Anthology of Reactions to Oedipus at Colonus  
(in order in which they were received)

1. Pat,
Congratulations! And thanks for a really good, enjoyable experience. You will, no doubt about it, have had all sorts of good feed-back. [Judy Davies]

2. Pat,
It was a moving and thoroughly engrossing production last night. Pat' Easterling’s lecture at the start set it all up and the whole thing with the music, overheads and reading added up to a memorable evening. Thank you. [Dorothy Thompson]

3. Dear Prof. Boyde,
Congratulations on your production, direction, and performance of the title role, of Oedipus at Colonus - a pretty astonishing feat!

   I found the music (beautifully played) a great entry into listening to the Greek, listening more for the rhythm, sound, expression - out of necessity however (one day I hope I shall learn Greek!) rather than choice. I also enjoyed the peculiar pleasure of knowing that many others in the audience, and not just Greeks, were understanding this ancient play in its original tongue. It is such a pleasure that this kind of thing happens!

   The Bartok musical dialogue, with the musicians, and staging symmetrically facing into the centre, also focused attention on Oedipus as the pivotal centre of relationship and dialogue. How his daughters, sons, citizens, strangers, the audience, relate to him, the heroic, paradigmatic, outsider and human outcast. I also found the sequence of images, musical interludes, and pauses for meditation, allowed the space for reflection which normally, in the fast-pase of drama, is held back until after the performance, or lost altogether.

   Thank you for a super evening, and I do hope you break a leg for tomorrow .
[George Corbett]

4. Pat,
Well done, you ended in time for me to make the 9.13 train home, my fastest walk for years!

   As for the performance, that was splendid, you had a good cast (...). Theseus and Creon gave each other a good glaring! And Polynices felt like a Brooklyn mobster using the 'family' for himself. And yourself of course, very dramatic!

   One slight query: near the end Oedipus says he is going off to find a spot to die with both Theseus and daughters in tow, but you went off only with Theseus, leaving daughters rather forlorn. [Michael Coultas]

5. Dear Pat,
Thank you so much for inviting us to see the play last night. I thought it was outstanding. I really enjoyed hearing the words spoken in Greek and was grateful to have the subtitles! I interpreted the play to be about euthanasia/dying gracefully. After a life of torment and illness, I think Oedipus was ready to die. Theseus had to turn away and keep the place/manner of death a secret because it was suicide assisted by the dread goddesses -
basically doctor-assisted suicide and yet another taboo poor old Oedipus was fated to violate.
It also occurred to me that Sophocles gave Oedipus the first email address
Oedipus@Colonus.

I am surprised and happy to be able to report to you that our sixteen year old daughter Emma also enjoyed the play. [Deb Turner]

6. Dear Pat
Many congratulations on last night! John and I were very much impressed, especially by the way you brought out the astonishing range of Oedipus' thoughts and feelings. All this demands enormous energy: please plan a restful day or two after all your efforts.
[Pat Easterling]

7. Dear Pat,
Marvellous stuff last night, both the production and your performance. [Prue James]

8. Dear Patrick,
I came to the performance yesterday and just wanted to thank you for putting these shows on. My partner and I enjoyed it a great deal. Enjoy tonight! [Jonathan Stökl]

9. Dear Pat,
Well done! I am very pleased to have been involved in such a triumph as last night's performance. You were very good indeed. It was interesting that sometimes you managed to make your face become the mask of tragedy! Your power and range were impressive and moving.

One of the things I greatly enjoyed was the terrific range of voices; I already knew that Alderik Blom had a beautiful voice as I had heard him give a paper at a Fellows' Research night at Girton, and his scenes with you were particularly successful, I thought. But the male range from the baritones to Colin's tenor chorus, and the difference between Antigone and Ismene, all helped to make the ear never weary.

I also liked the way you had varied the staging from previous productions – the musicians in a central position on stage, the players facing away from the audience when not taking part in a scene. Invention is the mother of interest!

Sam Motherwell's drawings were great, and the contrast between them and the ancient images used for the interludes worked very well. I don't think the 'black screen' bit quite worked, as the screen was not black (as when we looked at it on the computer) but quite light grey, so I am not sure that the meaning was clear.

Martin did a fantastic job as always. And Pat E.'s brief presentation was helpful (...)
Best, Jill [Jondorf, the translator]

10. Grazie Patrick,
uno splendido spettacolo. Appena mi ritaggerò del tempo libero devo assolutamente riprendere in mano la grammatica e greca e ricominciare a tradurre... Complimenti a tutti!
Giulia [De-Dominicis, Italian research student in linguistics]
11. Professor Boyde,
I just wanted to write you to say that Wednesday night's performance was delightful. Despite no knowledge of the original language, I was really gripped throughout, not simply by the story, but by your cast's excellent reading. The voice and emotion really transcended language; it was a pleasure to watch.

Thank you for the event and the opportunity to experience the play in its original language!
Regards, Prajwal Ciryam [research student at John’s]

12. Dear Pat,
Thank you so much for Wednesday evening, and for allowing me to bring a friend to your packed performance. I thought it was the best so far (at least of those I've seen), with the stage mechanics working very well, the parts very aptly filled, and your own depiction of Oedipus convincing and powerful. Of course, I was listening almost entirely to the intonation, with a scattering of recognisable Greek roots mixed in, but it's surprising how well that worked.
Best wishes, Graeme [Mitchison, mathematician and biologist]

13. Thank you, Pat. We all enjoyed that very much. It clearly represented a huge amount of work, so many congratulations all round. What a star you are, Caro [Wilson, wife of the Master of Emmanuel]

14. Dear Pat
I hugely enjoyed Oedipus last night. It was absolutely brilliant and so cleverly done. Many congratulations.
Best wishes, Margaret [Mair, wife of Master of Jesus]

15. Dear Pat,

What an excellent performance. The whole cast, while differing in their styles, brought their own interpretation and pathos to their roles. The music was just right, and the art work made me very envious!

I look forward to your next production. Have we mentioned Alexander is doing classical civ for A-Level? To give support to the studies, Luffy and I are revisiting the Iliad (in English - my Greek stopped at school, although I was surprised at the number of words and phrases that came back last night). Paul [Crisp, a nephew by marriage who has been to all the previous productions]

16. (a handwritten headed card dated 26. ii. 10)
Dear Pat, I just wanted to thank you for the great treat you afforded us on Wednesday. It was rare privilege / to have the opportunity to hear Sophocles so superbly and aptly performed in the original and with such fitting and aural accompaniments. You and the rest of the cast deserve the highest praise for your rendering of the Greek text. I found the performance evocative and moving, and I look forward eagerly to future productions. With all best wishes, George [husband of a Fellow and Earl of St Andrews]
17. A voicemail message received on Saturday morning. 
Pat, Good morning, Robin here, I enjoyed it, thank you, and I thought the Bartok worked very very well. I’d love to have written little snatches myself... but I thought it was all fine. Anway, let’s have a word when it’s all over. [Robin Holloway, composer, who wrote the music for three of the Homeric productions and before that for Racine’s Phèdre]

18. A ‘prompted’ response from someone to whom I’d forwarded the previous 17. 
Dear Patrick,
Thank you very much for this, it's very thoughtful of you to send it. And congratulations again on a lovely performance. I also enjoyed the live music very much, and found the presence of the chorus above a nice touch. 
I hope you continue to stage Greek plays in Greek in the future.
All the best, Magdalena [Zira, London Ph.D student, working on Reception of Greek Tragedy in Britian]

19. 
Thanks for the play. It was superb. Fabienne [Bonnet]

20. (on receiving copy of DVD)

Dear Pat

How kind of you to send me the excellent DVD of OC, which has great charm and dignity as well as giving one a real sense of the passion that went into the whole performance (and its planning): very many thanks!
Pat [Easterling]

21. on receiving a copy of DVD
Arrivato!
Grazie ancora. Ho guardato la prima parte: molto intensa la recitazione (e molto belle le tue figlie!). Avete saputo con mezzi essenziali (ma notevolissimi alcuni disegni!) trasmettere emozione e passione: mi sembra proprio che questo tuo greco sia vivo.
ho cominciato anche ad ascoltare l'introduzione del prof. Gagné, ma senza microfono e in continuo movimento fatico un po' a seguirlo (oltre ovviamente al mio inglese traballante). 
Luciano [Zampese]