

Moving Shakespeare

19-20 October 2017

**Market Theatre Foundation
Newtown, Johannesburg**

This colloquium was co-organised by the Centre for Indian Studies in Africa (CISA) at the University of the Witwatersrand, the Wits School of Arts and the School of Literature, Language and Media, with support from the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa. Through talks, screenings, workshops and performances, participants – including theatre makers, dancers, choreographers, scholars and students – explored and reflected on the ways in which Shakespeare ‘moves’.

Sandra Young of the University of Cape Town delivered the keynote lecture, on Vishal Bardwaj’s film *Haider* (an adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* set in Kashmir). This starting-point – thinking about Shakespeare’s movement across the Indian Ocean and, more broadly, the Global South – was a response to the visit to South Africa of Indian Kathakali dancer, actor and playwright Arjun Raina. “Moving Shakespeare” culminated in a performance of Raina’s *The Magic Hour*, an ongoing project centred around his work with Kathakali and Shakespeare (it has previously been adapted and performed in India, Germany, Japan, France, Russia and Australia). Raina was joined by Odissi dance specialist Lillian Warrum for an exciting evening of music, dance and theatre in which Indian classical dance forms met Shakespeare’s *Othello*.

The Magic Hour offered a second point of departure for “Moving Shakespeare” – that is, the consideration of Shakespeare’s work as expressed in and through movement and dance. There were also opportunities to address movement *within* Shakespeare’s plays, in terms of the dynamics between performers and characters – experiments in ‘moving parts’ and extemporaneous ensemble work. Mark Hawkins, Sunnyboy Motaung, Oscar Buthelezi and their colleagues from Moving Into Dance Mophatong (MIDM) performed and discussed aspects of their collaboration with Raina as part of his residency at the Nirox Foundation. Sarah Roberts and Nicola Pilkington workshoped a scene from *Much Ado About Nothing* with students from the Wits School of Arts and the Market Theatre Laboratory. Pilkington also discussed the touring production of *Coriolanus* she co-directed in 2016 with cast members Sanelisiwe Yekani and William Harding. Colette Gordon of the University of the Witwatersrand framed the colloquium with a talk on “Shakespeare in Movement”, and Lliane Loots of the University of KwaZulu-Natal gave a paper on “Dancing Shakespeares” (including the work of Dada Masilo, Gregory Maqoma and Helge Letonja).