The 'Shakespearience'

Professor Ewan Fernie discusses his research.

Title: **The 'Shakespearience' (/schools/edacs/departments/shakespeare/research/videos/fernie-ewan-research.aspx)**
Duration: 2.48 mins

I'm Ewan Fernie and I'm Professor and Chair of Shakespeare Studies here at the Shakespeare Institute here in Stratford.

And as a critic, what I'm really passionate about and interested in is the life there is to be found in Shakespeare and other literature and I really believe in doing justice to and allowing the fact that reading Shakespeare or seeing Shakespeare is 'experience' - that it's a kind of virtual but no less intense for that, sensuous or erotic, ethical, spirtiual experience.

And the latter has been a particular focus of my research and one of the things I'm interested in and committed to is experimenting with the traditional form of the critical essay, because there's a massive gap between the form of the Shakespeare play with all its embodied life, and a linear critical essay, you know, great though such a thing is, and important though it can be for conveying certain kinds of truths.

But I'm interested in stretching the essay form and playing around with it to see if it can do justice to other more extensive possibilities of literature to give us a wider sense as if you're widening an eye, of what literature and Shakepseare can be. I also write creatively, I've written a novel with my Shakespeare colleague Simon Palfrey and recently I've written a poetic liturgy with Andrew Motion and Jo Shapcott and Michael Symmons Roberts and Andrew Shanks and I believe in a kind of real reciprocity between critisism on the one hand and creativity on the other.

And thirdly I believe in 'big picture Shakespeare' - I really feel strongly that while it's really important and useful to see Shakespeare in relation to his contemporaries, it's equally important to see that Shakespeare is alive in periods far distant from his own time and similarly places.

So I'm very interested in seeing Shakespeare in conjunction with Wagner or in conjunction with Dostoevsky and with the best and most powerful and most exciting art from all over the place and I'd be very interested to hear from other researchers who feel the same and similarly from research students who want to experiment and push the envelope in this way and you know, what better place to do it than here - for all I've said about Shakespeare being alive elsewhere.

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