

DIDASKALIA 

The Journal for Ancient Performance



Didaskalia is an electronic journal dedicated to the study of all aspects of ancient Greek and Roman performance.

DIDASKALIA

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About Didaskalia

Didaskalia (διδασκαλία) is the term used since ancient times to describe the work a playwright did to teach his chorus and actors the play. The official records of the dramatic festivals in Athens were the διδασκαλία. *Didaskalia* now furthers the scholarship of the ancient performance.

Didaskalia is an English-language, online publication about the performance of Greek and Roman drama, dance, and music. We publish peer-reviewed scholarship on performance and reviews of the professional activity of artists and scholars who work on ancient drama.

We welcome submissions on any aspect of the field. If you would like your work to be reviewed, please write to editor@didaskalia.net at least three weeks in advance of the performance date. We also seek interviews with practitioners and opinion pieces. For submission guidelines, go to didaskalia.net.

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Note

Didaskalia is an online journal. This print representation of Volume 8 is an inadequate approximation of the web publication at didaskalia.net, which includes sound, video, and live hyperlinks.

Ancient Drama in Performance: Theory and Practice

We are pleased to present the proceedings of Ancient Drama in Performance: Theory and Practice (Didaskalia 8.21–8.31), organized by current Didaskalia editor Amy R. Cohen, who introduces the collection.

In earlier volumes of Didaskalia, these articles might have constituted an individual, themed issue. In our new practice of publishing a continuous annual volume, such collections will be numbered in sequence but will bear an indication of their related theme in the table of contents. These Ancient Drama in Performance pieces will all have “ADIP I” as part of their references on the site, but they may be cited simply by their volume and number.

Amy R. Cohen
Randolph College

In October 2010, inspired by the success and importance of the biannual Blackfriars Conference,¹ Randolph College hosted *Ancient Drama in Performance: Theory and Practice* to coincide with the college's production of *Hecuba*. Readers of *Didaskalia* are friendly to the underlying inspiration of the conference: the potential for new insights by means of investigating ancient drama as it was practiced and as it is practiced. The conference brought together students, scholars, and practitioners of ancient drama on the campus to learn from one another within the context of an ancient playing space.²

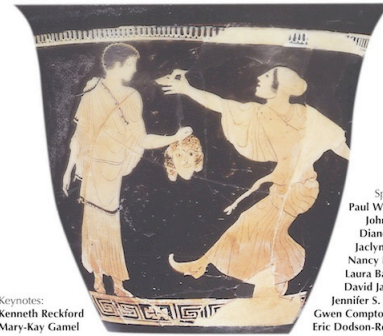
We invited conference-goers to witness and reflect on an original-practices production and to share and discuss other productive ways of playing Greek drama. They had the opportunity to use student actors to demonstrate their theories, if they chose, and to present them in a context that insists on the play as an experience.

All the conference speakers were invited to contribute to these proceedings: some authors chose to give us permission simply to present the video of their talks, others have paired their text with a record of the talk on the day, others include their talk from the conference along with an expanded version of their paper, and some have developed or changed their thinking to such a degree that video from a year ago would be incongruous.³

Jennifer Starkey began the day's proceedings, and begins this collection, with “Play in the Sunshine,” in which shows how Athenian playwrights could use the sun itself as a dramatic tool. Nancy Nanney's “Adapting Hecuba: Where Do Problems Begin?” proposes a pedagogically fruitful classroom script. Jaclyn Dudek, inspired by Shakespeare performance, suggests a new staging in “The Twice Born and One More: Portraying Dionysus in the Bacchae,” and David J. Jacobson, raising important points about pronouns, shows what not to do with Aristophanes in “A Gestural Phallacy.” In “Double the Message” Diane J. Rayor solves a casting problem in *Antigone*, and Eric Dodson-Robinson solves a staging problem in “Performing the ‘Unperformable’ Extispicy Scene in Seneca's Oedipus Rex.” Using a scene from

ANCIENT DRAMA IN PERFORMANCE: THEORY AND PRACTICE

October 9–10, 2010 The Mabel K. Whiteside Greek Theatre
Randolph College Lynchburg, Virginia



Keynotes:
Kenneth Reckford
Mary-Kay Gamel

Speakers:
Paul Woodruff
John Given
Diane Rayor
Jaclyn Dudek
Nancy Nanney
Laura Banducci
David Jacobson
Jennifer S. Starkey
Gwen Compton-Engle
Eric Dodson-Robinson

in conjunction with the 2010 Randolph College Greek Play: HECUBA

<http://faculty2.randolphcollege.edu/ancientdrama> 434/947-8306
sponsored in part by The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities: www.virginiafoundation.org vfh

THE PRACTICE MATTERS TO THE UNDERSTANDING

The Conference Flyer

Sophocles' *Elektra*, Paul Woodruff stages and reflects on "[Compassion in Chorus and Audience](#)," and John Given demonstrates some solutions for the modern director who is "[Staging the Reconciliation Scene of Aristophanes' Lysistrata](#)." Finally, Laura Banducci's "[The Delayed Feast: Plautus in its Festival Performance Context](#)" shows how Plautus withholds satisfaction from a hungry audience.

We also present here in its entirety the video recording of the keynote address by Kenneth Reckford, entitled, "[Euripides' Hecuba: the Text and the Event](#)," in which he gives his ideas about the two parts of *Hecuba* and the loss of innocence, and how we might understand how Euripides engages Aristotelian catharsis and recognition. The talk, however, ranges widely as Reckford touches on Shakespeare and Ibsen and Stoppard, the prickly difficulties of translation and collaboration, what constitutes the shocking, and, in general, what changes and what endures in the theater.

The other centerpiece of the day was a production of Jay Kardan and Laura-Gray Street's *Hecuba in a New Translation*. The two authors collaborated on a powerful, poetic script, which appears here alongside the working script for the production and a video of the October 9th performance. After the show, Mary-Kay Gamel led a wide-ranging [Talkback](#) that engaged conference participants, spectators, and cast and crew with many issues of theory and practice that arose in the play.

The great variety of topics at the conference and the different sorts of problems presented and solved by consideration of what happens on the stage show that, indeed, "the practice matters to the understanding."

notes

This is a revised version: it omits a paragraph that explained a delay in 8.32 and 8.33, and it includes the paragraph that now introduces those two pieces.

¹ A conference at the [American Shakespeare Center](#) in Staunton, Virginia, the [Blackfriars Conference](#) brings together scholars and practitioners of early modern drama in a replica of Shakespeare's indoor theater. The Blackfriars Conference also inspired the very short presentation times (only 10 or 13 minutes), enforced in our case by a fury (rather than a bear).

² The conference would not have been possible without the hard work of Rhiannon Knol (conference assistant), the friendship of George Fredric Franko (co-conspirator and on-call master of ceremonies), and the generous support of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

³ The video quality is the best that was available. Some talks include their question and answer period afterwards, but the sound quality was such that some questions are unintelligible, and so we have cut some portions.