



Measure for Measure

Education Pack with Integrated Live-Capture



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Age guidance 16+

Produced by Cheek by Jowl and the Pushkin Theatre, Moscow in a co-production with the Barbican, London; Les Gémeaux/Sceaux/Scène Nationale; Centro Dramático Nacional, Madrid (INAEM)

Live-capture filmed on 22 April 2015 at the Barbican, London

INTRODUCTION

Hello and thank you for using this resource!

It has been created and made available for educational purposes by Cheek by Jowl.

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A little more about this pack:

The entire recording can be accessed via this link: <https://www.cheekbyjowl.com/learning/measure-for-measure-film/>

The : [hyperlinks](#) in this PDF will also direct you to specific sections of the play or other relevant video content.

Note: While the production has been given 16+ guidance rating by UK theatres, we believe teachers can use their discretion and decide whether to show the production in its entirety to younger students or withhold certain scenes.

We hope you enjoy the pack and the production.

Cheek by Jowl

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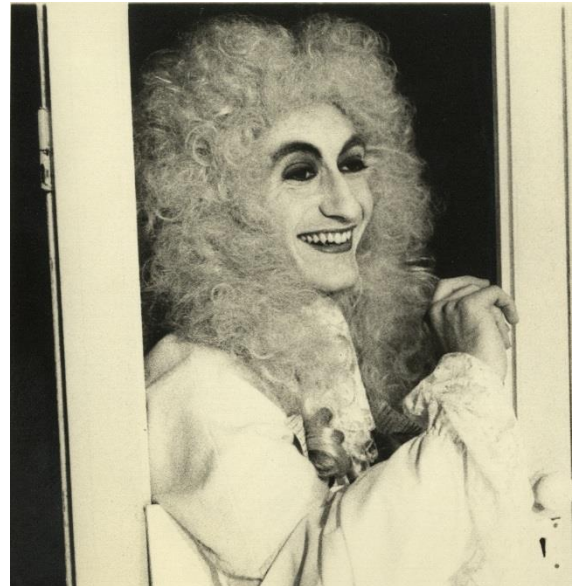
CHEEK BY JOWL

HISTORY

Cheek by Jowl was established in 1981 by its co-Artistic Directors Declan Donnellan and Nick Ormerod. The company is dedicated to producing fresh and vivid productions that focus on the actor's art, avoiding directorial and design concepts. Cheek by Jowl produces work in English, French and Russian. The company has performed in 392 cities in more than 50 countries spanning six continents.

Cheek by Jowl's first production was William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, presented at the Edinburgh Festival in 1981 and supported by a small Arts Council grant. Before long the company received its first official invitations to perform abroad, taking their productions of *Vanity Fair* and *Pericles* to the Almagro, Valladolid and Jerusalem festivals in 1984. These productions were also subsequently invited to perform in London at the Donmar Warehouse.

For that first London season Cheek by Jowl won the Laurence Olivier Award for Most Promising Newcomer in 1986, with over half of the company's plays receiving Olivier awards. The company grew rapidly throughout the 1980s — creating 18 productions in ten years, touring across six continents and giving more than 1,500 performances. In 1990, *The Independent* said, "If there is one company to have influenced British theatre in the 1980s, it is Cheek by Jowl."



Nigel Leach as Sparkish in *The Country Wife* 1981. Photo: John Beveridge



The Tempest Company (2011). Photo: Johan Persson

RUSSIA

In 1986, Russian theatre director Lev Dodin invited Donnellan and Ormerod to visit his company in Leningrad. Ten years later, they directed and designed *The Winter's Tale* for the Maly Drama Theatre of Saint-Petersburg, a production which went on to win Russia's prestigious Golden Mask Award - an award that *Measure for Measure* has been nominated for in 2015. Throughout the 1990s the Russian Theatre Confederation had regularly invited Cheek by Jowl to Moscow as a part of the Chekhov International Theatre Festival, and this relationship with Russia intensified in 1999, when the Chekhov International Theatre Festival, under the leadership of Valery Shadrin, commissioned

Donnellan and Ormerod to form their own company of Russian actors in Moscow. This sister company performs in Russia and internationally and its current repertoire includes *Boris Godunov* by Pushkin, *Twelfth Night* and *The Tempest* by Shakespeare, and *Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov. *Measure for Measure* is Cheek by Jowl's first co-production with Moscow's Pushkin Theatre.

THE CLASSICS

The core of the Cheek by Jowl's repertoire has always been Shakespeare; by the time of *The Tempest* in 2011 Cheek by Jowl had presented no fewer than 13 of Shakespeare's plays. Another of the company's principles has been to present major works of European drama, both in translation and their original versions. To date Cheek by Jowl has given the British premières of 10 European classics including *The Cid* by Corneille and *Andromache* by Racine, over three hundred years since they were first presented in Paris. John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* was the company's most recent English language production and, following a critically acclaimed international tour which saw the production visit Sydney, Paris, London, New York and Madrid, was remounted in 2012 and 2014 for further UK and International tours.



FRANCE

In addition to their work in English and in Russian, in 2007 Paris based theatre director Peter Brook invited Donnellan and Ormerod to form a group of French actors. The result was a French language production of *Andromaque* by Racine, co-produced with Paris' Bouffes du Nord, which toured throughout the UK and Europe in 2008/2009. Following that production's international success, Cheek by Jowl worked with the same French actors on their production of Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi*. This marked the first time that Cheek by Jowl was lead-producer in a foreign language and culture.



Christophe Gregoire as Pere Ubu and Sylvain Levitte as Bourgreilas in *Ubu Roi* (2013). Photo: Johan Persson

DECLAN DONNELLAN: WHY SHAKESPEARE AND WHY RUSSIA?

WHY SHAKESPEARE?

Modern Subjects

“There are some annoying things about the plays that we choose: they’re incredibly old, many of them are written by dead people, and they’re full of words. I am not particularly wedded to any of these things. It’s just that they happen to be very great plays. One of the things about a great play is that you can work on it, on tour, for a long period of time, and they will always be different. These plays give the actors an array of profoundly experienced parts that deal with apparently modern subjects – politics, sex, love, loss, the supernatural. All of those things seem to be explored well in the plays we present.”

“I choose to work on the plays of Shakespeare because he continues to surprise me. I think you need to approach Shakespeare in a state of humility and ignorance. I don’t think he is there to teach us anything, I think he takes us by the hand, gently (sometimes roughly) and guides us, as an equal observer, a partner bursting with curiosity, into amazing worlds. It’s all about the worlds we land on, the extraordinary language is mostly the delivery system, the rocket ship if you like, in some absolutely extraordinary language.”



Photo: Johan Persson

The Human Experience

“The most extraordinary thing about Shakespeare, and why we perform him so much, is that he speaks to us very clearly about who we are, and he cuts straight to the quick of the human experience, something that is ‘timeless’ and something that is ‘universal’. These words sound like clichés and I dread using them, but they are in fact true! At the centre of his work is a permanent investigation of human love, but as there can be no love without loss, he has to talk about loss too. He talks to us about these overwhelming obsessions which are as relevant today as they were 400 years ago, and as they will be in another 400 years’ time.”

“Shakespeare also has this capacity to completely imagine himself in the skin of other human beings, he has this extraordinary quality of empathy. It’s as if he gets into our nerves and into our bones. He’s able to incarnate authentic human beings because he is able to imagine them totally from within, and not as pictures, not as how they might appear to others. So when Lady Macbeth says - ‘Who would have thought the old man had so much blood in him?’ – It’s like Shakespeare’s imagining her from the inside out and he’s able to completely disappear into this woman who has done something so terrible that it will haunt her forever.”

“You never really feel the characters are being manipulated by some God-like author – (as you might in several novels) - Shakespeare vanishes – and I think that’s one of the reasons why he’s so wonderful, because he has the good grace not to get in the way of his own light. That’s why talking about Shakespeare is so difficult, because his genius is to vanish into his own work.”

WHY RUSSIA?

Background

“We have been going to Russia since Soviet times and have worked there so often and have such close relationships with the people there that in truth, we feel part Russian. Incidentally Russians adore Shakespeare as well as their own national classics, such as Pushkin, Chekhov, and Tolstoy.”

“We naturally fell into step with Russian theatre when we were young because our priorities were very similar to many in Russia. Everyone says the search for life matters of course, but we prioritise it above all else, as do many Russians. Most humans have similar concerns, it’s what we actually prioritise above all else makes us specific.”

Commonalities

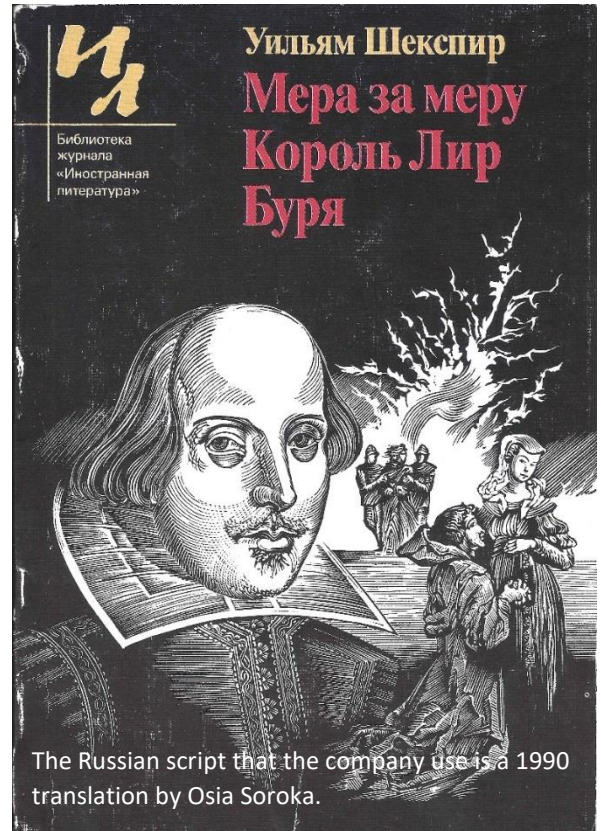
“Fundamentally, I don’t really believe that individual actors are so different in the Russian or English-speaking world. The challenges that the actors face are the same. However the systems in which they work are very different. In England we have a very rigid system – because of the way contracts work with English actors we are only able to use the beginning of our rehearsal period to experiment and try different ideas with the company – however with our Russian (and French) company we can have an experimental period well in advance of the rehearsals.”

“With *Measure for Measure*, we took the company away from the theatre and rehearsal rooms and far away from Moscow, into a rural place we call ‘The Woods’, here we developed the work with the company. Those ten days we spent in The Woods helped us gain an idea of what we thought the play was about, and how it would work well ahead of our rehearsals back in Moscow.”

Language

“We have never really seen language as a barrier. Really these ‘barriers’ vanish once you realise that words are only a small part of how we communicate. In Russia, it is true, we are dependent on brilliant interpreters; We also have a native Russian speaker as our Assistant Director – Kirill Sbitnev has assisted us on *Measure for Measure* as well as *The Tempest* in 2011. With Shakespeare – even in English language productions – we do a lot of movement work while considering the delivery of the verse. However, the rules to this should be few and good – especially as I use an English version of the script and the company uses a Russian translation! But it’s the movement that is very important – the verse is best rediscovered through movement.”

Declan Donnellan - Artistic Director, Cheek by Jowl.



MEASURE FOR MEASURE: SYNOPSIS



Photo: Johan Persson

In the absence of its Duke, Vienna is ruled by Lord Angelo's iron-fist. He revives forgotten laws on morality and sexual license and decides to make an example of Claudio, a young man who has had pre-marital sex with his fiancée, Juliet. Hearing of Claudio's death sentence, his sister the novice Isabella resolves to petition Angelo for her brother's life. Despite his outward strict moral code, Angelo tells Isabella he will only free her brother if she sacrifices her virginity to him. Isabella is shocked by this and refuses Angelo; she begins to resign herself to the necessity of her brother's death to protect her own virtue. Luckily, her conversation with Angelo had been overheard by the Duke, who is still in fact in Vienna, disguised as a friar, as a means to oversee Angelo's government without his presence being known in the city.

The Duke comes up with a plan to save Claudio, preserve Isabella's virginity and reveal Angelo's misdeeds. Under the cover of darkness Angelo is tricked into believing he is meeting Isabella, but instead has sex with his estranged fiancée, Mariana. After this, he still refuses to pardon Claudio; however Angelo is none the wiser when he is sent the head of another man in Claudio's place. The Duke returns and reveals his disguise to all. He judges Angelo for his crimes, and forces him to marry Mariana. Claudio is pardoned and allowed to marry Juliet. At the play's end a third and final couple materialises: the Duke proposes marriage to Isabella.

FIRST PERFORMANCES



King James I (by John de Critz, 1555-1641) painted around 1604 at the time of the Scottish King's accession to the throne of England.

There is virtually no evidence to pinpoint the exact date of the first performance of *Measure for Measure*. The official Revels account gives us the earliest recorded performance as 26th December 1604. This was conducted at Whitehall Palace and began the first full scale Christmas celebrations of the new King James' reign. The highly political themes of the play made it a suitable choice to be presented to a politically-minded king, the author of a treatise on government, widely read by contemporaries and named *Basilikon Doron* or 'Royal Gift'.

Shakespeare's chief source for *Measure for Measure* was George Whetstone's play *Promos and Cassandra* (1578), which had been based on a story published in Giraldi Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* (1565). However, the play draws on many traditional literary and historical sources; the actions of Angelo, Claudio and Isabella are a parallel to the story of the Corrupt Magistrate, the roles of the Duke and Lucio to the legend of the Disguised Ruler.

There are theories growing in acceptance that the *Measure for Measure* text widely used today was adapted from Shakespeare's original – at least in part – by contemporary playwright Thomas Middleton for a revival, around 1621. This was the version that was set to type as early as 1622 and most likely used in the First Folio of 1623.

Perhaps the most striking piece of evidence for these theories is that despite the Austrian setting of the play, the characters all have Italian names: this suggests that Shakespeare's original was set in Italy, perhaps the city of Ferrara. Historians believe Middleton made the changes to establish the Thirty Years War as a backdrop to the play – which meant Vienna was a much more topically relevant location.

POLITICAL CONTEXT

James Shapiro - Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University.

Although little is known about the earliest performances of *Measure for Measure*, Shakespeare's first Jacobean play, we do know something about the political context in which it was written – the winners and losers once King James succeeded Queen Elizabeth to the throne in 1603. Among the winners was Shakespeare's own company, long known as the Chamberlain's Men, chosen by the new King to be his own players, and so rechristened the King's Men. Foremost among those who 'lost', and lost big, was the larger-than-life Elizabethan courtier, Sir Walter Raleigh.

Upon the death of Queen Elizabeth, Raleigh joined the stream of those hoping to ingratiate themselves with the King of Scots on his celebratory journey south. But Raleigh showed too much bravado and too little tact when first meeting the King. The 17th century biographer John Aubrey describes how James asserted that he would have defended his claim to the English throne "on his own strength, (should the English have kept him out) to have dealt with them, and get his right.' Raleigh foolishly responded, 'Would to God that had been put to the trial.' James asked him sharply, 'Why do you wish that?' to which Raleigh replied enigmatically, 'Then you would have known your friends from your foes.'" John Aubrey wrote that the exchange "was never forgotten nor forgiven."

Things soured quickly, as Raleigh was stripped of his monopolies and lost his captaincy of the guard. Two months later, Raleigh was implicated in murky conspiracy plots against the new regime that were known at the time as the Bye and Main plots. The Bye Plotters wanted to kidnap King James, then force him to grant toleration to Catholics; the Main Plotters- including both Raleigh and Lord Cobham, were supposedly appealing to Spain to invade England, and once James was deposed, to make Arbella Stuart monarch in his place. Once Raleigh was implicated by Cobham, he was conveyed to the Tower. Cobham's confession that he and Raleigh plotted "to destroy the King and all his Cubs" was deeply incriminating. It is best to think of these half-baked schemes as little more than frustrated and clumsy exchanges of powerful men, denied access to office and promotion, wealth, and influence. However, four months later the cases of Cobham, Raleigh, and Lord Grey of Wilton came to trial. All eyes were on Raleigh when he was finally brought to trial at Winchester on 17 November. By then, Cobham had largely withdrawn his testimony implicating Raleigh, and Raleigh brilliantly fended off the attacks of his overly aggressive prosecutor, the Attorney General, Sir Edward Coke.

Raleigh may have been technically guilty (treason charges were wonderfully elastic), but he won the propaganda war. As Dudley Carleton put it a few days later, "never was a man so hated and so popular in so short a time." Word spread quickly of Raleigh's eloquence and his charismatic performance: one onlooker reported that "never any man spoke so well in times past, nor would do in the world to come."

The court found each conspirator guilty as charged. George Brooke, the first of the noblemen found guilty of treason, was led out to be beheaded first. Four days later came the turns of Cobham, Thomas Grey, and Sir Griffin Markham – who were led out in a torrential downpour to the scaffold. Markham went first. As he was saying his prayers, a groom of the bedchamber named John Gibb pressed through the crowd and delivered a new warrant from the King. Markham was told that his execution was to be briefly delayed, so Lord Grey took his place at the block. When he had finished his prayers, the executioner intervened, insisting that his orders were that Cobham was to be the first to die. So Markham too was ushered away, told to wait his turn.



Sir Walter Raleigh (c.1554-1618). Image taken from Montgomery's *The Beginner's American History*.

Dudley Carleton, who witnessed all this, described to his friend John Chamberlain the vivid scene in which all three condemned noblemen were led back to the scaffold – and he couldn't help but see it all as a sort of stage play. "Now, all the actors being together on the stage, the sheriff made a short speech unto them, by way of condemning the heinousness of the offences, the justness of their trials, their lawful condemnation, and due execution to be performed. 'Then', saith the Sheriff, 'see the mercy of your prince, who hath sent hither a countermand and given you your lives'".

Raleigh, imprisoned within earshot, and awaiting his own execution the following Monday, could hear all that was going on, was soon informed that "the king had pardoned him with the rest, and confined him with the two lords to the Tower of London, there to remain."

Although this engraving depicts the execution of Jacobite rebels in 1746 (over a hundred years after *Measure for Measure* was written), it illustrates the public and theatrical nature of executions in early modern England, and London in particular. The prisoners on the scaffold are surrounded by soldiers and large crowds on foot and in grandstands near the riverbank.



James had scripted things beautifully – it was a canny political move, showing severity toward the unpopular and mercy toward those who were either too popular or well connected to kill off. Contemporaries took note of the political fallout, and how it redounded to James's credit: "the applause that began about the King went from thence into the presence and so round about the court." In case anyone missed the staged event or reports from those who were there, King James saw to it that copies of his letter of reprieve circulated.

It's dangerous to speculate about the topicality of early modern drama – especially Shakespearean drama; the obvious cases connecting life and art are few and far between. So we don't know how these events shaped Shakespeare's imagination. What we do know is that there's a record of a play written the following year and performed at court: *Measure for Measure*. And that play famously ends with the ruler first threatening punishment, then turning around and showing mercy, sparing the transgressors and turning tragedy into comedy.

SHAKESPEARE AND THE CITY



Taken from Claes Van Visscher's *Panorama of London, 1616*.

Dr. Peter Kirwan - Assistant Professor in Shakespeare & Early Modern Drama at Nottingham University.

London

Unlike many of his professional contemporaries, Shakespeare moved to London relatively late in life. Born in the market town of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1564, Shakespeare was almost certainly educated in the local grammar school before marrying young and beginning a family in Warwickshire. The county was far from isolated – many of Stratford's townsfolk had professional contacts in London, and Shakespeare would have encountered theatrical culture through the stagings of Biblical stories in Coventry and regular visits from travelling players. But it is not until the early 1590s that we know Shakespeare was living primarily in the capital, where he remained until around 1613.

While Shakespeare lived and worked in the capital for most of his adult life, he never wrote explicitly about the London of his own time (although the city featured prominently in many of his history plays). This is perhaps surprising, as one of the most popular genres of the early modern period was the city comedy. Writers including Thomas Dekker, Ben Jonson and Thomas Middleton made names for themselves with witty satires of contemporary London during the final years of Elizabeth's reign and into that of James I. These plays of young gallants, defying the older generation in pursuit of marriage and money, offer comedic insights into everyday London life.

Although Shakespeare never wrote a city comedy, the city of *Measure for Measure* would have been all too familiar to his fellow Londoners. The Vienna of the play is populated by recognisable figures (the rake, Lucio; the jilted lover, Mariana; the bumbling constable, Elbow), and the plot devices of city comedy (the bed trick, the disguised intervention, the public reveal) are present and correct, yet the play's darker concerns with authority and public morality make this a difficult play to categorise.

Surveillance State

Shakespeare's Vienna is a city where secrets are hard to keep. Not only does Angelo's scorched-earth approach to social policy leave nowhere for ordinary people to hide, but the disguised Duke lurks in corners and intervenes in the lives of his subjects. James I advocated an approach to kingship that used whatever means necessary to understand one's own subjects, and a remarkable number of plays around the turn of the century featured disguised authority figures manipulating events. During Elizabeth's reign, Francis Walsingham had acted as 'spymaster', particularly pursuing Catholic recusants, and following the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 the surveillance culture in London only tightened further. Shakespeare's Duke poses as a Friar, allowing him the privilege of overhearing confession – a potentially sacrilegious, and certainly ethically questionable, practice. The Duke's strategies in *Measure for Measure* evoke a London in which secrets had to be guarded closely if one wanted to remain safe.



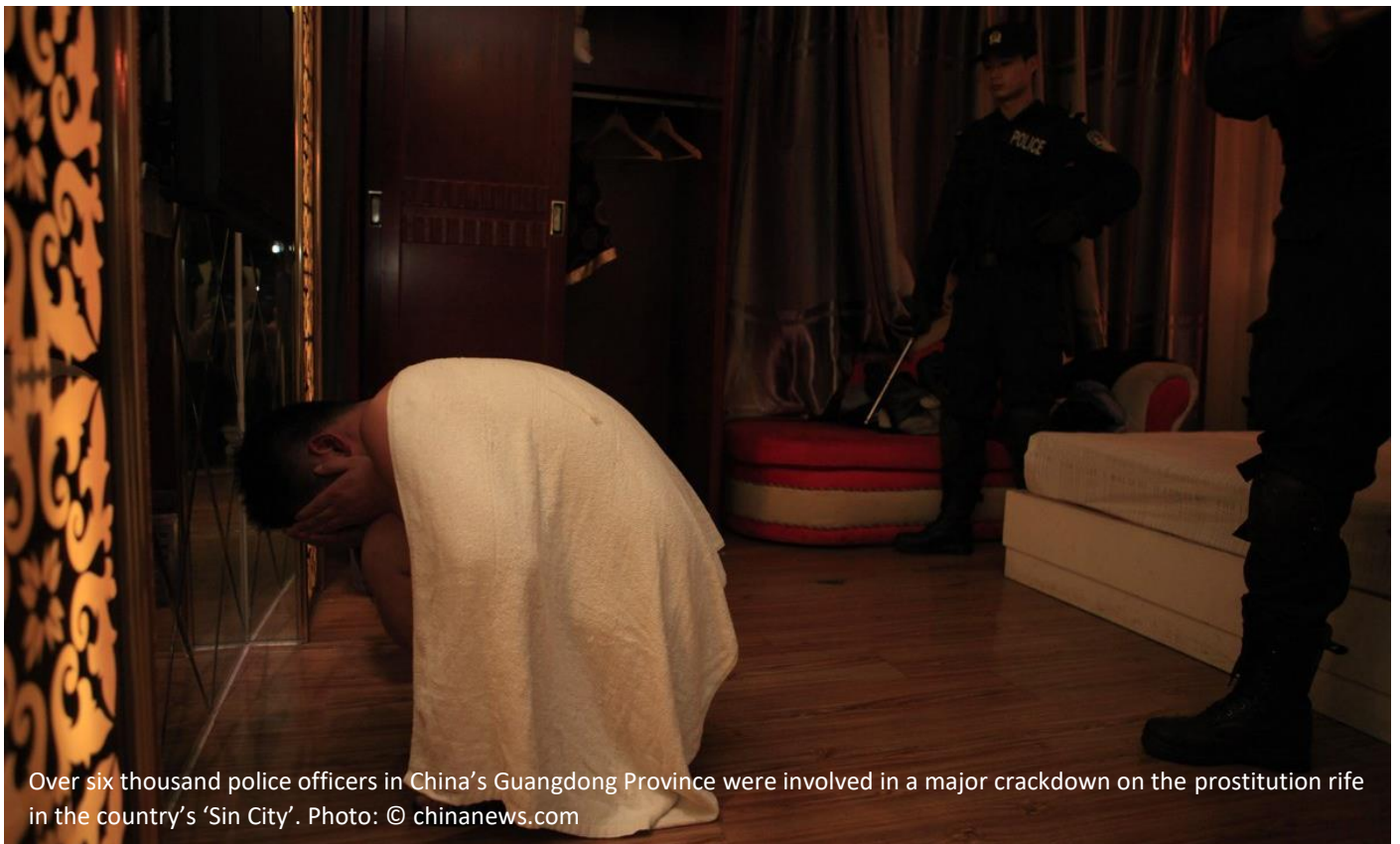
Banksy, April 2008. London, United Kingdom

Relevance Today?

The play's contemporaneity may be measured against its current resonance in a society where CCTV, micro-chipping, spy satellites and Google Maps ensure that our own actions can theoretically be documented and recorded at any time. In the city, whether London or Vienna, with so many people pressed up close to one another, individual choices seem instantly to become public concerns. When the Duke meets Barnardine, we see the highest member of society taking a disconcertingly close interest in the personal lives of those at the bottom of the pecking order, questioning whether the individual can ever be entirely sure of their own privacy.

Sin City: Vienna or...?

In 2014, in scenes eerily resonant of those at the start of Shakespeare's play as the city's brothels are shut down at Angelo's behest, over six thousand police officers in China's Guangdong Province were involved in a major crackdown on the prostitution rife in the country's 'Sin City'. Where many of the city comedies of Shakespeare's contemporaries are now rarely performed under the assumption that they only address their own time, *Measure for Measure's* concern with social policy and urban governance continues to find more echoes around the world, making Shakespeare's view of the city one of his most enduringly contemporary achievements.



Over six thousand police officers in China's Guangdong Province were involved in a major crackdown on the prostitution rife in the country's 'Sin City'. Photo: © chinanews.com

INTERVIEWS: A VERY MODERN PLAY?

DECLAN DONNELLAN – DIRECTOR

Shame

“The play is about many different things; it always strikes me as a very modern play. It’s a play about control and how one of the ways that we are controlled, by not only governments, but by churches and other institutions that seek to control us, is shame. We are controlled by shame. It starts with parents and it develops, and it is an extremely good way of controlling people.”

“And of course it’s a very political play about corruption; in the end the Duke comes back and denounces the corruption in the state.”

More Questions than Answers?

“It’s so strange that the play is set in Vienna - the city of Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis! In *Measure for Measure*, Shakespeare, like Freud, understands very deeply the connection between mental disturbance, sex and death – and corruption. When we hear that he talks about the corruption of the city we ask ourselves, is it in fact this city, is it in fact this state that we’re talking about? And then at the end we bring the house lights up, so the audience is fully addressed – and may have to ask themselves certain questions...”

“What’s wonderful about *Measure for Measure* is that the conclusion leaves us with many questions. The story brings us to this dark side, and however disturbing that might be, I think that sometimes it’s quite reassuring to know that there is a dark side, I think you go crazy if you only believe there’s a light side.”

NICK ORMEROD – DESIGNER

Modern Dress

“Shakespeare’s plays speak to people nowadays, and *Measure for Measure* is no different. It’s strange, but we’ve found that when watching other Shakespeare productions in period dress it sometimes creates a barrier between the audience and the play. This is why, in *Cheek by Jowl*, we tend to dress our productions in modern dress and put them into a modern setting. This instantly makes a 400 year old play more alive and relevant to a modern audience. We must remember that in Shakespeare’s time, the actors would have worn their own contemporary costumes, even 400 years ago the play would be performed in the dress and fashions of the day.”

KIRILL SBITNEV – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR


A Timeless Dark Side

“*Measure for Measure* is an important play. Even just reading through it, we all understood its modernity - even after 400 years; nothing has changed. There are many cruel and strange things that happen amongst common people, among presidents and before that Tsars and so on and so forth. It was very interesting opening *Measure for Measure* in Moscow, because many people came up to us and asked if we had written bits of the play ‘No it’s just Shakespeare!’ we told them. ‘Really? He’s so rude’. Yes, but he’s a genius.”

“I think that the show is about the dark sides of our souls, and of our own world. We lie to ourselves and pretend in many situations and we shut out things we don’t want to hear or watch, but bad things, they exist in our world. It’s actually very scary to go into yourself and think about these bad things. That’s why we want to go to clubs, that why we want to go the shops, or even just not to be alone, because it’s very scary and because humanity has always had many ugly qualities. From our first year to our last there are many dark things in all of us.”

EXERCISE: Act 1, Scene 2

 : [0:14:07](#)

- Watch the scene by clicking on the  : [hyperlink](#) above.
- Answer the following questions:

CLAUDIO

Fellow, why dost thou show me thus to the world?
Bear me to prison, where I am committed.

PROVOST

I do it not in evil disposition,
But from Lord Angelo by special charge.

1. How is the feeling of 'shame' created in this scene? Consider Shakespeare's language as well as visual themes employed in the production.
2. Watch the Provost's response to Claudio's question. How do you think he feels about Angelo's orders? How does the production realise this? Again, consider Shakespeare's use of language as well as visual themes employed in the production.
3. Can you think of examples from history and current events where similar tactics have been used by a state to punish its citizens?



INTERVIEWS: DESIGN I

NICK ORMEROD – DESIGNER

An Abstract Space

“The play is about a city and it examines almost every aspect of the city you can imagine; from the prisons to the government house, a monastery, and a brothel. The set we created is a completely abstract space in which anything can happen. It was rather late in the production process that I alighted upon the large red boxes and for a long time I didn’t know what to do with them, but they seemed to me to suggest something about the psyche of the Duke himself. It was only very late on that we discovered we could use the boxes in the way that we do to reveal three aspects of disturbance in the Duke’s personality (and in the personality of the city as well).”



Photo: Johan Persson

📝 EXERCISE: Act 4, Scene 3:

🎬 : 1:21:17

- Watch the scene by clicking on the [🎬 : hyperlink](#) above.
- Answer the following questions. This [short video](#) may help you.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Sir, induced by my charity, and hearing how hastily you are to depart, I am come to advise you, comfort you and pray with you.

BARNARDINE:

Friar, not I
I have been drinking hard all night,
and I will have more time to prepare me, or they
shall beat out my brains with billets: I will not
consent to die this day, that's certain.

1. In this particular scene Barnardine leads the Duke around the stage, revealing three aspects in the rotating red boxes. What do you think these three aspects symbolise? Why would these aspects disturb the Duke and what do they tell us about his character?
2. ‘An abstract space in which anything can happen’. How does the production create the effect of the various spaces in Vienna throughout the play, without having numerous set changes? Answer with reference to the delivery and meaning of the text and visual themes employed in the production.

INTERVIEWS: DESIGN II

Top: A fragment of Bernt Notke's *Death Dance* from 1463, on display at St Nicholas' Church, Tallinn, Estonia.



Middle: Still from Ingmar Bergman's *Seventh Seal* (1957) © Svensk Filmindustri.



Bottom: *Measure for Measure*: 'Dance of Death'

NICK ORMEROD – DESIGNER


Dance of Death + Bed Trick Scene

“At a certain point the production shifts form, and the Duke leads all the characters in a kind of medieval ‘dance of death’, in which he as leading character is dressed as a friar. You can see many medieval drawings and prints of Death Dances – Ingmar Bergman also, very famously uses this in his movie [The Seventh Seal](#). Death Dances symbolise the universality of death - no matter one station’s in life, whether Duke, deputy, prisoner or bawd, Death awaits us all. In our production the Dance of Death initiates the Duke’s telling of his plan to save Isabella, while the plan is simultaneously acted out onstage. You could say though that with the chorus onstage there is a sort of death dance that takes place throughout the whole play.”

EXERCISE: Act 4, Scene 1:

 : [1:11:38](#)



1.  : Watch this scene and compare it with Shakespeare's original text. What do you notice? (Below is a transcript of the edited script Cheek by Jowl made for *Measure for Measure*, this may help).
2. How does the production change the mood or 'shift form' with the Dance of Death? What is the overall effect of the dance? Why do you think the company chose to do this?
3. This is the first mention of the character Mariana in the play. What do we learn of her character? How is she portrayed?

(Act 3, Scene 1)

DUKE VINCENTIO:

The hand that hath made you fair hath made you good.
The assault that Angelo hath made to you, fortune hath conveyed to my understanding.
How will you do to content Angelo, and to save your brother?

ISABELLA:

I am now going to resolve him:
I had rather my brother die by the law than my son should be unlawfully born.

DUKE VINCENTIO:

Fasten your ear on my advisings.
There lives a lady in strict seclusion who lives some miles beyond the city walls.
Her name is Marianna.
She lived in expectation of a mighty dowry,

and thus Lord Angelo professed his suit to her.
His persuasions did succeed. The lady gave consent, and they arranged to wed.
But mark how heavily this befell lady.
The mighty dowry much expected by Angelo did in a storm be swallowed by the sea.
Thus in an hour did vanish both the fortune of this luckless Marianna
and so too her husband in vow, the constant seeming Angelo.
But how out of this can she avail?
It is a rupture that you may easily heal:
and the cure of it not only saves your brother,
but keeps you from dishonour in doing it.
Go you to Angelo; answer his requiring with a plausible obedience;
On a token to call on him upon the heavy middle of the night
we shall advise this wronged maid to stead up your appointment, go in your place;
and here, by this, is your brother saved, your honour untainted,
the poor Mariana advantaged, and the corrupt deputy scaled.
What think you of it?

ISABELLA:

The image of it gives me content already.

(Act 4, Scene 1)

MARIANA:

Take, O, take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn.



INTERVIEWS: THE DUKE AND BARNARDINE

NICK ORMEROD – DESIGNER

The Duke's Journey

"The play follows the subjective journey of Duke Vincentio - at the very beginning we see the Duke created as a personality out of the group of characters who act like a chorus through the first four Acts. Throughout the play, the different characters are metamorphosed onto the stage by leaving the group while the remainder watch the action onstage throughout. The group is led primarily by the character Barnardine, in whom we begin to see one whole aspect of the Duke's personality and with whom he becomes reconciled at the end."

DECLAN DONNELLAN – DIRECTOR

'There, but for the grace of God, go I'

"Barnardine is an immensely interesting and important character, but is quite often played down in productions of *Measure for Measure*. The scene in the last Act [where the Duke pardons Barnardine](#) is often omitted completely. Many people think it is quite an unnecessary scene, or is perhaps meant to be comedic. We puzzled over that scene for a long time. The more we thought about it, the more we began to believe it was really important to the entire play."

"Barnardine is a man who's beyond salvation, beyond redemption. He's been sentenced to death. He has been judged as having no right to be alive. In that scene I think the Duke realises that he himself has the potential to be heir to the same sins that Barnardine is heir to. He has seen how the 'good' Angelo has fallen. There is an old saying, 'There, but for the Grace of God, go I'. You could say this means 'Thank God I'm not Barnardine', but what that saying also means is – 'in life there is a chance I could be like Barnardine and have made the decisions he has done, and end up like him'. At the end the Duke has seen himself in Barnardine and in some symbolic way says 'Hey! You're a part of me; I share humanity with you, I can pray like you, I can sing like you, I can shit like you, I *do all of the different things that are all together what it is to be a human* like you'. And the Duke, in a gesture of some kind of respect, lets Barnardine go."



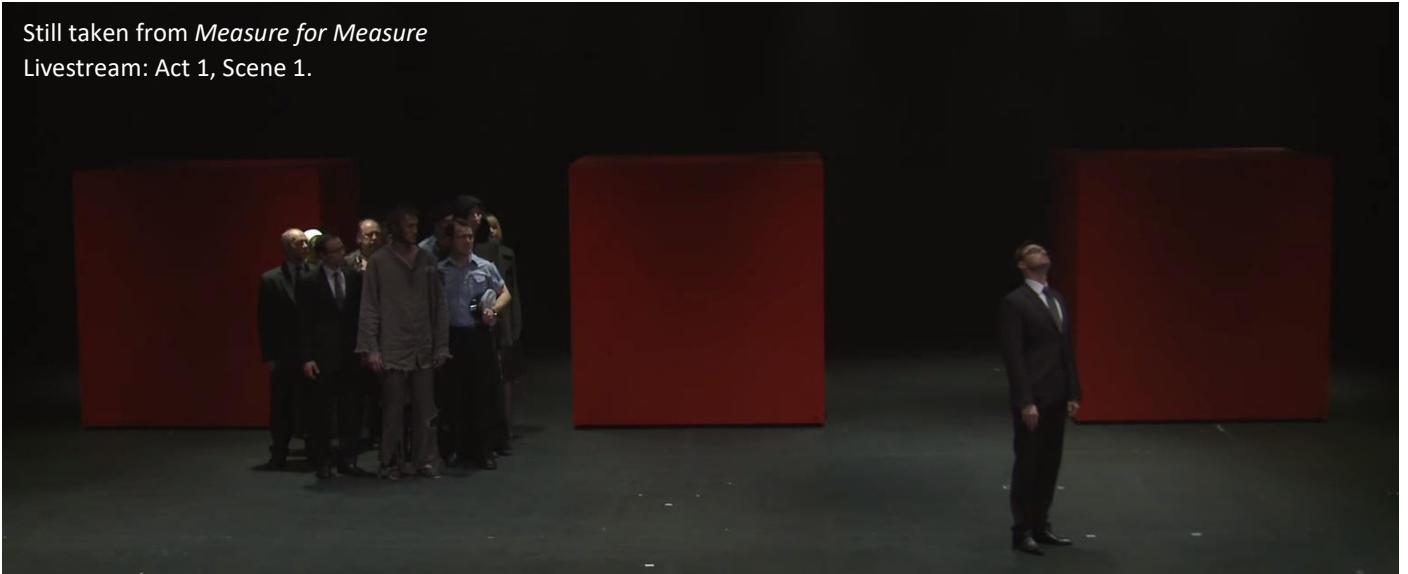
'Good' and 'Bad'


"The Duke has great problems in being a good person, because he knows he's not a good person, as none of us are. We all have the potential to do good things and bad things, but we're not born 'good' and we're not born 'bad'; we have choices and choices are uncomfortable because it means I could do a 'bad' thing tomorrow or I could do a 'good' thing tomorrow. I think it's very difficult for us to tolerate the fact that there's good things and bad things inside each individual. So we 'split' – we like to 'split', we like to say the 'bad' person is over there, the 'good' person is me. This is why we scapegoat minorities, why we scapegoat other people every day in classrooms, at work, in the street, just so we can preserve our own sense of being 'good'. It's uncomfortable to think like this, but we want other people to be categorically 'bad', so we can be categorically 'good'. In *Measure for Measure*, the criminal Barnardine is this appalling lump of everything we can all carefully despise – and we can all be like a 'good' Angelo towards a 'bad' Barnardine, because we're all carefully 'above' him, because Angelo is carefully above him – and Barnardine is carefully beneath."

EXERCISE: Act 1, Scene 1:

 : [0:00:00](#)

Still taken from *Measure for Measure*
Livestream: Act 1, Scene 1.



1.  : Watch the play's beginning. What is the effect of the company's entrance? What does this introduction suggest about the play?
2. Compare the dynamic between the Duke and Barnardine, at [1:21:17](#) and [1:51:33](#) – what changes between the two? Why do you think this is?
3. 'People shouldn't be afraid of their government. Governments should be afraid of their people' (Alan Moore).

In light of this statement, discuss how those in power interact and behave with those without power in *Measure for Measure*.

INTERVIEWS: ANGELO – CHARACTER ANALYSIS



Photo: Johan Persson

ANDREI KUZICHEV – ANGELO

A Complex Man

“Declan gives many levels to every character; so, considering Angelo, in a certain scene he’ll give me an idea about what it is to be a powerful man, or [what it’s like to come into power for the first time](#) - in another scene I’ll focus on [how one would feel speaking to a woman for the first time](#). Another idea was looking what it would be like to try and be good, to try and be religious – [even when you can feel something terrible growing inside you](#). Declan helps me to connect these different ideas from scene to scene.”

“You can see that the design of the show is boldly red and black. Everything is symbolic, bold and absolute; in the scenes where you’re moving as a chorus you need to play along with this because the chorus is a little bit like a symbol, but inside a scene with dialogue you cannot be like a symbol, because it makes you closed and not like a real character – so inside a scene you should find something more complex. You see, sometimes when we perform, Angelo isn’t an entirely ‘powerful’ man, sometimes he is a victim – we can do this because during rehearsals we tried many variants in character and all these variants are possible to play and sometimes when I feel it’s possible and my opposite partner gives me the opportunity, I could be the victim – I could be weak. Angelo is not a black and white character, he’s much more complex.”

DECLAN DONNELLAN – DIRECTOR

'A Man of Stricture and Firm Abstinence' Act 1, Scene 3

“The problem is when people or society feel weak, we feel frightened and we are often attracted to very certain and assured people. Adolf Hitler was very certain, most right-wing dictators are certain. They don't have any doubt and so people become attracted to them, and it's a dangerous attraction, in that particularly at times of great stress people look to a certain and assertive leader.”

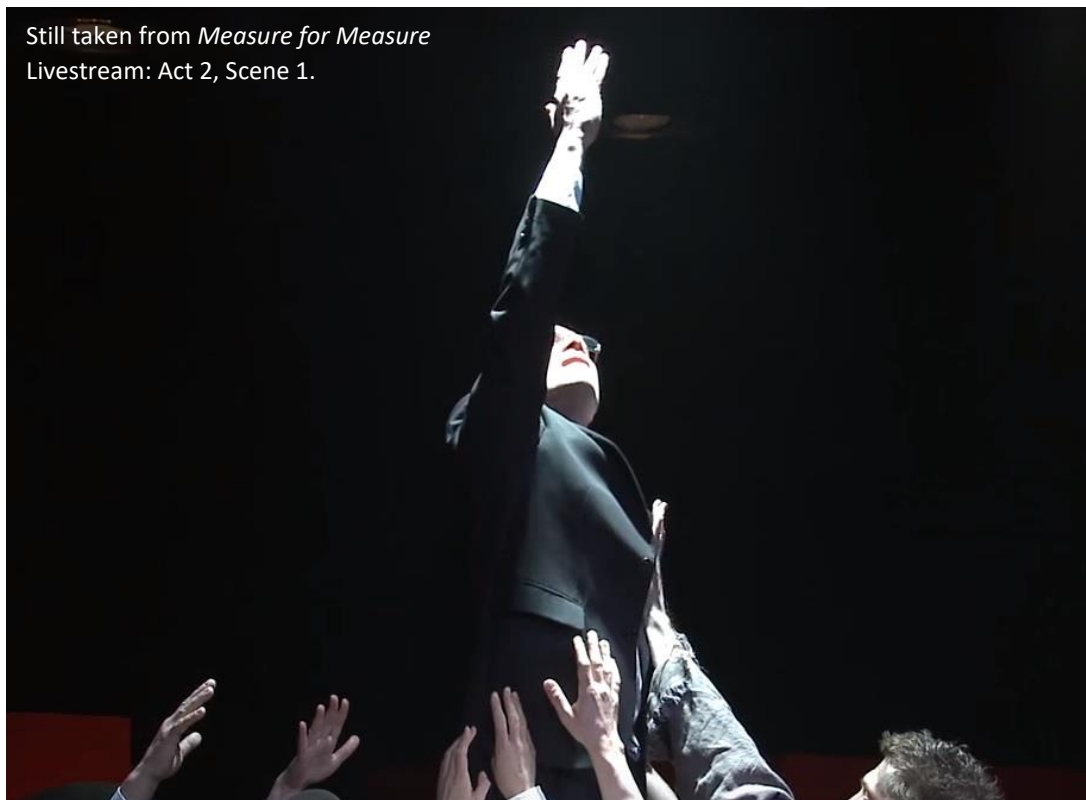
“But, life isn't certain; it isn't black and white, and if you choose someone to lead you who is certain and assured, you will actually find there is a part of them they have repressed, and usually that is a dark part of them. The Duke is attracted to Angelo (and not Escalus for example) to rule in his absence because Angelo is known to be firm, certain and unswerving in his dedication to the law.”

“Dictators often come into power after a period of chaos because a large amount of people want stability. They will become attracted to someone who can impose great certainty and order and rules. But rules are nothing to do with mercy, mercy is something that subverts rules. Rules aren't very much to do with love. There are many problems with rules, rules are principles but we must still use our judgement in every single case.”


Worse Than A Villain?

“I don't think we should call Angelo a villain, I think Angelo is far worse than a villain. I think Angelo is a 'good' person, and it's a brilliant example of how we should be wary of those who believe themselves to be 'good' people. It's nearly always narcissistic and that narcissism often holds something much darker, it often disguises somebody who is not very honest with themselves. Decent human beings are a mixture of good and bad, they have weaknesses, and they can see other people's weaknesses, but there is a humility there. You might go so far as to say there is a certain humour in being a genuine, ordinary person.”

“I think Angelo is very vulnerable because he perceives himself as being above other people, he thinks he's a 'good' person, that he's more 'good' than other people. He narcissistically believes himself to be above everybody else, ordinary people, who he sees as just 'sinners'. As we see in *Measure for Measure*, this is incorrect, he is in fact vulnerable to the same temptations as everybody. The fact that he doesn't realise this makes him dangerous.”



EXERCISE: Character Analysis – Angelo

- : Watch the scene below or analyse the photograph on the previous page. How is Angelo made to look prior to the excerpt below? How do The Chorus appear to treat him at first?
- What makes a good ruler? Who is a better ruler: Duke Vincentio or Angelo?
- Watch/Read both the below excerpts. What has happened to Angelo in the time between the two? What is striking about his argument in Act 2, Scene 2? Who is he arguing with?

Act 2, Scene 1: : 0:11:37

ANGELO

We must not make a scarecrow of the law,
Setting it up to fear the birds of prey,
And let it keep one shape, till custom make it
Their perch and not their terror.

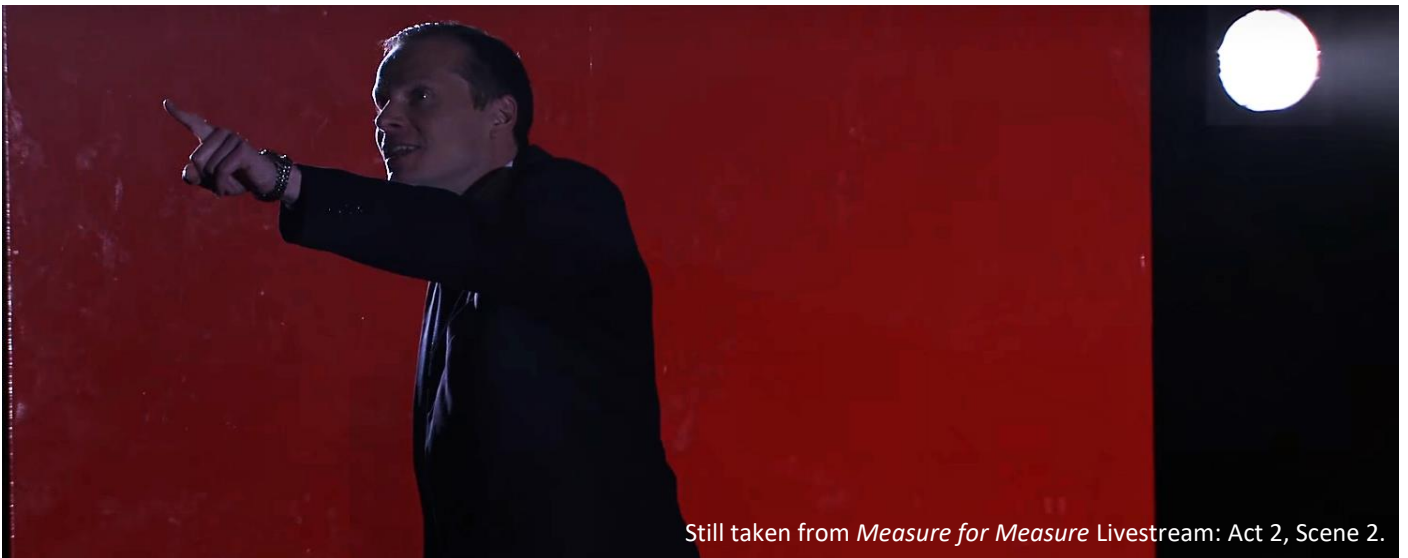
ESCALUS

Ay, but yet
Let us be keen, and rather cut a little,
Than fall, and bruise to death. Alas, this gentleman
Whom I would save, had a most noble father!
Let but your honour know,
Whom I believe to be most strait in virtue,
That, in the working of your own affections,
Had time cohered with place or place with wishing,
Or that the resolute acting of your blood
Could have attain'd the effect of your own purpose,
Whether you had not sometime in your life
Err'd in this point which now you censure him,
And pull'd the law upon you.

ANGELO

'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,
Another thing to fall. I not deny,
The jury, passing on the prisoner's life,
May in the sworn twelve have a thief or two
Guiltier than him they try. What's open made to justice,
That justice seizes: what know the laws
That thieves do pass on thieves? 'Tis very pregnant,
The jewel that we find, we stoop and take't
Because we see it; but what we do not see
We tread upon, and never think of it.
You may not so extenuate his offence
For I have had such faults; but rather tell me,
When I, that censure him, do so offend,
Let mine own judgment pattern out my death,
And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

(Note: In Cheek by Jowl's production of *Measure for Measure* Escalus' and Angelo's dialogue about Claudio's fate in Act 2, Scene 1 is delayed until a slightly later scene: [0:20:02](#)).



Still taken from *Measure for Measure* Livestream: Act 2, Scene 2.

Act 2, Scene 2: 🎬 : 0:30:55

ISABELLA

'Save your honour!

Exeunt ISABELLA, LUCIO, and Provost

ANGELO

From thee, even from thy virtue!
What's this, what's this? Is this her fault or mine?
The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?
Not she: nor doth she tempt: but it is I
That, lying by the violet in the sun,
Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,
Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be
That modesty may more betray our sense
Than woman's lightness? Having waste ground enough,
Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary
And pitch our evils there? O, fie, fie, fie!
What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo?
Dost thou desire her foully for those things
That make her good? O, let her brother live!
Thieves for their robbery have authority
When judges steal themselves. What, do I love her,
That I desire to hear her speak again,
And feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on?
O cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint,
With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous
Is that temptation that doth goad us on
To sin in loving virtue: never could the strumpet,
With all her double vigour, art and nature,
Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid
Subdues me quite. Even till now,
When men were fond, I smiled and wonder'd how.

Exit

MEASURE FOR MEASURE: 2015 COMPANY



Alexander
Arsent'ev
Duke Vincentio



Anastasia
Lebedeva
Juliet/Francis



Yuri
Rumyantsev
Escalus



Alexander
Feklistov
Lucio



Ivan
Litvinenko
Executioner



Petr Rykov
Claudio



Anna
Vardevanian
Isabella



Alexander
Matrosova
Provost



Igor Teplov
Barnardine



Nikolay
Kislichenko
Elbow



Elmira Mirel
Mariana/Mistress Overdone



Andrei
Kuzichev
Angelo



Alexey Rakhmanov
Pompey

CREATIVE TEAM

Director
Designer
Assistant Director
Lighting Designer
Composer
Choreographer
Technical Director

Lighting
Sound
Wardrobe
Props

Makeup

Stagehand
Stage Manager
Surtitle Editing
Surtitle Operator & Interpreter
Consultant Producer
General Manager of the Pushkin Theatre
Artistic Director of the Pushkin Theatre
Production Photography

Declan Donnellan
Nick Ormerod
Kirill Sbitnev
Sergei Skornetsky
Pavel Akimkin
Irina Kashuba
Alexander Solomin

Pavel Bolotin
Evgeniia Bilinkis
Elena Vorobyeva
Ekaterina Vitushkina

Elizaveta Pravosudova

Vladimir Mazlov
Marina Krymova
Anna Kolesnikova
Liliia Kazakova
Anna Kolesnikova
Anna Volk
Evgeny Pisarev
Johan Persson



**ТЕАТР ИМЕНИ
ПУШКИНА**

Produced by Cheek by Jowl and the Pushkin theatre, Moscow in a co-production with the Barbican, London; Les Géméaux/Sceaux/Scène nationale; Centro Dramático Nacional, Madrid (INAEM).

BIBLIOGRAPHY & FURTHER READING

Online Articles of Possible Interest:

[Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web, urges Britain to fight 'snooper's charter' \(The Guardian\)](#)

[Massive Police Crackdown On China's 'Sin City' Dongguan And Its Prostitution Industry \(IB Times\)](#)

[Robert Menard: France's strongest Far-Right Mayor \(BBC Website\)](#)

[Mark Lawson: The Power of Shame, Why Measure for Measure is more relevant than ever \(The Guardian\)](#)

From Cheek by Jowl:

[VIDEO: *Measure for Measure*: Livestream Recording](#)

[VIDEO: *Measure for Measure*: Design](#)

[VIDEO: *Measure for Measure*: Isabella & Lucio discuss their roles](#)

[VIDEO: *Measure for Measure*: Cheek by Jowl's Artistic Team discuss the play](#)

[Measure for Measure Production Programme](#)

[Cheek by Jowl Sophie Hamilton Archive](#)

[Archive Entry for *Measure for Measure*](#)

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Get in touch with feedback or questions:

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