In the last two chapters, I moved from the relationship between cognitive linguistics and rhetoric to the relationships between cognitive linguistics and practical issues of staging. This chapter argues that Shakespeare’s troubling of the mirror blend offers a reconceptualization of cognition and intellection: how do we know what we think we know? In the century following *Hamlet*, philosophers (who we refer to retrospectively as scientists) were asking and positing new answers to that question. Sir Francis Bacon, Renè Descartes, and Sir Robert Boyle changed how data were gathered and examined; they understood knowledge as mediated and thus changed the tools used for seeing and the performance of their results. From realizing he can use the play to catch the conscience of the king to instructing the players how to enact this story, Hamlet’s preoccupation with testing and exploring his own epistemology circulates around the mirror held up to nature. The research on mirror neurons in the brain provides exciting new ways to think about perspective, imitation, and the self; it also provides some evidence that our metaphoric conception of *to see is to know* has a literal corollary at the neural level. I believe that what we do as theater practitioners and academics—indeed as humans—is move from question to question, not focusing on the answer, but on what is the next question posed by the results of the last asking. Rehearsing and remaking *Hamlet*—from the performance at the Globe at the beginning of the seventeenth century to a performance by The Wooster Group at the end of the twentieth century—asks the questions the community is interested in answering and poses new ways of approaching and pursuing the answers.
To represent the previously invisible, to perform the seemingly impossible, is vitally important to creating the visible and the possible. The early modern period learned from the language of the hypothetical and the performance of the important discoveries of the seventeenth century depended on performance and spectators to make them true. Mary Crane has found in *King Lear* echoes of debates at the time about divisibility and argues that *King Lear* exists in light of an “epistemological rupture” where the breakdown of Aristotelian physics also calls into question basic mental concepts of weight, space, divisibility, and existence. In addition to turning to the history of science for circulating debates at the time, Crane suggests that Shakespeare’s basic mental model of weight and wait, “woven into the fabric of poetry” provides a “shaping presence” or “frame that supports plot, characterization, and theme.” Henry Turner, imagining Shakespeare’s language as a kind of genetic code, articulates a tight relationship between science and poetry: “We should regard genetic engineering and biotechnology not simply as a new application of scientific knowledge but rather a new mode of poetics, and that Shakespeare’s own work provides a model for just such an approach.” Before one can do an experiment to test a hypothesis, one must have a hypothesis (or theory); before one can have a hypothesis, one must imagine. This is where representation of the previously invisible, performances of the seemingly impossible, are vitally important.

Telling and understanding stories—embodied and perspectivized language—teaches us to see and thus to conceive and then to test, and finally, perhaps, to know. Several theorists have found the shoreline between cognitive science and theater productive in reconceptualizing the work of theater. Many cognitive scientists see cognition as embodied simulation and this provides Bruce McConachie (among others) with a tool for retheorizing the relationship between performer and spectator. With new theories of perspective, empathy, and narrative come new arguments for the purpose and importance of theater as an instrument with which to alter and expand our relationship to each other and our environment, as investigated recently by scholars such as Naomi Rakotnitz, Ellen Spolsky, F. Elizabeth Hart, Lisa Zunshine, and others. This chapter asks about the role of dissection in rehearsing previously unimagined territories and the role of performance in projecting perspective and seeing beyond ourselves. Specifically, I turn to remakes of *Hamlet* to ask how the same play can be deployed against different epistemological questions. The tool Shakespeare, through *Hamlet*, finds in the mirror was the rhetorical