



# Shakespeare Films in the Making: Vision, Production and Reception

*Russell Jackson*

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## **Shakespeare Films in the Making: Vision, Production and Reception** Russell Jackson

Shakespeare Films in the Making examines the production and reception of five feature-length Shakespeare films from the twentieth century, focusing on the ways in which they articulate visions of their Shakespearean originals, of the fictional worlds in which the films are set, and of the movie-makers' own society. Warner Brothers' 1935 *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and MGM's 1936 *Romeo and Juliet* were products of the Hollywood system and reflect the studios' desire to enhance their status with 'prestige pictures'. Olivier's 1944 *Henry V* was part of Britain's cultural war effort and embodies visions of the medieval past and ideal leadership. The *Romeo and Juliet* films of Renato Castellani (1954) and Franco Zeffirelli (1968) embodied visions of Renaissance Italy that contrast - in differing ways - with MGM's film. This book offers readings of these significant and influential films, supported by extensive archival research, including studio documents, script revisions, publicity materials and reviews.

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