

Editorial

Early Theatre congratulates the three winners of our essay prizes, selected for articles published in volumes 14 and 15: C. Edward McGee, for his superb theatre history article, ‘The English Entertainment for the French Ambassadors in 1564’, based on an unfamiliar archival record, a letter in the Thynne family papers at Longleat narrating events relating to the 1564 occasion; Amy Tigner, for best interpretation of a topic in early drama, ‘The Spanish Actress’s Art: Improvisation, Transvestism, and Disruption in Tirso’s *El vergonzoso en palacio*’, discussing female actors in women’s roles; and Jennifer Roberts-Smith, for best note with “‘What makes thou upon a stage?’: Child Actors, Royalist Publicity, and the Space of the Nation in the Queen’s Men’s *True Tragedy of Richard the Third*’, exploring boy-actors in the Queen’s Men, especially in terms of doubling and of representing their patron Elizabeth I. Readers will find the full prize announcement, including honourable mentions, on page 11 of this issue. Descriptive commendations for these award winners appear on our website, under ‘Essay Prizes’. We congratulate all the authors in those two volumes, who made the decisions extremely difficult for our judges.

Early Theatre itself is undergoing a sea-change over the next three years. First, our associate and managing editor Melinda Gough, who won prizes in the past year for two different essays — Best Article in *Early Modern Women* 7 (2012) for ‘Marie de Medici’s 1605 *Ballet de la Reine* and the Virtuoso Female Voice’, and the 2013 Barbara D. Palmer Award for Best New Essay in Early Drama Archives Research (MRDS) for ‘Marie de Medici’s 1605 *ballet de la reine*: New Evidence and Analysis’ in *Early Theatre* 15.1 (2012) — has agreed to take on the responsibility of co-editor of this journal starting in January 2014. Our assistant editor Sarah Johnson, also a prize-winning scholar, has accepted the position of associate editor, starting in January 2014. Many thanks to both for agreeing to continue with this journal and share credit for its success.

This issue presents many fine essays covering a variety of topics in medieval and early modern drama. Kimberly Fonzo examines gender in the York cycle’s ‘Dream of Pilate’s Wife’. In line with traditional readings of Procula

that discredit female spirituality, she shows how the play's further revisions frame Pilate's choice between the beadle and his own wife as one between not only masculinity and femininity, but also appropriate and sinful civic behaviour. Andrew Albin explores the aural qualities in the Chester Shepherds play to give spiritual credit to sound that unites audiences, rather than divides by gender. Sound at the narrative climax, especially in the repetition of 'summoning vowels', bridges the theatrical divide between actor and audience and the divide between past and present — ultimately inviting the audience to participate in the community inaugurated by Christ's birth.

James Forse, Charlotte Coffin, and Nova Myhill examine different aspects of performance history. Forse interrogates Henry VIII's practice of advertising his queens' and his children's status by encouraging them to patronize performers, much as Elizabeth I did with the Queen's Men. The fate of those theatrical companies, Forse concludes, waxed and waned with the fate of their patrons. Coffin addresses the 1634 case of the witches first tried in Lancaster Castle's courtroom, followed by re-examination of the evidence (including witnesses and four of the witches) in London. Heywood and Brome's London play, she argues, despite the concurrent legal process, seemed to push a verdict before the hearing was actually over. With particular attention to another set of women from the 1630s — the increasingly prominent female spectators who attended Caroline theatres — Nova Myhill contends that Brome's *The Antipodes* posits the authority of audiences, rather than players or playwrights, as the most effective antidote to anti-theatricalist anxieties.

In our Notes section, Wendy Beth Hyman, drawing attention to the 'jaquemart' and its disparate associations with mechanistic labour and creativity, persuasively identifies a new facet of Shakespearean character that illuminates our understanding of figures ranging from Falstaff to Richard II. David McInnis draws our attention to the miscatalogued, virtually lost play, *Cupid's Grand Polititian*. Outlining this closet drama's basic plot and noting its amusing 'undergraduate humour', McInnis also takes up broader questions concerning authorship, composition date, and political significance.

Kent Cartwright's review essay 'Defining Tudor Drama' from our last issue declared this 'a propitious time for the study of Tudor literature', pointing out that many recent studies are limited in either focusing on single plays and authors, or considering similar types of historical and performance evidence. The current Issues in Review section, 'New Approaches to Earlier Tudor Drama', models a range of other critical arguments about the plays

written, printed, and performed between the 1480s and the 1570s. The authors in this section offer four short, innovative essays: Maura Giles-Watson analyzes as a professional repertory dramatic works written and published by John Rastell; Jennifer Ailles interprets Heywood's *Play of the Weather* through an eco-critical lens; Laura Estill shows that Sackville and Norton's *Gorboduc* was a mine of material for manuscript commonplacing long after its first performance; and Brett D. Hirsch suggests that digital editions can transform Tudor plays like *New Custom* into an untapped reserve not just for reading but also for stylistic analysis and data-mining. Our associate editor Erin E. Kelly acted as contributing editor in drawing these pieces together to inspire further work on Tudor drama — and we hope that anyone who undertakes such projects will consider this journal as a place to share ideas.

THE EDITORS