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Fischlin, Daniel, project dir. Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP). Archive

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month, with the last entry dated 24 January 2020—a critique of the 2019 Oregon Shakespeare Festival. While COVID-19 may have threatened the continuity of Shakespeare performance as live events, and consequently led to the absence of articles, the death knell for this site may have been sounded even before the global pandemic occurred. Given how rapidly digital technology transforms and (re)invents virtual experiences, not only are blogs now regarded as an archaic medium and mode of Internet communication, particularly by the younger generation, they lack the appeal of more visually alluring applications prevalent today. Even as one sees the importance and value of Reviewing Shakespeare, one wonders if its continuity can be sustained.

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Fischlin, Daniel, project dir.

Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP). Archive.

Guelph: University of Guelph, 2004. Accessed 1 December 2020.
canadianshakespeares.ca.

The Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project (CASP, canadianshakespeares.ca/) is a digital archive of resources relating to the historical and more recent reception of Shakespeare in Canada, based at the University of Guelph. As the project website notes, “CASP is the first research project of its kind devoted to the systematic exploration and documentation of the ways in which Shakespeare has been adapted into a national, multicultural theatrical practice” (“Canadian Shakespeare News”). The project quickly outgrew its initial aims, which founder Daniel Fischlin and early team members Dorothy Hadfield, Gordon Lester, and Mark A. McCutcheon describe in a retrospective article as “conceptualized in primarily literary and historical terms with typical project outcomes projected—a critical book, an anthology for use in pedagogy, a CD-ROM of relevant archival materials, and a comprehensive bibliography.”¹

1. Daniel Fischlin, Dorothy Hadfield, Gordon Lester, and Mark A. McCutcheon, “‘The Web of Our Life Is of a Mingled Yarn’: The Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project, Humanities Scholarship, and ColdFusion,” *College Literature* 36.1 (2009): 78, doi: 10.1353/lit.0.0032.

Where Fischlin had expected to find fifty to one hundred scripts for CASP, a year into the project “the number of confirmed plays had doubled, with an extensive ‘new leads’ list that numbered in the thousands.”²

Only a tiny fraction of these scripts is reproduced on the site. The project went live in 2004 with “information” on over 450 plays, but the “CASP Online Anthology” captures only six scripts from the nineteenth century, twenty-eight from the twentieth, and eighteen from the current century, the most recent ones dating from 2007. Alongside these, however, are abundant materials to support teaching and research (or simply diversion), including a collection of clips from film, television, and radio ranging from the sublime (Alec Guinness providing acting advice at the then-new Stratford Shakespeare Festival in 1953) to the frankly ridiculous (Canadian comedy legends Wayne and Shuster, the Royal Canadian Air Farce). CASP has produced a series of its own short documentaries as well as a virtual exhibit, *Shakespeare Made in Canada*, all available on the site.

These materials complement the digital performances of Shakespeare in Canada available through, for example, the Stratford Festival’s streaming service *stratfest@home*. Where Stratford’s stage-to-screen productions, interviews with stars like Colm Feore and Margaret Atwood, and behind-the-scenes documentaries are often glossy and glamorous, CASP’s sometimes surprising content offers a broad range that I find very useful to guide students towards their own engagements with Shakespeare. If a Stratford production is aspirational (and, to be fair, much of the CASP material is, too), the antics of the Elsinore beer-swilling “hosers” in *Strange Brew*, a 1983 film very loosely based on *Hamlet* and featured on the CASP site, may be just as inspirational.

CASP is eclectic and extensive, seeming at times less curated than hoarded. In an article classifying Shakespeare digital resources according to their processes of curation and collection, Christy Desmet describes CASP as “a digital archive built upon a database [that] also bears the stamp of its originators’ personal perceptions and goals, which makes it more like a collection.”³ As Desmet notes, “the database and archive are, in effect, reliant on the ethos of its creators—their assessment of what is missing and what we need

2. Fischlin, et al., 80.

3. Christy Desmet, “The Art of Curation: Searching for Global Shakespeares in the Digital Archives,” *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation* 11.1 (2017): 7.

more of—revealing the lingering shadow of the collection at the foundation of this project.”⁴ That ethos does not imply endorsement: as a feature on CASP in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* notes, one of Fischlin’s “least favorite adaptations, which he considers profoundly racist but which he nonetheless put on the site for the sake of completeness, is *Chief Shaking Spear Rides Again, or The Taming of the Sioux* (1975), by Warren Graves.”⁵ Some of the special features, for example on Indigenous and francophone Shakespeares, are more accurate markers of the ethos informing the collecting process that Desmet discerned.

CASP has been an important resource for work about Shakespeare in Canada, including, most recently, the collection I edited with Irena Makaryk, *Shakespeare and Canada: Remembrance of Ourselves* (2017), along with the special issue of *Borrowers and Lenders* edited by Fischlin (issue 3.1, 2007), *Shakespeare Made in Canada* edited by Fischlin and Judith Nasby (2007), Ric Knowles’s anthology *The Shakespeare’s Mine: Adapting Shakespeare in Anglophone Canada* (2009), Leanore Lieblein’s anthology *A Certain William: Adapting Shakespeare in Francophone Canada* (2009), and Jennifer Drouin’s monograph *Shakespeare in Québec: Nation, Gender, and Adaptation* (2014).⁶ Some of the most exciting scholarship is found right on the CASP site, in the “special topics” section featuring brief commissioned essays on everything from tobacco sponsorship of the Stratford Festival to a critical analysis of Keanu Reeves’s “most excellent” (not really, I was there) 1995 turn as Hamlet at the Manitoba Theatre Centre.

Besides fostering research on Shakespeare in Canada, CASP has also trained a veritable army of digital humanities scholars and provided an example

4. Desmet, 8.

5. Peter Monaghan, “The Many Faces of Shakespeare,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 52.45 (2006): A6.

6. Irena Rima Makaryk and Kathryn Prince, eds., *Shakespeare and Canada: Remembrance of Ourselves* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2017); Daniel Fischlin, ed., “Canadian Shakespeares,” special issue, *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation* 3.1 (2007); Daniel Fischlin and Judith Nasby, eds., *Shakespeare Made in Canada* (Guelph: Macdonald Stewart Art Centre, 2007); Richard Paul Knowles, ed., *The Shakespeare’s Mine: Adapting Shakespeare in Anglophone Canada* (Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 2009); Leanore Lieblein, ed., *A Certain William: Adapting Shakespeare in Francophone Canada* (Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 2009); Jennifer Drouin, *Shakespeare in Quebec: Nation, Gender, and Adaptation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

of what is possible. CASP was initially supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the Government of Ontario, and the University of Guelph. After its launch in 2004, it was upgraded to version 2.0 in 2007 and refreshed in 2013 using open source XHTML coding, replacing the initial ColdFusion programming discussed in Fischlin, Hadfield, Lester, and McCutcheon's retrospective article (see note 1). Although it is no longer growing, it will remain a crucial source for anyone working on Canadian and global Shakespeares as long as it is available online.

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Bandín, Elena, Laura Campillo, Juan F. Cerdá, Keith Gregor, Jesús Tronch, and Noemí Vera, project leads.

Shakrep: Shakespearean Performance in Spain. Archive.

Murcia, Spain: Universidad de Murcia, 2007. Accessed 30 November 2020.
um.es/shakespeare/representaciones.

Shakrep: Shakespearean Performance in Spain is the performance database in the website *The Reception of Shakespeare's Works in Spanish and European Cultures* (um.es/shakespeare), both managed by the research project Shakespeare in Spain within the Framework of His European Reception ("Presentation"). This research project gathers experts on both Shakespeare in Spain and European Shakespeare and can be considered a direct heir of the European trend of Shakespeare research developed in the 1990s that is still very much alive thanks to the European Shakespeare Research Association. The purpose of the website is to provide information on the results of the research project (general information on the group's members, their publications, and links to other Internet sites devoted to Shakespeare in Europe) and, at the same time, to host the three databases with which this group of scholars based in Murcia, Spain, aim to contribute to the research and teaching of William Shakespeare.

As stated on the main site, the general objective of both the research project and the website is "to contribute to the knowledge and the study of the reception of Shakespeare in Spain since the 18th century on both the Spanish