2019 Seminar Abstracts: Tudor Performance: Contexts, Traditions, Afterlives
Jessica Winston, Idaho State University

"1559 and 1572 Temporary Banqueting Houses, the Elizabethan Masque, and Consumptive Court Entertainment at Whitehall"

Catherine Clifford, Graceland University

Analyzing the moment in which banqueting houses and dramatic court spectacles collided in Jacobean court masques, Patricia Fumerton argues that the history of banqueting house architecture is a "history of physical detachment" that "exaggerates the trend toward private rooms" which characterizes later Stuart court spectatorship (*Cultural Aesthetics*, 1991: 112). Royal banqueting houses, she argues, were spaces of fragmentation, physically detached from the daily traffic of the palace's domestic and ceremonial chambers. In this detachment, Fumerton traces a line to an ideal of a privatized self that James I's use of banqueting houses for revels exposed as ultimately illusory and performative (137).

Fumerton's intellectual history of the Tudor banqueting house is where I take my cue here. Under James I and Charles I, the Banqueting Houses at Whitehall served as spaces for performative hospitality, public ceremony, and, of course, entertainment. Under the same set of assumptions, royal banqueting houses developed under the Tudors, but largely as temporary, occasion-specific venues and often to host foreign retinues with elaborate displays of architectural consumption. This paper looks to two temporary banqueting houses at Whitehall, constructed by the Revels Office for visits by the French embassies in 1559 and 1572, and locates them within an early Elizabethan masquing culture. Making a case for "lesser" banqueting houses in our intellectual histories of Tudor court performance, I argue that these two temporary structures should be read in relation to the development and consumption of drama at court.

"Henry Walton's Henrician 'Playhouses'?
Early Tudor Commercial Stages and Elizabethan Afterlives"

Callan Davies, University of Roehampton

Henry Walton has not featured in sixteenth-century theatre history, but he was one of the earliest theatrical entrepreneurs in the Tudor archive: he built stages, managed (and probably stole) costumes, and organised performances in the 1520s and 1530s. This paper looks back to these years as important moments in the development of commercial playhouses and suggests that "Tudor drama" need not mean "pre-commercial/public stage."

The traditional origins story of commercial theatre marks James Burbage and John Brayne's building of *The* Theatre, Shoreditch, in 1576 as a new and unprecedented beginning. This narrative persists, despite increasingly widespread challenges to this big bang theory of playhouse building. Janette Dillon draws its history back to John Rastell's stage, erected in his garden in Finsbury in the 1520s (though it remains unclear to what extent if any Rastell's was a popular or commercial endeavour). It was Henry Walton who built Rastell's stage, and Walton provides even further clues to the playing ecology of Henrician London: he also built a

churchyard stage that was granted a season-long licence from the City and later hired another churchyard stage to coordinate plays himself.

This paper considers the nature of Walton's stages and their relationship with later developments such as the Red Lion (1567) and The Theatre (1576) and questions the enduring notion of "firstness" in theatre history narratives. While the paper focuses chiefly on the labour behind and around performance, I also discuss the types of "play" that might have appeared on Walton's popular stages—and their Elizabethan "afterlives." Henry Walton's activities show how earlier examples of commercial performance can trouble assumptions about periodisation, categorisation, and the playgoing overlaps between elite-life and street-life. What happens to our aesthetic, architectural, and economic models if we begin a history of the commercial playhouse not with James Burbage or Philip Henslowe but with the likes of Henry Walton?

"Residual Allegory in Elizabethan Drama: The One-Scene Psychomachia"

Alan C. Dessen, University of North Carolina

My goal is to argue for continuity between allegory in the early Elizabethan moral interludes and what follows in the 1580s and 1590s. As a theatre historian my interest has been in the various means available to later playwrights - the original *theatrical vocabulary* - in this instance, ways of presenting ideas, abstractions, and key choices onstage, with an emphasis on techniques less visible today (as opposed to the soliloquy) that can enhance the presentation of significant motifs or images. Outside of a few notable exceptions, allegorical personae do not survive as part of the mainstream of Elizabethan professional drama. Moreover, a major component of today's prevailing logic of interpretation involves a distaste for allegorical and didactic effects, especially in Shakespeare's plays. Nonetheless, my thesis is that in the 1590s and thereafter a post-allegorical mode of presentation - what I term "residual" allegory - *does* persist, albeit in adapted form.

This essay falls into two parts. First, I summarize how medieval and Tudor dramatists used the psychomachia tug-of war to structure an entire play but later dramatists adapted that technique to present a pivotal decision in a single scene. Second, I provide an account of a 2010 workshop that involved staging ten such scenes: two from moral interludes and the rest from Marlowe, Shakespeare Dekker, Heywood, and *Arden of Faversham*. No one in this project claimed that what emerged was a faithful reconstruction of the original staging. Rather, the goal was to suggest an alternative way to display a character's struggles, an alternative that invites a different approach to performance than the modern method - "an allegorical style" that is recognizably not Realism.

"'Pretie conveyance': *Jack Juggler* and the Idea of Play"

Ágnes Matuska, University of Szeged

Taking, as a starting point, Douglas L. Peterson's understanding of this play as a transition between 'ludic' and 'mimetic' performance, and as a tool teaching the contemporaneous audience to appreciate a new logic of playing, the paper sets out to examine the types and functions of playing and performance as represented through this drama. I plan to interpret the diverse categories as types representing diverse points on a continuum between ritualistic action and a more innovative type of playing as theatrical play and as social action. For this analysis I will rely on Jeffrey C. Alexander's theory discussing social performances, in which he examines, among others, the relationship between rituals and performances of other kind, and suggests a new understanding of the parallel between social and theatrical performances. Special attention will be given to the fact that the title page of the drama features a dramatic stock character, the Vice, who in this play is arguably non-evil, and who, as the master of ceremonies, is responsible for the play as a whole as entertainment. The controversy which has been puzzling critics for about a century, namely the surprisingly antitheatrical epilogue of the play – a moral message that seems to go against both the prologue's explicit ideas as well as the logic of the Plautus-inspired plot – will also be addressed.

"Practicing Emotions in *The Four PP*"

Kathryn Prince, University of Western Australia /University of Ottawa

A pardoner, a palmer, a pedlar, and an apothecary walk into a bar. Nothing much happens.

John Heywood's *The Four PP* finds its dramatic stakes in a contest to determine which of the protagonists can tell the best lie, and its comedic payoff in the misogyny that gives the palmer the victory with his implausible tale of female virtue. Plausibility, hearkening back to Aristotle's "probable impossibilities" and prefiguring neoclassicism's verisimilitude, is a key preoccupation of this text. Counter-factual statements, always a tricky dramatic concept because of the layers of fiction they signal, are a crucial element of this play's meaning; so are the character types created in the association between profession and protagonist, which, not being entirely upheld by the play's dénouement, create another kind of tricky counter-factual. By considering these elements from the perspective of the History of Emotions, and in particular Monique Scheer's theorization of emotional practices, I hope to demonstrate how the relationship between fact and fiction is tested in this play through the practice of emotions, and what that might signify in performance, which is yet another layer of counter-factual that exerts different pressures, some of which are reflected in the period's anti-theatrical pamphlets.

"Inducting the Audience:
The Activating Designs of Early Tudor Dramaturgy"

Nancy Selleck, University of Massachusetts Lowell

This paper looks at an early example of Tudor staging practices, Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucres*, in order to explore early modern conceptions of the audience's active role within a dramatic performance. Medwall's script (printed c.1512) not only suggests a constant reliance on the practice of integrating the audience's presence with the action of the play; it also offers an

allegory that theorizes the meaning and function of that practice. I argue that Medwall's use of what later sixteenth-century plays call an "induction" initiates a new aspect of early modern dramaturgy in general – the explicit recognition of the audience's role in constituting the play's meaning and value. This analysis builds on Greg Walker's argument that great hall drama sought to stage the critique of authority by its subjects and to enact a conversation between them. While the convention of inductions grows in part out of medieval stage practices of audience interplay, it also goes beyond them. Its primary effect is to include the audience in a behind-the-scenes perspective – a knowledge of how the playing process works. That inclusion enables a sense of *playing along* with the action rather than a passive perception of it, creating a sense of dialogic engagement with the play's characters and action. In contrast to arguments that the metatheatrical characters of *Fulgens and Lucres* serve either to distance the audience from the fictional illusion of the play or to draw them into it, this paper shows that they work on several levels to "induct" spectators into the playing process itself.

"Medwall, More, and the Idea of the Play"

Andrew Sisson, Williams College

Following the work of Kent Cartwright and Joel Altman, it's become something of a commonplace to describe the quasi-improvisatory performance styles of Tudor interludes like *Fulgens and Lucres* as peculiarly suited to expressing humanist values of contingency, skepticism, and situated judgment. However, not much has been said about the distinctive inflections such performance traditions might give to the manifold uses of theatrical performance as an epistemological and political metaphor in Tudor humanist writing. In this paper I'd like to revisit one especially familiar such moment, the passage late in Book One of *Utopia* where More compares Hythloday's refusal to temper his philosophic ideals to a player's misguided attempt to insert Senecan speeches into a comedy by Plautus. It forms a crux connecting three bodies of discourse: a network of similar passages by More and Erasmus in which failed intervention into an ongoing stage production serves figuratively to define the problem of the public intellectual; a biographical tradition in which anecdotes concerning More's capacity to insert himself spontaneously into a play already in progress are strangely prominent; and a set of dramatic works including Medwall's interlude in which such violations of decorum and illusionistic distance are a consciously orchestrated and more or less constitutive element. What I'd like to propose is that the presence of the latter as intertext complicates the passage in ways that criticism has not really appreciated. More's example of theatrical failure implicitly summons up the alternative idea of a kind of performance that would derive its coherence from the successful crossing of the same generic barrier that the philosopher stumbles over. I aim to show that More in *Utopia* is in fact deeply engaged with that alternative model as embodied particularly in *Fulgens and Lucres*, a model at once evoked and transcended in the presentation of Hythloday's island as fictive construct.

SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

Catherine Clifford is an Assistant Professor of English at Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa. Educated at the Shakespeare Institute, her research focuses on dramatic performances in palatial spaces during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and on representations of monarchy in and through early modern drama. Her forthcoming book chapters include "Elizabeth I and the Dancing Queens: Female Agency and Subjectivity in Early Modern English Court Drama" for *The Palgrave Handbook of the History of Women on Stage* and "'The old name is fresh about me': Architectural Mimesis and Court Spaces in *All is True*" for *Performances at Court in Shakespeare's Era*.

Callan Davies is Research Fellow at the University of Roehampton (London). He is part of Before Shakespeare (www.beforeshakespeare.com), an interdisciplinary project that explores the development of playhouses and their proprietors and plays from 1565-95. He is the editor of the Curtain Playhouse for *Records of Early English Drama*, and his monograph, *Strangeness in Jacobean Drama*, is currently under consideration. Twitter: @callanjd ; @b4shakes.

Alan Dessen is Peter G. Phialas Professor of English (emeritus) at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He is the author of eight books, four of them with Cambridge University Press: *Elizabethan Stage Conventions and Modern Interpreters* (1984); *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (1995); *Rescripting Shakespeare* (2002); and, co-authored with Leslie Thomson, *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama, 1580-1642* (1999).

Ágnes Matuska is associate professor at the English Department, University of Szeged, Hungary. Her main field of research is English renaissance drama, particularly issues of the changes in the logic and ontology of theatrical representation at the Early Modern. In her book entitled *The Vice-Device: Iago and Lear's Fool as Figures of Representational Crisis* (JatePress Szeged, 2011) she suggests a re-evaluation of the Vice character of morality plays. Currently she is working on a project dealing with the diverse traditions of the *theatrum mundi* metaphor in Elizabethan England, as well as the ways contemporary understandings of the topos influence our readings of the plays. She is the recipient of short-term Folger Fellowships (2007 and 2013) and a Fulbright Research Fellowship (2011).

Kathryn Prince is director of the Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies and associate professor of Shakespeare Studies at the University of Western Australia. She is the editor of *Shakespeare Bulletin.* Her recent books include *Shakespeare and Canada* (2016), *History/Memory/Performance* (2014), and *Performing Early Modern Drama Today* (2012). She has published in *Borrowers and Lenders, Early Theatre, Emotions: History, Culture, Society*, and in many edited collections focusing on Shakespeare and the History of Emotions.

Nancy Selleck is Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and the author of *The Interpersonal Idiom in Shakespeare, Donne, and Early Modern Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). Her current book project, *Actor and Audience: Shakespeare's Theatre of Recognition*, explores early modern performance practices and the changing relationship of stage and audience in Renaissance drama. Her research and teaching combine the study of early modern theatre history and texts with the practical arts of performance. In addition

to her scholarship, she has worked as a theatre director and dramaturg at Harvard, UConn, Boston Directors' Lab, and UMass Lowell, and she was the founding Director of UML's Theatre Arts Program.

Andrew Sisson is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of English at Williams College. He received his doctorate from Johns Hopkins University in 2014, and has taught at Emory University and the University of Richmond. His previous publications are on Shakespeare and Spenser; this is his first scholarly foray into the early Tudor world. His research interests center on what literary history and the history of political thought might have to say to each other, and the present project arises out of questions about how the English reception of "civic humanism" might have been inflected by a set of specifically dramatic or theatrical paradigms.

Jessica Winston is Professor of English at Idaho State University. Her research focuses on early modern drama, sixteenth-century literary culture, law and literature, performance criticism, and performance pedagogy. She is the author of *Lawyers at Play: Literature, Law, and Politics at the Early Modern Inns of Court, 1558–1581* (OUP 2016), which received a 2017 Joseph L. Andrews Legal Literature Award from the American Association of Law Libraries. She is also coeditor of *Elizabethan Seneca: Three Tragedies* (MHRA 2012). Her current research focuses on Tudor drama in modern performance.

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