

SAA 2021, Austin, Texas (Zoomed). Seminar #13: **Fields, Spaces, Parks and Gardens: Shakespearean Drama and Entertainment Outdoors**.

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1-3pm, EDT

Seminar convenor: Dr. Eva Griffith, Independent Scholar (6-8pm, Greenwich Mean Time)

**Group 1: The European Musicological and Theatrical 'Outdoors' (2 papers)**

Marcus Höhne, University of Kansas (7-9pm, German time)

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“Noises, / Sounds, and Sweet Airs”: Outdoor Magic and Music in *The Tempest*

My project seeks to analyse the interconnectedness between magic, music, and the outdoors in Shakespeare's late romance *The Tempest*. The play – like the genre itself – is known for its incorporation of the supernatural. This paper will explore the interrelatedness of these themes, as well as the ways in which the playwright's chosen outdoor settings and musical selections underpin the play's supernatural themes. More specifically, this work will examine the role of the unexplored island in *The Tempest*, and the way this space interacts with the musical and supernatural elements of the play. The combination of magic, music, and an unfamiliar outdoor location creates an uncanny blend which is heard and felt by the characters on stage and the audience members in the playhouse alike. This project will also investigate the functions of characters such as Caliban and Ariel, who infuse music and magic into the play. Through closer inspection of the play's preternatural features, this work seeks to cultivate deeper understanding of, and spark discussion about, the relationships between space, music, and the supernatural.

Ascensión Mazuela-Anguita, University of Granada, Spain (7-9pm, Spanish time)

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Students' music, drama, and outdoor entertainment in early modern Spain

The term *pandorga*, which stems from *pandura*, an ancient Greek stringed instrument resembling the lute, is defined at the Covarrubias dictionary of 1611 as “a crazy consonance with lots of noise resulting from a variety of musical instruments”. Numerous accounts of outdoor celebrations in the early modern Iberian world refer to the sounding participation of students by organising *pandorgas*, which consisted of burlesque masquerade parades in which several musical instruments were played in order to make noise and express joy along the city streets. In written sources, the *pandorga* is related to dissonance, noise, roar, out-of-tune music, masquerades, the satiric and the burlesque. Later on, theatrical genres such as the *mojiganga* were said to be accompanied by noisy “*pandorga* instruments” and, in his *Entremés de los instrumentos* (1663), where Calderón associated each musical instrument with different contexts, he related shakers to the *pandorga*. This paper studies, from a musicological perspective, a variety of chronicles, lyrics of villancicos, and theatrical texts, with the aim of imagining the non-written music that sounded in a *pandorga*, the musical instruments that were used and how they were combined, and the role that this music had in drama and urban entertainment outdoors in the early modern Iberian world.

## **Group 2: 'Modern' Historical Accounts of Entertainment Outdoors (3 papers)**

Darlene Farabee, University of South Dakota (12-2pm, Central Time)

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### Outdoor Shakespeare on the US Plains

In 1914, Yankton College built on their campus in Yankton, South Dakota, an outdoor “Renaissance-styled” theatre specifically for the College’s yearly Shakespeare productions, which had been happening outdoors since 1908. The promotional materials describing the theatre claim that this was the first outdoor theatre of its kind in the United States, designed with the “structural features of original Shakespearean theatres.” While the theatre is still on the campus (and still well maintained), the college closed in 1984 and became a low-security prison. The theatre has since not been used for productions. George Harrison Durand, the Kittredge-trained Shakespearean teaching at Yankton College, was the prime force behind building the theatre. When the Garden Terrace Theatre was built, they adopted what seemed to be the main features of Shakespearean playing spaces and experimented with using a thrust stage, no curtain, little to no scenery changes and minimal stage properties. Between 1908 and 1972 (the last instance I can find of a Shakespeare play done at the Garden Terrace Theatre), there were 54 Shakespeare plays produced and 46 of these Shakespeare plays were produced in the Garden Terrace Theatre. This paper explores the use of this outdoor playing space, considers the choice of plays, and speculates on the role of outdoor Shakespeare for this community.

Brian Harries, Concordia University, Wisconsin (12-2pm, Central Time)

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### “We’ll shift our ground”: Positioning and Moving the Audience in Two Outdoor Shakespeare Productions and Concordia University Wisconsin

In 2015 and 2017, the Theatre Department at Concordia mounted productions of *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, respectively. Due to the small nature of our university, I often collaborate with the Theatre as some combination of dramaturge, set designer, and assistant director, especially on Shakespearean productions. Working with Prof. Lori Woodall-Schaufler as director, we created two shows that sought to engage the audience through outdoor performance locations. In particular, we wanted to emphasize how changes in location fundamentally drive the plots of these two plays. In both cases we utilized the unique outdoor features of our campus for the purpose of positioning the audience in settings appropriate to the action. *Macbeth* began in our small amphitheater overlooking Lake Michigan for the battlefield and heath scenes, and moved to the built environment of our chapel courtyard for Inverness and Dunsinane. We created the closed world of *MND* within a small internal courtyard on campus, whose heavily landscaped environment allowed us to move the audience between the discrete worlds of Athens and the woods. This paper will explore how we used the text and multiple outdoor spaces to interpret one another in an attempt to create an immersive audience experience.

Robert Ormsby, Memorial University of Newfoundland (2.30-4.30pm Newfoundland Time)

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### Staging Newfoundland as A Tourist Place: Perchance Theatre's Outdoor Shakespeare

This paper will explore summertime festival performance at Perchance Theatre, in the small town of Cupids (NL). Founded in 2010, the company built a replica open-air Jacobean playhouse to commemorate 400 years of English settlement in the community (pop. 800), an hour's drive from the provincial capital of St. John's. I argue that Perchance takes up the notion that rural Newfoundland is an appropriate locale for staging Shakespeare because the landscape and the local people's traditional ways of life, which transformed that landscape into a meaningful place, can supposedly reveal truths about the playwright's drama. I argue, furthermore, that Perchance depicts its open-air theatre as a place of pilgrimage to which urban tourist audiences travel and co-create, through a version of Original Practices, a sense of place that combines Shakespearean performance and the rural setting. In the final part of my paper, I will examine the company's response to the pandemic, a series of video monologues from Shakespeare's plays recorded to feature prominently the province's rugged topography. I argue that, while the videos are a necessary departure for Perchance, they extend the company's grounding of its identity in the rural landscape.

### **Group 3: London Theatre history and London Theatrical territory Outdoors (2 papers)**

Gregory M. Schnitzspahn, Fisher College, Boston (1-3pm Eastern Time)

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### Swelling Tides, Unruly Crowds, and The Lord Mayor's Show

Held on London's streets and waterways on a late autumn day, the Lord Mayor's Show provides an annually recurring example of an entertainment that can *only* take place outdoors. And in the early modern period, some of London's most notable playwrights were hired to write this sprawling performance. Indeed, Ben Jonson, Thomas Middleton, George Peele, Thomas Dekker, and Anthony Munday all wrote one or more installments of the Lord Mayor's Show. But these writers were surely more accustomed to producing texts that governed the speech and movement of professional actors within the relatively stable space of the playhouse. The Lord Mayor's Show, on the other hand, took place largely on city streets crowded with spectators, and it included the chaotic "water show" that was carried out alongside the Lord Mayor's barge as he journeyed to Westminster and back again on the Thames. In such settings, the Shows were unquestionably subject to disruption by the elements, not to mention the populace. And this very notion seemingly comes up in the first speech of Middleton's 1621 Show, *The Sun in Aries*, when the new Lord Mayor's coming year is compared to a journey at sea: "There is no voyage set forth to renown, / That does not sometimes meet with skies that frown / With gusts of envy, billows of despite" (65-7). Focused on the Lord Mayor's Shows written by Thomas Middleton between 1613 and 1626, this paper considers the instability and potential disorder inherent to early modern outdoor performances.

Dave Kathman, Independent Scholar (1-3pm, Eastern Time)

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Carpenter's Yard: An Early Outdoor Playing Venue in Tudor London

Popular histories of the pre-Elizabethan theatre often state that itinerant players would typically perform in innyards and other open spaces, and that these inspired the permanent open-air playhouses that appeared in the 1570s. It is often stated or implied that indoor playing in spaces like the Blackfriars was a later development, at least for adult players. This common storyline is not really accurate, though; of the specific places in London known to have hosted professional plays before 1575, most were indoors, including nearly all of the venues known from the first burst of commercial playing in the 1540s. One exception is Carpenter's Yard, where a man named Ambrose Chapman was hosting plays in the spring of 1543 before the London Common Council ordered him to stop. Chapman was engaged to marry Elizabeth Gray, the widow of John Gray, who had been leasing Carpenter's Yard and several other properties and died with considerable debts. It is not clear exactly where this Carpenter's Yard was or what its dimensions were, but the location of John Gray's other properties provide some clues, and the complex story of John Gray, Elizabeth Gray, and Ambrose Chapman provides interesting context for early commercial playing in London.

**Group 4: Animal and Human: Sex and Sensory Theatrical Experience Outdoors (3 papers)**

Lee Emrich, University of California, Davis (10am-12pm, Pacific Time)

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Sex on the Grass: Carnal Knowledge, Green Gowns, Outdoor Pleasures

Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* presents most of its onstage action as *outdoor* action and explores the concerns of both festival and outdoor entertainment through its characters, an intermingled populace of fairgoers and vendors who congregate in Smithfield on August 24th (St. Bartholomew's Day) to sell and consume produce, meat, trinkets, ballads, and even a puppet show. Smithfield, which lies just outside the city walls, was a liminal space between the city and the country, and was, at the time Jonson was writing *Bartholomew Fair*, losing its grass and trees to encroachments by the city in the form of paved streets and buildings. Smithfield is also a boundary site because of the fair itself: citizens, farmers and animal keepers, and various tradespersons come from both in and out of the city to participate in festival freedom and economic exchange. Many studies detail the connections between animality and the play's female characters, arguing that the women in the play converge two "meat" markets at the fair: pig-eating and prostitution. As a parallel exploration to animality, this essay examines the moments where women are re-natured, or associated with plants and natural locales, arguing that plant power supports avenues of women's empowerment in the play. The green women of the fair, not just the location of the fair in Smithfield, serve as an interface between the city and the country, and the play keeps Smithfield's liminality alive by both professionalizing trees and grass through Ursula's booth and the green gowns of Win Littlewit and Dame Overdo but also allowing nature to vegetize the intense fleshiness of the women in the play.

Steven Urkowitz (1-3pm, Eastern Time)

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Performed Under the Sky:

Unexpected Environmental Expansions of One "Harrowing of Hell" and Two *King Lear*s

Outdoor productions have affected my work and my theatrical imagination. For the seminar, I give examples of specific, influential out-door performances from 1962, 1986, and 2008. They include two KING LEARs outside in wild winds on different continents and a medieval YORK CORPUS CHRISTI "Harrowing of Hell" pageant in Toronto. I connect my experiences to an idea developed by Michael Long in THE UNNATURAL SCENE (1976). Long shows how Shakespeare invokes Nature as an unpredictably powerful and uncontrollable intervention in human lives. I suggest that playing out-of-doors may restore a sense of wildness too easily masked during performances in our modern more predictable venues.