



*Didaskalia is an electronic journal dedicated to the study of all aspects of ancient Greek and Roman performance*

# DIDASKALIA

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## About Didaskalia

Didaskalia (διδασκαλία) is the term used since ancient times to describe the work a playwright did to teach his chorus and actors the play. The official records of the dramatic festivals in Athens were the διδασκαλῖαι. *Didaskalia* now furthers the scholarship of the ancient performance.

*Didaskalia* is an English-language, online publication about the performance of Greek and Roman drama, dance, and music. We publish double blind, peer-reviewed scholarship on performance as well as reviews of the professional activity of artists and scholars who work on ancient drama.

We welcome submissions on any aspect of the field, and we provide a uniquely friendly venue for publishing sound, image, and video evidence. If you would like your work to be reviewed, please write to [editor@didaskalia.net](mailto:editor@didaskalia.net) at least three weeks in advance of the performance date. We also seek interviews with practitioners and opinion pieces. For submission guidelines, go to [didaskalia.net](http://didaskalia.net).

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## *Hecuba*: A Film Record

Patrick Wang

*Photo credit: In the Family LLC*

A movie screening ends, and then the conversation with the director begins. Most of us know the routine to come: standard questions about casting, budget, influences, camera. So it's been refreshing that the most common question I am asked following screenings of *A Bread Factory* is: "Why *Hecuba*?" Why indeed.

*A Bread Factory* is a set of two feature films, each running two hours long. They take place in the eponymous Bread Factory, a former industrial space that for the past 40 years has served as a community arts center for a small town. It's the life work of Dorothea and Greta, the formidable couple at the heart of the story, who suddenly find themselves fighting a war on two fronts. A world-famous performance art duo, supercharged by capital, have built a shiny new arts complex down the street and threaten to absorb the public arts funding that keeps the Bread Factory afloat. And with these flashy new neighbors, the fabric of life in the town is changing. Dorothea and Greta struggle to orient themselves in this new world of tourists and a nascent tech industry.

In four hours of film about an arts center, you might reasonably expect at some point to see some art. And you do. Visiting artists arrive: a filmmaker, a poet, a monologist. They also mount local theatrical productions here. At the moment, they are rehearsing Euripides' *Hecuba*, the English text written by a local translator.



*Hecuba* first reading with Dorothea (Tyne Daly), Greta (Elisabeth Henry), and Sir Walter (Brian Murray)

## The Path to *Hecuba* Runs Through Boston

Like many of my writing choices, the choice to include *Hecuba* in the film script happened fast. If the choice was wrong, it would just be a placeholder. If the choice was right, it would survive. *Hecuba* survived. The play had been on my mind. I was discussing a radio production with Diane Arnson Svarlien (translator of the text we use in the films). That production has yet to materialize, but preparing for it gave *Hecuba* a prominent place this season at the Bread Factory.

Twenty years ago, I directed my first verse drama, Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*. The production was in Boston, where fear of scolding by a conference of Marlovian scholars kept me on my academic toes. For someone with only a high-school Shakespeare education and a few Elizabethan-theater acting experiences, there was a lot to learn. I quickly grew to appreciate what the vast work of scholars meant for theater practitioners. Through their efforts we could very quickly develop a rich context for understanding our characters, their language, and their times. I preemptively convened my own conference of two Marlowe experts, both with extensive theater experience. We discussed the text at length, line by line, over the course of a month. The experience left a deep indentation on me. I learned that no matter how little one knows in the beginning, the bridge to insight is always there for the taking. I also learned how classical plays come to life in present-tense, present-place conversations.

## Enter Euripides

A decade after the production of *Edward II*, I was hired to direct *Medea* at an acting conservatory. This was my first time directing Greek drama. I didn't share this fact with my employers, I just hit the library. I started with twin tasks: to learn more about Greek drama and to choose a translation. The university had chosen the play but not the specific text, and this was the first decision I would make for the production.

In no time at all I became well acquainted with a wide range of awkward translations. Some translations were tied so closely to the date of publication that their period details were the most prominent element of the play. Some prose translations seemed to follow the philosophy: we can't have poetry, so we might as well have an autopsy, spilling out their technical guts. Other translations were technically poetry, but good luck finding a mind and a mouth that can navigate those curves.

As I was running out of published options, I started contacting theater companies that had recently produced productions of *Medea* using original translations. Some were kind enough to share their texts. These tended to be experimental adaptations. They definitely sounded newer, but the intersection of ideas and poetry with the original text were slight. It was with great relief that I finally discovered Diane Arnson Svarlien's recently published translation. Here was a text that was speakable, dramatic, and technically rigorous. Great attention was paid to concordance and response. Stichomythia wasn't a chore; it really sprang to rhythmic life. But most important of all, this translation presented a play that I was excited to work on. No excavation was necessary to see the fascinating ideas that lived in the foreground, close to us, clear and resonant. I saw possibilities, not impediments.

## Trojan Sisters

What I felt most deeply in *Medea*—her tenderness for her children, the question of how to process the unjust acts of others and then how to understand your own responsibility in effecting justice—is also there in *Hecuba*. For me, Odysseus’ betrayal of Hecuba is more dramatically maddening than Jason’s betrayal of Medea. As I started selecting passages from *Hecuba* the characters would rehearse in my films, I was struck by the thematic resonances between Hecuba and the women running the Bread Factory. After the Trojan War, the women of Troy are captive and seemingly powerless. Yet they struggle on. They still search and lobby for justice, summoning the few resources they have to be able to effect it. This moral clarity amidst man’s mess is beautiful to witness. And this easily describes Dorothea and Greta’s struggle as well.

Once I recognized the parallels between *Hecuba* and the Bread Factory, a door opened. The role of the play within the films expanded beyond just glimpsing a few rehearsals. The play penetrated more and more scenes, culminating in an extended final performance sequence from *Hecuba* that serves as the climax of both films. This was unexpected. Did I mention that the films are comedies? One does not expect a four-hour comedy to end in a twenty-minute performance of *Hecuba*.

As a matter of progression, it makes sense. We see the play develop through various states of casting and rehearsal and technical development. It would be nice to see what all the fuss was for in the end. It was also fitting that *Hecuba* is not an easy sell, and this is in line with how the Bread Factory makes its programming decisions. We shouldn’t just wave the banner of challenging art; we should experience it. And if the *Hecuba* performance gambit pays off, we can experience the magic of places like the Bread Factory to expand our notions of what is possible and what art speaks to us.

## How the Audience Comes to Understand

In the past when I’ve directed classical theater, I’ve never put plot summaries in the program notes. My goal is to present a production that doesn’t need them. A general audience may not understand all the names and references, but we should give them enough to hang their hat on in each dramatic moment without the need for offstage footnotes. What they recognize and feel when experiencing the play should outweigh the unknown.

So it may be surprising that my approach with *Hecuba* is different in *A Bread Factory*. I still believe in the same bargain with the audience: that what you have to hold on to will be greater than any unknown you will experience. But here I am aware that the audience has not come to the movie expecting to see a Greek play, as they would have if they had gone to a standalone theatrical production of *Hecuba*. This changes things. Sure, some will be delighted with the surprise appearance of Greek theater. But for those who might think that a Greek play is not for them, I take some time to prepare a path for them into the experience. The play leaks in bit by bit. Someone mentions it. You meet the translator. Oh, they’re heading for a rehearsal. And then another and another. By the time you get to the final performance, you’ve heard the plot outline half a dozen times, you recognize lines and actors, and you’re ready.

The following is a more detailed map of how information from *Hecuba* flows to the viewer and interacts with the narrative of the films:



*Hecuba rehearsal with Dorothea (Tyne Daly), Greta (Elisabeth Henry), and Julie (Erica Durham)*

Movie Timeline	DAS Translation Line Numbers	Context	Key Information
<p><i>Part One</i>                      0 hr, 7min -                      0hr, 12min</p>	<p>992-1003,                      1007-1052</p>	<p>This is the first rehearsal for <i>Hecuba</i> attended by Dorothea (the director), Elsa (the translator), two actors (Greta and Sir Walter), and two observers in the audience.</p>	<p>The scene begins with the translator (Elsa) and the director of the play (Dorothea, one of the women who runs The Bread Factory) in the middle of discussing the script. Elsa is considering changing a line, and Dorothea would just like to start this first rehearsal. As they discuss the script, they reference line numbers. The scene being rehearsed is between Polynester (played by elderly actor Sir Walter) and Hecuba (played by Greta, the other woman who runs The Bread Factory). Polymestor has come to see Hecuba at her request and apologizes for his delay. He expresses regret at seeing how far her fortunes have fallen and pretends to want to help her. She asks about the safety of her son, Polydorus, entrusted to his care. He says Polydorus is well and eager to see her. [One of the audience members (who works at The Bread Factory) whispers as an aside to the other audience member (a newcomer) that this is a lie; Hecuba’s son is already dead, and she is aware of this.] The exchange between Hecuba and Polymestor moves into stichomythia as Hecuba pretends to enlist Polymestor’s help to keep her gold and valuable possessions safe. Some of her valuables are in the tent where she and the other captive Trojan women live, and she convinces Polymestor and his sons to come there with her, assuring him that it is free of any of the Greek men that surround her and hold her captive. Sir Walter ends the scene by commenting, “She’s going to blind me now, isn’t she?”</p>

<p><i>Part One</i> 0 hr, 29 min - 0 hr, 31 min</p>		<p>The translator, Elsa, arrives at the theater looking for the <i>Hecuba</i> rehearsal. She meets an older, mysterious stranger, Sandra.</p>	<p>They have a comic exchange in which Elsa struggles to understand who Sandra is and why she is there. She explains to Sandra that she wrote the English translation of the play, originally in Greek. Sandra is excited to meet a writer and suggests that Elsa could write the stories of her family, many of whom have been “in the war.” Elsa makes a hasty exit.</p>
<p><i>Part One</i> 1 hr, 2 min - 1 hr, 5 min</p>	<p>162-175</p>	<p><i>Hecuba</i> rehearsal with Elsa, Sandra, Dorothea, Greta, and Julie (the actress who plays Hecuba’s daughter, Polyxena).</p>	<p>Elsa is in the middle of explaining the plot of the play to Sandra: Hecuba used to be the Queen of Troy, but now she is a slave after the Trojans lost the war to the Greeks. She doesn’t know yet that her son, Polydorus, is dead, but she’s had a dream with bad signs. Sandra is very grateful for the explanation and exclaims, “It was like being there!” Dorothea is explaining the opening blocking to the actresses. They rehearse a scene where Polyxena exits the tent, frightened at hearing her mother’s cries. Hecuba expresses distress at her troubles as Polyxena coaxes her to explain what has frightened her so. [This is a short exchange that doesn’t reveal a lot of information, but it will be repeated in several other scenes and serves to give the audience a comfortable, familiar reference point.] The rehearsal is interrupted by Elsa’s sudden comment that there should be singing. She notes the passage is marked in the script to be sung. Dorothea tries to table the discussion, explaining that she knows music will enter at some point, but she hasn’t determined yet how this will happen. Elsa insists that it and the upcoming antistrophe are meant to be sung and that there is a responion between the passages. Suddenly Sandra starts to sing a mixture of lines from the play and her own original words: “Responion! Oh unhappy me! Prelude to sorrow. Everyone singing now. Why? Why?” No one knows quite how to respond to this.</p>



*Hecuba rehearsal with Sandra (Martina Arroyo) and Elsa (Nana Visitor)*

<p><i>Part One</i> 1 hr 50 min - 1 hr 58 min</p>	<p>1-24, 27-34</p>	<p>Max, who has been dating Julie (the young actress playing Polyxena), sits in the theater distraught that they have broken up and that Julie has left town to pursue her acting dreams in Hollywood. Sandra, as always, sits in the theater observing. Dorothea walks in to discover the two of them. She has a talk with Max</p>	<p>Max recounts the many plays where Julie has appeared on stage at The Bread Factory. Dorothea expresses her sympathy for what Max has lost, noting that Greta (Julie's frequent scene partner) has also suffered a great loss, and Dorothea doesn't know how to help her. Dorothea stands up and invites Max to join her on stage. He is hesitant but Dorothea insists. Now on stage, she turns him to face the audience telling him, "Things look different from here." She finds a copy of the script for Hecuba backstage and puts it in his hands for him to read. Max objects that he is not an actor. Dorothea explains the passage. These are the opening words of the play. The ghost of Polydorus (Max's character) is speaking. He was once a prince of Troy, but now he's dead. His parents sent him away with gold and paid another king to protect him, but that king killed him and stole his gold. So Polydorus' body is now floating in the sea, his soul unable to find peace. He comes now to the camp where his mother and sister are slaves, trying to find peace. Max then reads the extended monologue, recounting this story in first person poetry. Resonant with Max's own present pain is the idea of the great promise of his young life (joy with Julie) cut short. As he finishes the monologue, Sandra approaches him to give him a big hug. She then proceeds to sing, "Unhappy me! Crying boy, paper man! Killed for the sake of gold!" Max's mood suddenly shifts from pain to trying very hard not to laugh at Sandra. Video clip 1: <a href="http://bit.ly/breadfactory1">bit.ly/breadfactory1</a></p>
<p><i>Part Two</i> 0 hr 12 min - 0 hr 14 min</p>		<p>As they get ready for bed, Greta and Dorothea discuss how to recast the Polyxena role now that Julie has left.</p>	<p>Dorothea makes joking suggestions about who should play Polyxena. Greta rejects each candidate in turn: Dorothea herself (she will not play Greta's daughter); Elsa (as a nervous woman, this suggestion would scare her away for good); Wendy (she is smart, but they cannot cast the cat).</p>
<p><i>Part Two</i> 0 hr 32 min - 0 hr 42 min</p>	<p>146-183</p>	<p>First rehearsal with Teresa.</p>	<p>The scene being rehearsed is the same one Julie and Greta rehearsed in Part One where Polyxena, upon hearing her mother's cries, comes out of the tent to learn what is wrong. The short snippet—not particularly dense—is repeated again and again as often happens in rehearsal, and the emphasis is more on bringing Teresa into the rehearsal process than on the specific text. Elsa and Sandra observe. Elsa again brings up the singing, and once more the issue is deferred. As Teresa struggles to connect with the text, they decide to move earlier in the scene, to Hecuba's monologue after she has received news that Polyxena is to be sacrificed. Greta launches into a performance where Hecuba laments that there is no family or city left to defend her and the other daughters of Troy who have already borne so much pain. Observing Greta's moving performance helps Teresa find a genuine concern for her mother.</p>

<p><i>Part Two</i> 0 hr 53 min - 0 hr 58 min</p>	<p>698-699</p>	<p>Greta and Dorothea are working on the play at home. Dorothea listens to music for the play as Greta works on her lines.</p>	<p>Greta brings up an issue she is struggling to understand: Hecuba's different responses to her son's death (for which she wants and gets revenge) and her daughter's death (after which she seems to mourn but take no action). Beyond the historical reason for political differences between sons and daughters, they know that if they present this play today, they must be aware if they are reinforcing past systems that value genders differently. Greta searches for a reason beyond gender as to why Hecuba would seek revenge for her son but not for her daughter. In the discussion that ensues, they talk about whom Hecuba would take revenge on for Polyxena's death. Greta's list includes Theseus' sons (who start the talk about sacrificing Polyxena) and most of all Odysseus. Hecuba saved his life before, but he does nothing for her now, making him a prime target for revenge. They discuss Elsa's translation, including a line Dorothea loves for its rhythm: "Oh poor me. Don't tell me it's Cassandra you're carrying, the prophet, the baccante." Dorothea comes up with an alternate possibility for why Hecuba reacts to the deaths of her daughter and son differently. It's possible it was because he was free, with money and allies. He represented hope.</p>
<p><i>Part Two</i> 1 hr 10 min - 1 hr 14 min</p>		<p>Tech night for <i>Hecuba</i>.</p>	<p>There is no dialogue in this scene, but the audience sees the technical elements for the play progress: the set coming together, lights being designed, costumes being loaded in.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Tech night for Hecuba</i></p>
<p><i>Part Two</i> 1 hr 21 min - 1 hr 23 min</p>	<p>64-67, 71-89</p>	<p><i>Hecuba</i> final performance, scene 1.</p>	<p>Hecuba's attendants lead her out of the tent. She prays to the gods for help after the horrible dreams she had in which her children appeared: her daughter Polyxena and her son Polydorus, whom she had sent off to Thrace for safekeeping. She prays for his continued safety as he is her only remaining anchor. She asks the gods for help deciphering her dream where she had visions of a deer torn from her knees and slaughtered by a wolf. Video clip 2: <a href="http://bit.ly/breadfactory2">bit.ly/breadfactory2</a></p>

<p><i>Part Two</i> 1 hr 23 min - 1 hr 24 min</p>	<p>168-183</p>	<p><i>Hecuba</i> final performance, scene 2.</p>	<p>This is the scene we have observed several times in rehearsal when Polyxena exits the tent to attend to her mother's cries. Hecuba tells Polyxena that she is to be sacrificed, but the news is so shocking it does not yet make sense to Polyxena.</p>
<p><i>Part Two</i> 1 hr 24 min - 1 hr 36 min</p>	<p>210-226, 233-234, 237-258, 260-265, 273-294, 304-323, 329-388, 393-395, 414-423, 425-430</p>	<p><i>Hecuba</i> final performance, scene 3.</p>	<p>Odysseus arrives to confirm the news to Hecuba and Polyxena that Polyxena is to be sacrificed at Achilles' grave. He has been charged to bring her to the altar. He advises Hecuba not to struggle and to accept this fate. In an exchange of stichomythia, Hecuba reminds him of their past when he was in danger and begged her to save his life. She shames him for remembering that episode and yet now advising her to accept death. She begs him to help save Polyxena, who is her great comfort in the face of so much tragedy. Odysseus says he is willing to save Hecuba's life out of gratitude, but her daughter must be sacrificed to honor Achilles. If great men are not honored, what hope is there that people will continue to take up arms to achieve glory? He also chides her that many Greek men and women have also lost everything, some suffering a more pitiful fate than hers. Unable to convince him herself, Hecuba encourages Polyxena herself to appeal to Odysseus for mercy. Polyxena approaches Odysseus but does not plead for her life. She tells Odysseus she would rather die than become a slave. She was a princess once, sister to Hector. She would rather die than accept a fate below her family's level of distinction. She says a last goodbye to her mother Hecuba, begging her not to struggle against those in power who would not think twice about physically harming an old woman if she resisted. Video clip 3: <a href="http://bit.ly/breadfactory3">bit.ly/breadfactory3</a></p>
<p><i>Part Two</i> 1 hr 36 min - 1 hr 38 min</p>	<p>462-465, 689-701, 703-705, 717-721, 727-735</p>	<p><i>Hecuba</i> final performance, scene 4.</p>	<p>The chorus of Trojan slave women sings a lament wondering where the ocean waves will carry them next in their unhappy travels. They bring a body wrapped in cloth to Hecuba. She asks why they have brought her Polyxena's body as she thought the Greeks were busy burying her. She then learns that it is her son Polydorus. She cries out at this devastation, now understanding the meaning of her dream. The chorus sings and asks if her dream told her who committed this murder. She knows it was Polymestor.</p>
<p><i>Part Two</i> 1 hr 38 min - 1 hr 40 min</p>	<p>1068, 1070, 1073, 1104, 1141-1142, 1312</p>	<p><i>Hecuba</i> final performance, scene 5.</p>	<p>Polymestor has been blinded and his sons have been slaughtered by Hecuba and the slave women. He cries for Helios to heal him and threatens to destroy this house.</p>

## How the Audience Comes to Feel



*Hecuba (Elisabeth Henry) and chorus in Hecuba performance*

I have watched these films in a theater with an audience some fifty times by now. Somehow new resonances between *Hecuba* and the Bread Factory continue to emerge. I attribute this partly to the alchemy of dramatic poetry. When the poet is capable, ideas forged this way hold a sharpness and versatility.

But it is not just ideas that are at play. Whether it is their first experience with Greek drama or whether they are experts, the impact of the *Hecuba* sequence on audiences has been immediate and emotional. Tyne Daly (who plays Dorothea in the films) observed that a “theater silence” emerges during the *Hecuba* scenes. It became theater by virtue of the quiet attentiveness the audience gave to the performance. The terrific translation no doubt does a lot of the heavy lifting, but the other key collaborator here is performance style. There is a performance approach I prefer for classical drama that I rarely see realized in production. Part of my desire for making *A Bread Factory* was to create a record of this approach to performance style.

The performance style I prefer pledges deep fidelity to text and poetic elements but none to current performance conventions commonly used in classical theater; it will employ whatever performance method elevates the psychological presence of the character. This is the inverse of most contemporary approaches to classical verse drama. Usually text and poetic elements are treated with great flexibility (often to the point where I can no longer recognize the virtues of the original), while there is a religious adherence to current conventions of classical performance style: broad gestures and declamatory vocalizations, overaccented and overemphasized. It is my view that these stylized gestures and vocalizations crowd out space for a psychologically realistic performance that is key to emotional connection with the audience.

To give an example of a performance approach that is the inverse of my own, I recently attended a performance of a play that was part of a larger project to “translate” the text of Shakespearean plays from Elizabethan English into contemporary English. The idea is a very interesting one. When Shakespeare is translated into other languages, the target language is not the 16th Century form of that target language but instead something more modern. What might this process be like for English?

For the play I attended, the linguistic changes did not significantly impact the play. The modernization in text was frequently not noticeable. But what made a deep impression was that by employing all the current conventions of classical performance, the production felt like a museum piece. Nothing feels more modern than recognizable psychological behavior like we witness day to day, and yet this was nowhere to be found. I think this Shakespeare “translation” project is evidence that the mindset of classical performance style is so deeply accepted that one would be so bold as to rewrite Shakespeare before even thinking to question the acting conventions currently used to present his plays.

I previously described my performance philosophy as having no fealty to current performance conventions commonly used in classical theater, but it also does not try to replicate ancient performance conventions. This is because I believe that the setting for engagement with the play should guide the performance terms. A specific performance style will play differently in an amphitheater versus a black box, and the performance style should adjust to its setting.

And I am working in neither an amphitheater nor a black box. The vocal and visual proximity possible in film can again reconfigure what is an effective performance style. In film the gold mine is often seen as the nonverbal acting during close-ups on the face. But I think this emphasis breaks the link between nonverbal and verbal acting that is the foundation of contemporary psychological performance: we like to see how the mind comes to form the words spoken and whether word and mind are in alignment or at odds. Film, with its intimate access to the human voice and the human face and all the subtle complexities they can express, allows a clear view into this process. And if we apply this perspective to classical verse drama, we elevate the mentality of the characters so as to understand how they form their complex phrases and ideas. In the hands of the right actor, we come to see the words as natural extensions of recognizable human expressions. This is the key to making immediate, emotional audience connections.

## More Room for Exploration

Now one might worry that this contemporary psychological approach could come at the expense of turning the verse to mush. This is where stereotypes of American method acting versus British technical acting come into play. But there is no reason that a contemporary psychological approach must come at the expense of technical elements. Actors rehearse so that they may be in the psychological moment *and* simultaneously deliver on technical elements. And doing away with the weight of current classical presentation conventions clears the canvas to notice more subtleties in the verse.

I'll elaborate on this last point. One of the first lessons taught to students of classical verse drama is how to scan verse. This is an essential exercise. Scanning the text brings one closer to the poetry and closer to the mind of the poet. But I think one of the inadvertent lessons some students (and directors) take from this exercise is that rhythm is poetry. Actors in classical plays frequently will take a line of iambic pentameter, which has its natural pattern of emphases based on the natural pronunciation of words, and then place even greater vocal emphases on these same already-emphasized syllables. The result is highly unnatural.

This form of double emphasis plagues many aspects of contemporary classical performance style. It can be physical as well as vocal. Actors frequently will pantomime what they are already communicating with their words in a way that we have come to expect on stage but would find odd in life. Contemporary psychology, with its ambiguities and contrary forces, could then be just the thing to scramble this practice of birthing twin vectors. It can also remind us that humans have a wide array of vocal and physical inflections available that are more interesting and nimble than the mechanical vocal stress and the obvious gesture.



*Polymestor (Brian Murray) in Hecuba performance*

I remember a conversation with the great stage actor Brian Murray (who plays Sir Walter in *A Bread Factory*). We were talking about stage accents (dialects). While he was a great observer of technical differences in consonant and vowel sounds, we both agreed that this was not the primary matter when it came to dialects. Character accents are not a presentation of alphabet sounds. Rather they are the shapes of how a specific character thinks. Accents are a way of thinking. This is how I view verse drama. Scansion is the shape for how a character thinks. And while that shape of thinking was obviously there for Euripides, the intimate performance forms for communicating the psychological subtleties that build the thought did not exist in his time as they do now. This new possibility is what makes present-day performance so exciting for me. Ancient Greek verse drama inherently has these psychological spaces available, and now contemporary acting techniques and performance mediums have emerged that can fill them. This work does not disturb the text, but rather it interprets it. It makes use of nuanced and varied tools instead of the standard blunt and limited ones.

When human psychology is the root of the play, there is a lot for audiences to hang their hat on. For many who watch the *Hecuba* performance in *A Bread Factory*, it ceases to be Greek drama. It is merely drama, psychologically and emotionally proximate to their own lives. They read these feelings within themselves and not in program notes.

For more information about the films: [www.abreadfactory.com](http://www.abreadfactory.com)

For more information about the technical production of *Hecuba*, see the video essay “Filming *Hecuba*” available on the DVD and Blu-ray editions of *A Bread Factory*.