

# VIDEO: DIRECTING SHAKESPEARE WITH JANINE WATSON



Now that you have watched Janine Watson's tips on directing Shakespeare, try these exercises to put some of the ideas discussed into practice.

1. Form a group of 3 and **read** the attached scene aloud excerpt from *Macbeth* (see over). One person is the director, one person plays Macbeth and one person plays Lady Macbeth. Take turns being the director as you run through the next exercises.
2. First, do some detective work to discover the **given imaginary circumstances** of the scene. Who are the characters in this scene? What is their relationship to one another? Where are they located geographically? Inside or outside? Is it a private or public space? How do you know? What is the tone of the scene – casual, or perhaps dangerous? Ask as many questions as you can to determine these circumstances.
3. Next, think about each character's **intentions**. What are they fighting for and why? Do they want the same thing or are their intentions conflicting? Why is what they want important to them? What would it mean to achieve what they want? What would it feel like to achieve it? How much do they want it?
4. Now that you have these given imaginary circumstances and character intentions in mind, **read the scene out loud again**. Did the actors' performances change from the way the actors performed it in your first reading? What did you notice that was different this time, and why do you think it was different? What was the conflict between the two characters, and how was it presented?
5. Add a **physical task** for one of the characters to complete during the performing of the scene. This can be a very simple task that doesn't necessarily have anything to do with the scene. For example, one of the characters could be tidying up or stacking and unstacking some chairs. The other character must work to undo the actions of the other character, ie. unstack the chairs or make a mess of what they have just cleaned. **Play the scene again**, adding in these physical tasks.
6. **Swap** the physical tasks, so now the other person is trying to complete the task, and the other is trying to undo their work. Play the scene.



# BELL SHAKESPEARE SHORTS FESTIVAL

## About Janine Watson:

Janine is a graduate of the National Theatre Drama School, Melbourne. For Bell Shakespeare she has previously appeared in *The Dream*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *The Players*. As a director for Bell Shakespeare she has directed *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Players*, and was Assistant Director of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Her other theatre credits include *Unqualified* (Ensemble Theatre, director), *A View From The Bridge* and *Dolores* for Redline Production/Old Fitz Theatre; *Measure For Measure*, *Antigone* and *Three Sisters* for Sport for Jove; *The Happy Prince*, *Dracula* and *Dangerous Liaisons* for Little Ones Theatre; *American Beauty Shop* for KXT; *Or Forever Hold Your Peace* for La Boite; *Dangerous Liaisons* for MTC Neon/Darwin Festival; *Triangle* and *J.A.T.O* for MKA Theatre; *Cordelia* for Little Dove; and *Agatha* for Melbourne Fringe. Her film credits include *That's Not Me*, *The Outside Light*, and *Picking Up At Auschwitz*. Her television credits include *The Code 2*, *Neighbours*, *Crash Burn*, and *The Secret Life Of Us*. Janine was nominated for Best Supporting Actor at the 2017 Sydney Theatre Awards, was nominated for Best Female Performer at the 2012 Green Room Awards, and received the 2016 Sandra Bates Directors Award.