

The bbc version of hamlet

Literature



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The opening lines of the play are delivered with the two soldiers far away from each other, and their challenge to identify themselves is more perfunctory than an actual warning to a potential enemy. The stage appears massive, and yet the two of them do not seem particularly worried. When the other two soldiers appear they are subdued regarding the ghost that has been seen.

The ghost itself merely walks out of the shadows and the fog, slowly and deliberately, as if unaware of what is going around it. So overall this scene is one in which the drama of Hamlet is seen as internal, as it will continue to be for the rest of the play. This contrasts greatly with the interpretation offered by Kenneth Branagh. In this, the opening lines are delivered as one soldier essentially leaps on another and asks him to identify himself. There is real physical fear and threat involved here. Branagh also sets the film in an actual castle, and there is the vast expanse of the mountains, apparently real fog and the sound of an angry sea in the background. This is an essentially physical beginning to the play as the characters express their real fears, and huddle together after very real challenges as to identity. When the ghost appears, it seems to come from nowhere, as if the statue of Hamlet has indeed come to life. This was foreshadowed by the various quick edits between different parts of the statues on the stone rampart which make them seem almost alive.

The ghost in Branagh's Hamlet is much more terrifying than that in the BBC production, and Branagh uses the full range of special effects to give him an actual "ghost-like" appearance rather than him seeming to be a real actor playing a ghost as it appears in the BBC production.

To conclude, these two different versions of the famous opening of Hamlet
<https://assignbuster.com/the-bbc-version-of-hamlet/>

introduce the main themes of the play well, but from the distinct perspective of the two directors. The BBC version will be a less action-oriented, "talking heads" type of production, while Branagh's will involve a lot of action and movement through an actual castle. Branagh's production is not constricted by the stage, and he makes full use of the freedom that he has.