

"Hamlet" at Brookfield Theatre

Sides: Younger Man

HAMLET

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wanned,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit, and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Yet I can say nothing—no, not for a king
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward?
For it cannot be but I am pigeon-livered. Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words
And fall a-cursing like a very drab.
Fie upon 't! About, my brains! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have, by the very cunning of the scene,
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions; I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick. If he do blanch,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil, and the devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape; I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.