Early Theatre
A Journal Associated with the Records of Early English Drama

Volume 8 | Issue 2 Article 1

1-1-2005

Editorial

Helen Ostovich
McMaster University, ostovich@mcmaster.ca

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/earlytheatre

Recommended Citation
Ostovich, Helen. 'Editorial'. *Early Theatre* 8.2 (2005): 7-8 (paper). Article 1.
Available at: http://digitalcommons.mcmaster.ca/earlytheatre/vol8/iss2/1

Copyright © 2005 by Early Theatre. This Editorial is brought to you by DigitalCommons@McMaster. It has been accepted for inclusion in Early Theatre by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@McMaster. For more information, please contact scom@mcmaster.ca.

Editorial

We have a very rich collection of essays for this issue on a variety of performance issues with surprising revelations about theatre history and practice, sources, cultural difference, and social reception. Regina Buccola's study of the boy actor in *The Devil is an Ass* works from the premise that Jonson's copious stage directions and meta-theatrical dialogue offer insight into early modern theatrical practice, especially concerning the performance styles of boy players in female roles. Philip Collington's investigation of *Othello* uses Bacon's definition of 'simulation' to propose that early audiences may have been prompted to interpret Othello's stories as travellers' tales, narrative simulations forming a pseudo-exotic persona which secures him unwarranted prominence in Venetian society. Duncan Salkeld's note, based on his discoveries in the 1575–1600 Bridewell Hospital archives, explores bizarre activities of actors and audiences before, during, and after performances at various London theatres. In her article on Webster's death scenes, Roberta Barker focuses on the would-be power-brokers, Flamineo and Bosola, who reflect both early modern culture's attraction to acting as an aid to social advancement and its mistrust of acting as dangerous hypocrisy. Karen Bamford's essay offers a sensitive reading of Helena in *All's Well that Ends Well*, based on folklore's testing of the bride who must find her lost husband. Finally, our Issues in Review section this year is a fascinating account of Italian exhibitions that combine art history, cultural context, and theatre in their recreation of earlier magnificence, and their careful reconstruction of early engineering skills, notably those of Inigo Jones, arguably the one theatre designer whose absorption of Italy's lessons had the most impact on English performances. The Italian perspective in this review article offers fortuitous and happy support to the other articles in this issue, especially those by Bamford, Barker, and Collington.

I am delighted to present to you our new Book Review Editor, also a contributor to this issue, Roberta Barker of Dalhousie University. For the 2006 book review section, she will be sharing the burden of the work with Karen

Bamford, who is retiring from the position after several years in order to devote her time to another academic role as head of her department. Starting in 2007, Roberta will be managing book reviews on her own. *Early Theatre* owes a special debt of gratitude to Karen Bamford for inaugurating Book Reviews in Volume 4 (2001), and for her skilful management in locating a range of scholarly reviewers who brought their experience and tact to the reading and timely reviewing of recent books on topics related to theatre history and performance. She will be sorely missed.

Letters on the content of this issue may be addressed to the editor, or individually to the authors, whose addresses are listed in the Contributors section. For all of us, dialogue with our readers is a welcome outcome of our work.

Helen Ostovich