



FACULTY OF  
**ARTS**



# **BEYOND 400: NEW SHAKESPEARES**

## **A SYMPOSIUM UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**

### **15 NOVEMBER 2016**

After a year-long celebration of the quartercentenary of Shakespeare's death, it's time to move from reflection to future directions. What will Shakespearean text and performance look like, beyond the 400 year anniversary? This symposium will draw on the expertise of its four keynote speakers from the Shakespeare Institute (University of Birmingham) and the University of York to focus on questions of editing and performance.

#### **DEFINING SHAKESPEARE**

**PROFESSOR JOHN JOWETT**

Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

#### **DEFINING THE BBC 2012 AND 2016 SHAKESPEARE SEASONS IN FESTIVAL TERMS**

**DR SARAH OLIVE**

University of York

#### **CANON, CHRONOLOGY AND COLLABORATION IN SHAKESPEARE'S EARLY CAREER'**

**DR WILL SHARPE**

Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

#### **SHAKESPEARE AND THE DIGITAL SPHERE: PERFORMANCE AND THE PUBLIC IN THE RSC / GOOGLE+'S MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAMING**

**DR ERIN SULLIVAN**

Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

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**400**  
SHAKESPEARE  
MELBOURNE

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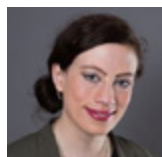
## DEFINING SHAKESPEARE

PROFESSOR  
JOHN JOWETT

Shakespeare Institute,  
University of Birmingham

Since the Oxford Shakespeare of 1886, developments in attribution study, textual theory, book history, performance study, and various other areas have raised the questions: 'What, then, is Shakespeare now?' and 'In what ways can a new edition most productively supply commentary, apparatus, and functionality?' This presentation will explore how the New Oxford Shakespeare seeks to define Shakespeare for new generations of Shakespeare students, performers, and readers.

**John Jowett** is Professor of Shakespeare Studies at the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham. He is a general editor of the forthcoming New Oxford Shakespeare, a member of the editorial board of *Arden Early Modern Drama*, and was an Associate General Editor of the Oxford *Collected Works* of Thomas Middleton. He has edited *Richard III* and *Timon of Athens* for the Oxford Shakespeare series, and *Sir Thomas More* for the Arden Shakespeare series. He is also author of the Oxford Shakespeare Topics book *Shakespeare and Text*.



## DEFINING THE BBC 2012 AND 2016 SHAKESPEARE SEASONS IN FESTIVAL TERMS

DR SARAH OLIVE

University of York

*Shakespeare Unlocked* and *Shakespeare Festival* are two BBC seasons broadcast on television and radio in 2012 (the year of the London Olympics, which included a veritable matryoshka of cultural events: the Cultural Olympiad, World Shakespeare Festival and Globe to Globe Festival) and 2016 (the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death).

*Shakespeare Unlocked* included BBC television's first adaptations of Shakespeare's plays in seven years (the second tetralogy, packaged as *The Hollow Crown*); documentaries showing RSC actors and directors working on three plays to 'unlock' their meaning, on Elizabethan and Jacobean history, Italy in Shakespeare and Shakespeare in India; and a dedicated episode of the popular comedy quiz show *QI*.

This paper asks whether *Shakespeare Unlocked* can be read as a festival in terms of the season's design and marketing, its reception by television critics and audiences (particularly those commenting on Twitter) and the extent to which it fits with notions of Shakespearean festival outlined by academics and in arts policy. If it can, what are the implications for Shakespearean theatre and television? I also consider the BBC's bold self-identification of the second season as a festival, offer preliminary reflections on the similarities and differences between the two seasons ('More comedy! More digital content!', 2016 seems to cry), and analysis of what they mean for Shakespeare's immortality in and beyond this funeral year.

**Sarah Olive** is a Lecturer at the University of York. Her research focuses on the function of Shakespeare in popular culture and education internationally, particularly in post-documentary television and social media. Her monograph, *Shakespeare Valued: Education Policy and Pedagogy*, was published by Intellect in 2015. She chairs the British Shakespeare Association's Education Network and edits its publication *Teaching Shakespeare*.



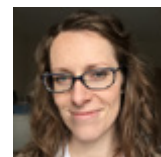
## CANON, CHRONOLOGY AND COLLABORATION IN SHAKESPEARE'S EARLY CAREER

DR WILL SHARPE

Shakespeare Institute,  
University of Birmingham

This paper will reconsider Shakespeare as a collaborator in the early phase of his career: how predominant a feature of his early writing collaboration is, and how this affects broader issues of establishing chronology and canon formation pre-Chamberlain's Men. The vexed question of Shakespeare's early activity has shared roots in theatre history, biography, and attribution study, and is in large part reflective of assumptions about his career trajectory and artistic development, and of how collaboration as a process and an apparent register of artistic independence fits in to those pictures. A chronology reoriented around collaboration may hold some very revealing implications for our understanding of Shakespeare's working practices in his early career and how they differed from post-1594, as well as how collaborative writing may be better understood as part of Shakespeare's development as a literary craftsman. I will argue that his particularly promiscuous collaboration at this time both differs from the more predictable stability of his late collaborations, and changes our sense of his early canon, and, potentially, early chronology quite radically.

**Will Sharpe** is a teaching fellow at the University of Birmingham. He contributed a monograph-length study on 'Authorship and Attribution' to the RSC/Palgrave volume *William Shakespeare and Others: Collaborative Plays* (2013). He is the editor of *All Is True: Or, King Henry VIII* for the New Oxford Shakespeare (for which he has also prepared commentaries on *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Hamlet*), and is one of the General Editors of *Digital Renaissance Editions*. He is, with Erin Sullivan, a revising editor of the updated *Oxford Companion to Shakespeare* (2015).



## SHAKESPEARE AND THE DIGITAL SPHERE: PERFORMANCE AND THE PUBLIC IN THE RSC / GOOGLE+'S MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAMING

DR ERIN SULLIVAN

Shakespeare Institute,  
University of Birmingham

How has the expansion of digital culture in the twenty-first century influenced the performance of Shakespeare's plays in and for the public sphere? This article looks at the RSC's 2013 collaboration with Google+ to produce *Midsummer Night's Dreaming*, a month-long, hybrid performance project involving social media exchange around Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and a concentrated, 'real-time' performance of the play in Stratford-upon-Avon over the June midsummer weekend. Drawing on archival records, practitioner interviews, and the author's own experience of being part of the audience for both the online and live elements of the project (including a 2am performance of the play's forest scenes), the article explores how *Midsummer Night's Dreaming* foregrounded questions about time, space, presence, and participation in the theatre, particularly when it moves into an ever-widening digital and public sphere.

**Erin Sullivan** is a Senior Lecturer and Fellow at the Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham. Her work focuses on the relationship between emotion, culture, and identity, both in Shakespeare's time and today. She is the author of *Beyond Melancholy: Sadness and Selfhood in Renaissance England* (OUP, 2016), co-editor of *The Renaissance of Emotion: Understanding Affect in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (2015) and *Shakespeare on the Global Stage: Performance and Festivity in the Olympic Year* (2015).