



# **Acting In Shakespeare**

Robert Cohen

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Acting in Shakespeare helps actors at all levels develop the skills they need to perform in Shakespearean plays. Lessons proceed in carefully graduated steps from simple, single lines to short speeches to more difficult, sophisticated scenes. A wealth of historical information and insightful descriptions of Shakespearean times and players bring Shakespeare's work within the actor's reach.

- Abundant exercises build gradually in difficulty, giving student actors confidence that they can act in Shakespeare. Exercises are appropriate not only for use in the classroom but also for independent study.
- Actors often find Shakespearean language and customs unusual and intimidating. Acting in Shakespeare relates Shakespearean acting to real-life, contemporary situations and common acting theory, helping actors realize that performing Shakespeare is well within their grasp.
- "Acting in Shakespeare is difficult. . . . His verse is not the language of our everyday American speech; the costumes in which he visualized his characters are not the clothing of everyday American life. Playing Shakespeare may mean living in a very different world from the one we normally inhabit." Robert Cohen, from the Preface
- "By book's end, students can reasonably be expected to be comfortable and confident with Shakespeare's demands. . . . [His] chapter on physicalizing Shakespeare contains a number of stimulating exercises (Cohen's strength as an acting teacher). . . . Cohen helps students apply his lessons: I can't imagine a group of students not being enthralled by Cohen's ingenious concept. . . . Acting in Shakespeare is so readily accessible and full of such "do-able" exercises that it should be a staple of period style classes for years to come." theatre journal



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