

performance style because they perform in modern dress, with no scenery and few props, and without using modern lighting, sound or stage effects. Many of the authentic Elizabethan garments owned by the Swan Theatre Company had been passed onto them. Although Minimalist performances of this kind may be closer to the Elizabethan originals than, for example, the spectacular Victorian performances of Shakespeare's plays (with detailed painted backdrops and archaeologically correct costume and stage designs, and sometimes even real horses, real boats and real canals) they are still very far from Elizabethan performances. A famous picture of a performance of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* (one of the few pictures of Elizabethan actors at work) shows Titus in a breastplate and a supposedly historical garment, very loosely based on the Roman toga, while one of his guards (in a play set in Roman times) wears the familiar armour of an Elizabethan soldier and another wears a foreign looking, possibly Turkish influenced, suit of armour. In reality the Elizabethans used far more sophisticated props, costumes and stage effects than is sometimes assumed. Elizabethan costuming seems to have been a strange combination of what was (for the Elizabethans) modern dress, and costumes which – while not being genuinely historically or culturally accurate – had a historical or foreign flavour.