Call for Papers: Where in the World is Shakespeare?

What makes Shakespeare funny in Kabul? In 2005, Corinne Jaber claimed (somewhat tongue-in-cheek) that “Afghans don’t do tragedy.” This idea shaped her production of Love’s Labour’s Lost, which she staged with the Roy-e-Sabs Troupe in the garden of a Kabul estate formerly occupied by a nobleman 150 years ago. Making Shakespeare’s humor “work” or translate in Anglophone productions is a challenge for many contemporary directors. Making it work in Dari and in a space fraught with war and occupation poses an even more complicated set of challenges. How does such a production raise questions about the comedy genre and what makes something funny? How does it raise questions about audience or national identity? The same troupe would eventually stage Comedy of Errors (in Dari) at the Globe Theater in 2012, which signifies a transnational Shakespeare even as it replaces the play in its “original space.”

This is one example of the degree to which Shakespeare has shifted from the centrality of an authoritative text to a multi-center model where different (and often peripheral) Shakespeares exist and cross-influence each other. In this framework, questions of authenticity and intent give way to discussions of Shakespeare in terms of influence and his works as a globalizing force. For the second edition of the International Shakespeare Conference, we seek submissions from a wide range of topics related to the translation, interpretation and adaptation of Shakespeare, including:

- Shakespeare in theater, performance, film, music, visual arts
- Shakespeare in and as pedagogy
- Shakespeare in the context of social justice
- Shakespeare and applied theater
- Shakespeare and materiality
- case studies of Shakespeare in translation
- digital Shakespeare(s)
- intralingual, interlingual or intermedial translation of Shakespeare
- imitation and reception of Shakespeare worldwide
- comparative analyses discussing the influence of the Shakespearean linguistic or cultural legacy
- theoretical approaches to global Shakespeare: postcolonialism, race, gender, sexuality, alterity

The conference will take place September 18-20, 2015, at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Please e-mail a 250 word abstract to isc.umass@gmail.com by May 15.

For more information, visit umass.edu/shakespeare.