

## Editorial

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This issue devotes itself largely to Caroline drama, with the notable exception of our first article, Leanne Groeneveld's fascinating discussion the Boxley Rood of Grace as puppet. Examining records written between 1538 and 1570, Groeneveld argues that these accounts work to establish clear and exclusive categories of miracle and mimesis (theatre), categories still accepted today. By comparing the rood (an elaborate near-marionette) to a puppet, reformers exploited contemporary representations of puppet theatre as a 'low' entertainment that appealed only to the ignorant, spiritually and sexually corrupt, suggesting that 'miraculous' images appealed to the same type of audience. Groeneveld questions the exclusivity of the categories of miracle and theatre insisted upon by protestant reformers. Evidence suggests that in its original ritual context the Rood of Grace was read as both.

David Mann's article on female play-going from 1589 to 1614 (briefly extending into the Caroline period) continues the focus on audience, asking an essential question: just how many women of good reputation did attend Shakespeare's theatre? Not too many before 1614, he maintains. Theatre then as now, he argues, caters to the male gaze, male-to-male violence, and the objectification and eroticization of the female. Playwrights probably did not consider actual females when they created characters for that stage. Consider the difference argued by Kamille Stanton in her article on female spectatorship as viewed by a female playwright. Stanton's interest is both Caroline and post-Caroline, based on the military leadership of Henrietta Maria as represented in Margaret Cavendish's *Bell in Campo*. She suggests that the queen's public example of female heroics during the civil war put her at the head of a scattered league of women privately taking action in defense of their homes and towns and in support of their husbands. That public image, and the fundamental royalist philosophy of divine patriarchy it endorsed, appealed to a specific female audience and inspired action, such as we see rehearsed and revised in Margaret Cavendish's page play.

Erin Obermueller's article on Massinger's Caroline play *The Picture* brings this sadly ignored work back into scholarly view. In relation to the gender argument treated in Mann's and Stone's articles, this essay shows that the titular portrait becomes a magical mirror of sorts, not of the woman it represents, but of male insecurity and desire. By pairing a detailed study of artistic process alongside gender ideology, we can approach Massinger's play as a drama that takes art and gender as both skillfully created and easily disrupted.

The Issues in Review segment takes up the work of Richard Brome, aptly introduced by Eleanor Lowe. Eleanor Collins examines Brome's contract with the Salisbury Court theatre, and takes issue with the assumption that exclusive contractual bindings between dramatists and companies were standard practice. She reveals the atypical and particular conditions of this contract. Karen Kettlich looks at improvisation in Brome's *The Antipodes* by making analogies with Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, with which it played in repertory in 1636. Farah Karim-Cooper looks at *The English Moor* not as a play about race (its usual category) but as a play about cosmetics. The play, she argues, is concerned more with the materiality of face paint, and its relationship to the moral condition of the women wearing makeup, than with the racial Otherness that blackness arouses. Finally Mimi Yiu re-examines the meaning of new seventeenth-century architecture in *The Weeding of Covent Garden*: Covent Garden's on-going construction around a piazza leads into a discussion not only of its aesthetic purity, but also of the social and economic condition that might ensue from such a massive urban project – particularly in consideration of the clash of values between Italian 'high' culture and its 'low' sexual mores, between the male entrepreneur or purchaser and the female courtesan. In that sense, the crucible of Covent Garden, historical and imagined, reveals the tension between the importation of continental architectural principles and the assimilation of 'foreignness' in gender roles, particularly within the new public sphere created by the piazza itself.

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