on the plinth [emphasis added]”. A large group of characters – among them: Leontes, Paulina, Polixenes, Perdita, Florizel, and others, stand up stage with their backs to Hermione’s white plinth, which is downstage, closer to the audience. With their backs to the plinth, Donnellan manifests a theatrical space of illusion where Hermione can enter without them seeing her. Donnellan’s choice to depict her entrance tells Hermione’s story, which Shakespeare otherwise leaves up for interpretation. According to Donnellan’s directorial choices, we can deduce that Hermione has lived somewhere, likely in Sicilia because of the quick rate at which Florizel and Perdita return to Sicilia, and soon to follow their return, a monument to Hermione is resurrected. Hermione can thus be none other than human, and her contact with the eternity of death is not possible. The Maly production does not have the theological and anthropological stakes of the BAM Harvey production. What’s more, Kenneth

14. Marshall, *Last Things and Last Plays: Shakespearean Eschatology*, 8.

15. Sean Benson, “The Resurrection of the Dead in *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*,” *Renaissance* 61, no. 1 (2008): 21.

Gross's reading of Hermione's awakening does not explain Donnellan's rendition of Hermione in the Maly production because we know that she has not died. Gross writes, "[Paulina's] urging of the statue to make a 'bequest' to death suggests that Hermione must *die (as a statue)* into life, to give up the security of the statue's solitude and solidity, even in the face of the acknowledgement that she will 'die again'"¹⁶. Gross brilliantly reads Paulina's exchange about Hermione's statue, but Donnellan's theatrical text of *The Winter's Tale* has made Gross' reading implausible.

The BAM Harvey production, however, leaves open the possibility that Hermione has died, and that her return to Leontes and the others is not a miracle, but a vision. She does not enter the stage; rather, before any light illuminates the stage, the statue of Hermione awaits the group's visitation. Literary critics in the 1950s and 1960s tended toward generous and hopeful readings of Shakespeare's later plays. Derek Traversi estimates that "it is the essence of love, in [these] plays, to produce a transforming vision of value," and Tom Driver writes that "the future is...full of beneficent promise and tending toward a final culmination which robs the past of its terror and gives significance to the choices of the present"¹⁷. Donnellan skews past, present, and future on the character of Hermione through the character Time in such a way that the audience is not sure if they see a hint of Hermione as she was, is, or will be, or if they watch Leontes fantasize the resurrection of his wife, or something else altogether. What Time is up to in the life of Leontes and Hermione becomes more complicated as she arises from the plinth and steps down towards Leontes. While Paulina carries forth her lines which signal her observations of Hermione, and while Hermione speaks to Perdita – and these could evidence the claim that Hermione is not a vision of Leontes, Leontes' nuanced physical actions with Hermione and Mamillius' return from the dead suggests that Hermione is dead, and that through Leontes, Hermione, Mamillius, and Time, the play drives forward the marriage of theology and anthropology. The marriage, however, uses death in the human community as a means to understand theology in light of the human experience.

16. Kenneth Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 105.

17. Derek Traversi, *Shakespeare: The Last Phase* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1953), 257; Tom F. Driver, *The Sense of History in Greek and Shakespearean Drama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 204.

In the 1990s production, we have no doubt that Leontes reached out to Hermione and touched her hand. Dunbar recounts this moment: "When Leontes touched Hermione's hand, amazed it was warm, she turned toward him, looking deeply at him for the first time; she took his hand, rather than embracing him"¹⁸. In the BAM Harvey production, however, the audience is not sure if Leontes makes contact with Hermione's hand. Hermione peers down at Leontes' face, while Leontes looks to her hand. But Time separates Leontes from Hermione: she does not speak to Leontes in the text, and does not embrace Leontes on the stage. As Perdita stands before Hermione, Leontes, with extreme precision and fragility, places his hand on Hermione's arm and seems to embrace not the flesh and blood human of Hermione, but an apparition, or possibly a memory of her. Gross comments on the meaning of Leontes' physical touching of Hermione's hand, writing, "It is a public speech as well as a silent touch that the gathered witnesses demand at the end of *The Winter's Tale*...[in the touch,] is the idea that physical touch might offer some 'moment of truth'"¹⁹. The moment of truth is the reality of Hermione's human body restored back to its human community; whether she revives from the grave, or returns from exile, or something else entirely is less important to Gross' point. If Hermione is there in the flesh, Donnellan creates the possibility for what Benson calls a "quasi-resurrection"²⁰. But, because the existence of Leontes' touch of Hermione is tenuous, so too is Hermione's physical presence, and something other than a resurrection has taken place.

Hermione's age adds another layer to the theological and anthropological precedents set forth in the BAM Harvey production. Leontes' wrinkled forehead and long facial hair reflect Time's passing over sixteen years, but Hermione, dressed in a long violet dress which accentuates her youthful beauty, has not aged. We can quickly observe that Donnellan has imagined Hermione's reality against the textual grain of Shakespeare as Leontes speaks, "But yet, Paulina / Hermione was not as much wrinkled, nothing / So aged as this seems" (5.3.27-29). For Hermione to have made a return to Leontes, she must also have aged. But Time's "slide / O'er sixteen years" and her request of her

18. Dunbar, *The Winter's Tale: Shakespeare in Performance*, 209.

19. Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue*, 84-85.

20. Benson, "The Resurrection of the Dead in *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*," 3.

audience to “leave the growth untried,” when mapped onto Hermione in the concluding moments of the BAM Harvey production, reveals one main artery of the play, which runs thick with questions of where is it we go when we die, what that place is like, who will I be when I’m there, will I miss my family, and will I like it there? David Bevington glosses Time’s phrase, “growth untried,” to mean “developments unexplored”²¹. Hermione’s physical, emotional, and spiritual developments have dropped away from Shakespeare’s and our own line of sight. All Shakespeare gives us of Hermione is her one line, which in the BAM Harvey production, she speaks while facing Perdita: “I...have preserved / Myself to see the issue” (5.3.126-129). Does she speak the truth; has she preserved herself over these sixteen years for the singular, resolute reason to see her child? Donnellan’s answer: in the Maly production, yes, but in the BAM Harvey production, no. The BAM Harvey production sets Hermione’s testimony within the context of Time, who stands behind her as if the presence of Death itself. Whether or not Donnellan intended to convey an old human tradition of imagining Death standing behind a human’s back, he does. Rundus incorporates several readings of the character Time, and specifically expounds three possibilities for what kind of glass Time might have held in Shakespeare’s original productions of *The Winter’s Tale*. One option is that Time held an actual looking glass, or mirror. If Donnellan had placed a mirror in Time’s hand, or Hermione’s hand to see Time, audience members and theatre critics alike would have called such a choice distasteful, unartistic, or any other such adjective because the reflection would have been too obvious. A note from Rundus’ article elaborates on a painting of Time’s collaboration with Death (Time as an iconic figure and not the character Time in *The Winter’s Tale*): “In a painting described by Guy de Tervarent in *Attributs et symboles dans l’art profane, 1450-1600*...Time holds a mirror before a nude couple, so that they can see death behind them”²². The nakedness of the couple and Time’s reflecting Death for them to see illustrates the idea of leaving the world in the same way as one enters the world: naked. In the painting, death has taken the couple, and Time shows them their captor, but only in the mirror’s reflection.

21. Bevington, *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 1549.

22. Rundus, “Time and His ‘Glass’ in the Winter’s Tale,” 125.

Consider also how the BAM Harvey production groups Hermione and Leontes together, a husband and a wife, as Leontes lays the nude body of his distress from the past sixteen years before Hermione. On stage, we can discern from Hermione's posture when set against the foil of Leontes' posture that her relationship with Time is not the same as Leontes', Time has already claimed her as her own. What's more, Donnellan aligns the angle of Hermione's body with the stance of her deceased son. Mamillius walks alongside Time, step for step, their coordination conveying a sense of two journeymen who have gotten to know one another. But every good story has a dark side. Perhaps what Mamillius learns of Time during his sixteen years dead in this "wide gap" with Time frightens or unnerves him, for Time allows him to come home, but only briefly lets him stay (4.1.7). The agreement of Hermione's and Mamillius' body positions suggests their shared spiritual reality: they are both dead.

The question which circulates around the play is why Donnellan has made death certain on uncertain terms. For example, Hermione is dead, but the degree in which she is dead is not clear. The BAM Harvey production walks along a knife's edge, showing its persistence to embrace the mortality and the immortality of human community. The production scrutinizes the human being and conceives of God through the human being, most especially in moments of what we could consider eternal loss – without a sure knowledge of a human's afterlife into eternity, what more is death than loss? The BAM Harvey production seems unwilling to commit to a lucid idea of who God is, but in its stricture, it arrives at a revelation of the human's relation to God. The play amplifies, through the character Time, the desperation a friend feels when they lose a friend, or a father or mother feels when their child dies, and how in that desperation, the friend, the father, or the mother seek with all their might to know what death means: to know what eternity is. The human body, both alive and then dead, is the meeting ground for their theological and anthropological questions. In its avoidance of crystal clear theological or anthropological answers, the BAM Harvey production lets the audience weigh their human life as it was, is, and will be, in the light of this life and the world to come. But that's for Donnellan's audience to decide.

Eternity written on man's heart.

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