

Prologue

reformer by Russ Hunt

The note in my edition (Nettleton and Case) says that Lacy played Bayes (so it's the playwright who says he's "reformed your stage" by his example).

Re: Prologue by Kayla MacAllister

Villiers take on how plays are put together. A new concept.

Re: Prologue by Matthew Goodwin

This sort of acts as a precursor to what the audience is in store for, it's interesting as it basically announces that the audience is going to catch a glimpse of how exactly a production is put together. It will remove the sort of romantic notions one may have about the composition of a performance, and replace these notions with what actually goes on (whether for better or for worse remains to be seen, although I am inclined to think that the process will be made a mockery).

Act I, scene I

fashionable by Russ Hunt

To be fashionable (the "new kind of wit") "'tis fighting, loving, sleeping, ryming, dying, dancing, singing, crying; and everything but thnking and sense." I like that.

Interesting to see what Bayes' rules are, and to think of what the opposite of them would be (which is, I guess, what Villiers and his friends expect us to admire). One thing for sure: they think it's funny that someone would have rules for being creative.

Re: Act I, scene I by Kayla MacAllister

-Bayes is describing to Smith and Johnson how he 'transverses" a play. It's one of the many rules that he uses.

-It is funny how Bayes tells Thunder how to say the sentence better "pr'ythee speak a little louder and with a hoarser voice".

-And how does a simile in a play be a miracle?

Re: Act I, scene I by Matthew Goodwin

Interesting that a personification of Dryden makes an appearance (Bayes).

Bayes seems a bit uptight, I can't tell whether or not he is annoyed at having to answer to Smith, or if he is simply oblivious to how pretentious he is being.

Is it smith who will finance the play, is that what Johnson is attempting to accomplish by having Bayes talk to Smith about the piece? I am a bit unclear on this point.

Re: Act I, scene I by Tabitha Goleniec

Bayes introduces Johnson and Smith to his great production.

Due to the structure of the play the actors of the production are unsure of how to play their roles and Bayes tries explaining it to them.

Act I, scene ii

making fun of Bayes by Russ Hunt

Wonderful skewering of Bayes -- "I'm sure I shall, for I have talked bawdy to her already."

"I know not whether I make myself well understood." "I did not observe you, sir; pray, say that again." How likely is it . . . we're going to understand it? "I find the author will be very much obliged to the players, if they can make any sense out of this."
How could you not love his "delicate, dainty simile"? "And snort, and gruntle, to each other's moan."

Re: Act I, scene ii by Matthew Goodwin

I find the players at the beginning of this scene hilarious. These are the exact same sorts of questions cast members ask one another all the time. They also express the same sorts of doubts. I am beginning to think that perhaps this will be an honest look at what really goes on before a piece is performed.

Act II, scene I

novelty by Russ Hunt

Grasping the storm with an eye reminds me of the New Yorker's "Block that metaphor" column.

"I despise your Jonson and Beaumont, that borrowed all they write from nature." The values are clear. It's about "novelty."

Re: Act II, scene I by Kayla MacAllister

I am not sure what is going on with this whispering scene or why anyone is whispering.

Re: Act II, scene I by Matthew Goodwin

I find that the play (so far) has been concerned with presenting things that (at least within the text) have never been done before. I am not sure if these "new" idea's are meant to sound as ridiculous as they do, or if i am reading the text incorrectly.

Were Villiers and Dryden friends? He certainly seems to be making a great mockery of someone who is meant to remind the audience of Dryden.

Re: Act II, scene I by Tabitha Goleniec

The opening to the production is two men whispering, not sure why they need to be whispering and how it is suppose to help foreshadow anything in the future of the play.

Act II, scene ii

refusing to act it by Russ Hunt

If the actors refused to act it, it must have been wonderful. I wonder if this had ever happened to Dryden.

Re: Act II, scene ii by Kayla MacAllister

I feel that Bayes is like a teacher to the actors and he knows how to make a play successful.

Re: Act II, scene ii by Matthew Goodwin

I find it hilarious when Bayes talks of the critics. He speaks as if they are vampires, waiting to sink their teeth into his piece (in a way which will lead to them tearing it apart, or seeing the pure genius of the work, we have yet to see. It seems as if Bayes does not acknowledge that the critics can make or break a performance (or rather that he doesn't care), for it seems that he is already accepting that the critics will dislike anything he does, so he might as well make his piece as different from the norm as possible.

Re: Act II, scene ii by Tabitha Goleniec

Bayes doesn't seem to have a clear idea of how to treat his actors.

Act II, scene iii

Novelty again (and sense) by Russ Hunt

"you must ever make a simile when you are surprised, 'tis the new way of writing."

And "If they cannot find it out themselves, then e'en then let them alone for Bayes, I warrant you."

Re: Act II, scene iii by Kayla MacAllister PM

Bayes is a big supporter of the simile-"That's a general rule, you must ever make a simile when you are surprised, 'tis the new way of writing".

Re: Act II, scene iii by Matthew Goodwin

Once again, we see Bayes sitting in the audience (I am assuming), remarking how wonderful his piece is, and how brilliantly it is displayed before his eyes. I also find it interesting that there has been a specific choice made within the character of Bayes to stay away from anything which occurs naturally (such as longing being the product of love, sadness the product of death...etc.)

Re: Act II, scene iii by Tabitha Goleniec

Bayes is questioned about what is going on in the play and explains the reason they don't understand is because it is a new form of writing, though in reality it is because they really don't make any sense.

Act II, scene iv

Natural by Russ Hunt

"That, I swear, is very natural." This is amazing stuff. The value of "natural" is interesting, because plays are not actually very "natural," ever.

Re: Act II, scene iv by Kayla MacAllister

Not sure why the Physician and the Usher draw their swords?

Re: Act II, scene iv by Matthew Goodwin

I find the "y' gad" coming out of Bayes' mouth starts to wear on me at this point.

Interesting little breakdown Bayes has when his dead men cannot get themselves organized at the correct time.

Re: Act II, scene iv by Tabitha Goleniec

Why were they whispering? Why did they draw their swords? And just sitting on the throne doesn't it make much sense.

Act II, scene v

killing, stage fighting by Russ Hunt

"They all kill one another" -- what a great stage direction. I wonder how they actually performed it-- how much was flat slapstick? When Bayes falls on his nose, though, I know what that must have been like.

Re: Act II, scene v by Kayla MacAllister

The soldiers "kill" each other and rise from the dead and then Bayes breaks his nose while trying to get up after explaining to the actors how to act a certain part of a scene.

Re: Act II, scene v by Matthew Goodwin

I have to agree with Russ' comment on how great a stage direction "They all kill each other" is. If there was some element of comedy which was meant to be portrayed at this point, I can imagine it being quite a spectacle (purposely unorganized so the men simply went at one another). Alternatively they may have actually choreographed a fight, but the direction is just so flat and uninformative that I like to think the killing looked like a huge, unorganized mess (which would have been hilarious).

Re: Act II, scene v by Tabitha Goleniec

Bayes breaks his nose when trying to show the soldiers how to perform their post death dance.

Act III, scene I

Meaning by Russ Hunt

"mean? why, he never meant anything in's life. What dost talk of meaning for?" I'm never sure how consistently Smith and Johnson are differentiated. They're both pretty good at sarcasm: "what a devil is the plot good for but to bring in fine things?" "Oh, I did not know that before."

Re: Act III, scene I by Kayla MacAllister

Bayes believes in what he writes and doesn't care what people think- "As long as I know my things to be good, what care I what they say?"

Re: Act III, scene I by Matthew Goodwin

It is Bayes "fancy" to end every act with a dance (because it is ridiculous).

I find it quite entertaining that Bayes is attempting so hard to seem completely unique, that he makes decisions that are completely ridiculous (and would be awful to watch) in order to accomplish originality. I guess it is also of some interest that Bayes believes that there is something wrong with the current formula of writing a piece (he must, if he is attempting so blindly to remove himself from it).

Act III, scenes ii and iii

Sarcasm again by Russ Hunt

"Perhaps you may find too, by and by, for all this, that she's not dead neither" "Marry, that's good news indeed. I am glad of that with all my heart." Smith is getting into the swing of it.

Re: Act III, scenes ii and iii by Kayla MacAllister 2012, 11:21 PM

Bayes is getting angry and frustrated with the actors. They are not acting the scene out right.

Re: Act III, scenes ii and iii by Matthew Goodwin 04:16 PM

If I understand what is happening correctly, that this is kind of an odd place to have a scene break. Am I to understand that Bayes has several possible outcomes for every scene (based off what Smith is saying)?

Act III, scene iv

poetic language by Russ Hunt

This is almost all about poetic language. I love this rhyme. "The blackest ink of fate sure was my lot / And when she writ my name, she made a blot."

Re: Act III, scene iv by Matthew Goodwin

Prince pretty man enters late. Bayes proceeds to chide him for not paying attention. This is almost exactly how things happen when this happens during a real rehearsal (although perhaps the director is not so rude about it, unless it is something that has happened quite a lot in a short span of time).

Act III, scene v

Really dumb jokes by Russ Hunt

It's hard to write a really dumb joke. "Why did you not observe? He first resolves to go out of town, and then, s he is ulling on his boots, falls in love with her. Ha, ha, ha!"

and: "is the lance filled with wine?" I wonder what that means (if anything).

Re: Act III, scene v by Matthew Goodwin

Smith and Johnson point out to the real audience some of the inherent problems with the extravagances Bayes has taken in the production of this piece, claiming that it is impossible to know that Prince Volscius has not truly gone to Piccadilly. Bayes (In true Bayes fashion) doesn't pick up on what they are suggesting and continues (or he simply doesn't care).

Act IV, scene I

Numbers (verse) by Russ Hunt

"The world discovers now its emptiness, / And by her loss demonstrates we have less." Just try to read that aloud. "Is this not good language, now? is not that elevate?"

"who is that Drawcansir?" asks Johnson. "Why, sir, a fierce hero that frights his mistress, snubs up kins, baffles armies, and does what he will, without regard to numbers, good manners, or justice." I like "numbers" there.

"I must fill the stage." "Why fill the stage?" "Oh, sir, because your heroic verse never sounds well but when the stage is full."

Re: Act IV, scene I by Kayla MacAllister

Not sure what the play these actors are trying to portray but the way Bayes is directing the actors is funny.

Re: Act IV, scene I by Matthew Goodwin

I find it interesting that many of the scenes simply begin with Bayes announcing a ridiculous idea, and then consist of the portrayal of the idea's subsequent failure (although it is not viewed as a failure by Bayes). I dread to think what the end of the play will hold for Bayes when he realizes how truly ridiculous his performance is. I suppose we shall truly find out if he cares as little as he claims for the opinions of others.

Re: Act IV, scene I by Adam Washburn

so instead of doing one play with five acts Bayes is doing five plays with one plot...?

So he is contemplating on whether the guy or the girl should kill themselves at the end of the play? Is he still talking about the play they are watching?

Bayes criticizes the actor for stumbling on his line and decides to read the part himself... sounds like a harsh director. Was this attitude normal at the time?

I'm guess a Pye is a Pie

So this scene is a funeral of a women the both of these Kings seem to love?

Whats a Bole?

Act IV, scene ii

Plot? by Russ Hunt

I wonder about the pretty much total lack of structure in this. It's more like a clown show than a play, and it seems pretty clear the audience must either have been rolling in the aisles or drifting off.

"But, Mr. Bayes, why is this scene all in verse?" "O sir, the subject is too great for prose."

Re: Act IV, scene ii by Kayla MacAllister

"I'll sooner have a passion for a Whale"- What type of line is that?

Re: Act IV, scene ii by Adam Washburn

so the two princes are talking about women they love? Is it the same woman?"Passion for a Whale"... "more shape more beauty in a Fly....these are absurd lines

What does Gad mean?

Bayes says that this this scene is in Verse because the subject is too great for Prose.. is that something that was understood by the audience at the time?

Re: Act IV, scene ii by Matthew Goodwin

I had to laugh when Smith asks Bayes why the entire scene is in verse. "O sir, the subject is too great for prose".

It is instances such as this (this scene) which make me believe that they must be making a complete mockery of other play-wrights. But it is so obvious a mockery that I believe it was meant to be looked upon as something that is funny, rather than something which another playwright (such as Dryden) would find offensive. Sort of like a modern day "roast" of an individual. What is being said is offensive, and it's not all that nice, but it's done in the spirit of honoring individuals, rather than attempting to besmirch them. That is my impression, anyway.

Act V, scene I

practicalities by Russ Hunt

I wonder how they put on the opening pageantry scene? And whether the audience was to notice that two cardinals were "in hats and the other in caps"?

And I just love this: "Plain? why, did you ever hear any people in clouds speak plain?"

Re: Act V, scene I by Kayla MacAllister

-What is a guiney?

-Accoutrements means an accessory item.

-When it says "Bayes is telling the actors when to shout", I get why the play was called "The Rehearsal". At the last act.

Re: Act V, scene I by Adam Washburn

Did Bayes just say he does not value words?

So why would some cardinals have hats and others have caps...?

So the Kings flea their thrones to give them to the Right Kings... what is the significance of this?
Why are the two Kings dancing?
When he says ghefs does he mean guess?
So two men are supposed to represent entire armies?... they didn't even fight
He is going to end the battle with an Eclipse... that's strange
So he plans to represent the eclipse by staging it with characters playing the moon, the sun and the earth?
So the entire cast just gets up and leaves instead of performing the last act?

Re: Act V, scene I by Matthew Goodwin

Are plot holes something that happen an incredibly large amount during the pieces of theater which were written during the restoration? Because it seems that the text pokes fun at all of these plot holes which appear within the piece. This rings especially true in this scene, as there is immense confusion as to why things hadn't turned out the way that Bayes had originally said it would, I believe Smith and Johnson are also immensely confused (as am I) how an entire army could disguise itself. Are these instances of the fantastical something that is common within Restoration Theater?

Epilogue

novelty again by Russ Hunt

This pretty well makes it clear; it's about doing things either the good old fashioned way (like who, I wonder?), or the new "witty" way. "this new way of wit does so surprise / Men lose their wits in wond'ring where it lies."

And: "Let's have at least once in our lives a time / When we may hear some reason, not all rhyme."

Re: Epilogue by Kayla MacAllister

Villiers wasn't afraid to try something different.

The main purpose, perhaps, for this play was "Let's have , at least, once in our lives, a time/ When we may hear some reason, not all rhyme".

Re: Epilogue by Adam Washburn

Is the Epilogue explaining that this play's purpose is to make fun of playwrights during this time who do not seem to care much about plot? Playwrights like Dryden...

Re: Epilogue by Matthew Goodwin

I think the epilogue is perhaps a harkening for realistic, human writing. To write pieces as perhaps they would be expressed during a real situation within someone's life. No one speaks in verse, everyone speaks in prose. I believe that this is perhaps a call to create rational theater than individuals can feel connected to on a common level, rather than feeling some sort of dreamy, distant connection.