This study explores an area of adaptation studies that has only recently begun to interest scholars: non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama on film and television. Through its filmography of more than sixty items, this project addresses the misconception that few screen adaptations of non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays have ever been produced. The dissertation itself focuses on two particularly rich clusters of appropriations, situating them within their vastly different industrial contexts. Chapters Two and Three examine a group of early British television adaptations from the late thirties and forties that were broadcast live and not recorded. Chapter Two partially reconstructs the earliest of these programs, the 1938 "Duchess of Malfi" (produced by Royston Morley), from documents preserved in the BBC Written Archives Centre (WAC). Chapter Three analyzes the WAC's files for producer Stephen Harrison's "Doctor Faustus" (1947), "Edward II" (1947), and "The Duchess of Malfi" (1949), discussing both their salient narrative and stylistic features and their relationships to larger institutional issues within the BBC. The dissertation's second half shifts from early British television to film from the late nineties and early aughts, providing an alternative to the critical paradigm of the "contemporary Jacobean film" that has begun to shape
scholarly response to films such as Edward II (Derek Jarman, 1991), Middleton's Changeling (Marcus Thompson, 1998), Hotel (Mike Figgis, 2001), and Revengers Tragedy (Alex Cox, 2002). While the model of contemporary Jacobean film asserts that directors self-reflexively position themselves as anti-Shakespeare and anti-Shakespeare-as-heritage, Chapters Four and Five argue that the Renaissance and its film adaptations are only one lens through which to view these films and their creators. Chapter Four demonstrates that the ways in which Jarman and Cox construct themselves as auteurs by invoking their Renaissance forbears is less stable than previously suggested, and Thompson and Figgis figure their authorship using the larger contexts of the film industry and its history. Finally, Chapter Five attempts to decenter the Renaissance and the late-nineties "Shakespeare industry" as Hotel's primary engagements by analyzing its deep roots in both the experimental and art cinema traditions.

NON-SHAKESPEAREAN RENAISSANCE DRAMA ON FILM AND TELEVISION

by

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To Michael and Fran,

whose patience

is matched only by their courage

and generosity of spirit.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The irony of this dissertation's title is not lost upon its writer. The project's very existence proclaims that looking beyond Shakespeare is useful, that exploring film and television engagements with plays by Renaissance writers such as Marlowe, Jonson, Webster, Middleton, and Rowley is a worthwhile endeavor. It is difficult, however, to craft an efficient way of referring to this group without invoking the name of their more famous colleague. Sarah Werner and Pascale Aebischer, organizers of the 2012 Shakespeare Association of America panel "Non-Shakespearean Drama and Performance," faced a similar problem. Werner's blog explains how they decided on terminology:

Pascale and I struggled to come up with a title and phrasing to use that conveyed our interest in moving beyond Shakespeare without defining those other playwrights and plays in terms of Shakespeare. "Non-Shakespearean", alas, does just that, but it is really the only shorthand available. "Shakespeare's contemporaries" runs into the same problem—defining everything in terms of Shakespeare—while introducing an emphasis on contemporaneity that excludes too much of interest. With some reluctance, then, we stuck with describing our interest as lying in the

1. When referring to early British television programs, the dissertation follows the early BBC convention of placing individual television episodes in quotation marks rather than italics.
non-Shakespearean, hoping that recognizing the inadequacy of the phrase might open up avenues for moving through the challenges of this field. Significantly, Werner subtitles the blog on which she posts this reflection "books, early modern culture, post-modern readers," but nothing indicates that they considered using "early modern drama" in an attempt to circumnavigate the Shakespeare problem. Perhaps that is because the wider category of early modern drama would certainly include Shakespeare, and therefore that term does not accurately describe their subject. Yet, the editors of Shakespeare Bulletin entitled their Winter 2011 special edition on this subject "Early Modern Drama on Screen: A Jarman Anniversary Issue." The choice of title in this case, however, might underscore the editors' desire to be inclusive, a refusal to add insult to injury by naming other Renaissance dramatists by their not-Shakespearenness in a journal that already bears Shakespeare's name.

I resisted the more elegant sound of "early modern drama" for two additional reasons. First, "early modern" seems like just as much of a metaphor and historical construct as "Renaissance," the term it seeks to refine. If "Renaissance" focuses too much on the rebirth of the arts that nineteenth-century thinkers saw and celebrated in the era without regard to serious social problems, then "early modern" commits a similar offense by positioning the period as the era during which we see the first sparkling glimpses of our modern selves. More important, though, "early modern" obscures this project's most basic premise: in British and American television, most decisions to produce plays by the "other" Renaissance playwrights are, to some extent, decisions not to produce Shakespeare. This premise points to the paradoxical position that these writers occupy in popular culture. On one hand, they are unquestioned members of the literary canon. Their
plays are fixtures in introductory literature survey textbooks and Renaissance drama anthologies, not to mention the shelves of any Barnes and Noble. On the other hand, the overwhelming shadow of Shakespeare often conceals their worth in popular culture. Indeed, the main feature binding together such a diverse group of playwrights and plays is that they all share a literary-historical period with perhaps the most famous writer of all time—essentially, their not-Shakespeareness. What significance does their creation take on, then? Are these adaptations trading on their places in the canon or are they trying to defy the canon? Are they more or less products of their respective moments in entertainment history, or are they exceptions to norms?

The vexed status of these adaptations even extends to the academy, where scholars have only just begun to display interest in them. "Shakespeare on screen studies" has become "a major industry of criticism" (Cartmell and Whelehan 4), but specialists in the field have seemed hesitant to apply their expertise to film and television engagements with the non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama. Granted, Shakespeare adaptations outnumber those of his colleagues many times over, but it seems as though this ratio's imbalance would make scholars all the more interested in them. Before the recent surge of interest in these appropriations signaled by the SAA panel and Shakespeare Bulletin issue, though, the body of criticism devoted to them was limited to a handful of articles, most of them about Derek Jarman's Edward II (1991). The filmography that I compiled during the course of my research, however, contains more than sixty entries, and I do not doubt that even more adaptations exist.

Why has it taken us so long to seek out these non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama adaptations? While the answer to this question ultimately has many
dimensions, perhaps the most important reason is that scholars simply do not know about many of these films and television programs. Courtney Lehmann's *Shakespeare Bulletin* article, for instance, states that only five Middleton adaptations have ever been made:

> As it turns out, with the exception of three versions of *The Changeling* released over the last fifteen years, Middleton's screen appearances are limited to two relatively obscure adaptations: Jacques Rivette's *Noroît* (1976), a *nouvelle vague* approach to *The Revengers Tragedy*, and Alex Cox's 2002 film of this same play [...].

In addition to the three versions of *The Changeling* that Lehmann discusses in her essay, however, at least four more screen adaptations of Middleton plays exist, all of them made for television. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) produced at least two versions of *The Changeling*, one featuring a dazzling Helen Mirren (Anthony Page, 20 January 1974), and another with a less-dazzling Hugh Grant but perfectly fine Bob Hoskins and Elizabeth McGovern (Simon Curtis, 11 December 1993). In January 1965, ITV produced two stunning Middleton appropriations: "Women Beware Women" (Gordon Flemyng, 11 January 1965), and "The Changeling" *(Philip Mackie / Derek Bennett, 4 January 1965). The ITV "Changeling" actually made headlines in 2010, when a cache of television programs that the British Film and Television Institute (BFI) had previously classified as "Missing, Believed Wiped" was discovered at the Library of

---

2. Lehmann focuses on *Middleton's Changeling* (Marcus Thompson, 1998), *Revengers Tragedy* (Alex Cox, 2002), and *Compulsion* (Sarah Harding, 2008). It is curious that she would describe *Revengers Tragedy* as more obscure than Jay Stern's adaptation of *The Changeling*. While Lehman's phrasing would suggest otherwise, the Cox film actually has been commercially distributed, whereas the Stern film has not.
Congress (Serafy). During the sixties, programs were routinely erased so that their videotapes could be used multiple times, so the Library of Congress programs are a remarkable find. Two years later, an image from "The Changeling" still illustrates the BFI's description of the discovery on its website (Figure 1.1). Interested viewers can now see "The Changeling" at the BFI's Mediatheques. Although never commercially released on video, "Women Beware Women" is also available for scholarly viewing at the BFI National Archive. Lehmann does not purposely seem to be ignoring television; Sarah Harding's *Compulsion* for ITV (2008) is one of the three adaptations she analyzes, after all. The fact remains, though, that her essay highlights the scarcity of Middleton.
adaptations by stating that only five have ever been made—four of them films—a claim that excludes at least four programs produced by the giants of British television.

Privileging film over television, however inadvertently, is not uncommon in adaptation studies. Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Whelehan even have called for more attention to television, a medium "so often excluded from literature on screen studies" (4), when discussing the future of the discipline. Particularly with older television, though, access certainly can prove a roadblock to scholarly progress. Many television appropriations of non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama are difficult to find or have not survived, are made in languages other than English and unsubtitled, or in some cases, both. Between problems identifying and accessing these adaptations, it is no wonder that the small body of criticism devoted to non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama adaptations focuses on movies produced during the last twenty years or so and available on home video. Considering that foreign-language appropriations constitute one third of the items on this dissertation's filmography, and more than half of those were made for television, we are doubtless overlooking fruitful areas of inquiry.

Aside from highlighting the number and variety of these adaptations through the filmography, this dissertation has two main goals. The first is recovery. Many of the films and television dramas discussed here are merely mentioned in performance histories of the plays that they adapt; some are omitted entirely. Particularly with adaptations that have not survived, compiling information and reconstructing what we can about them ensures that they become or remain part of performance histories. The second goal is analysis. This goal pursues another of Cartmell and Whelehan's seven suggestions for improving the discipline by exploring "[p]roduction values, technological changes,
commercial considerations—in short, the films and television industries themselves [...]"
(4). This dissertation thus analyzes how industrial contexts have shaped the ways in which these films and television programs engage with non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays. Since foreign-language adaptations operate within different cultural frameworks, this project concentrates on the output of two nations in which Shakespeare's fame thoroughly trounces that of other Renaissance playwrights: England and the United States.

Before further elaborating on the dissertation's objectives, perhaps a few words about its parameters and limitations are in order. Even as this project establishes that more non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays have been produced for film and television than scholars might know about, these adaptations are nevertheless anomalies within the Shakespeare-centric cultures of British and American entertainment. Thus while the dissertation strives for historical breadth, it is not a history of non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama on film and television. Because research on this topic is still in its early stages—both in this project and in the work of other scholars—such a history is premature. For the same reason, the dissertation shall not impose a tidy but misleading framework upon these adaptations, claiming influences and patterns where none might exist. Instead, it simply focuses upon the entertainment contexts that produced two particularly rich clusters of non-Shakespearean Renaissance adaptations within wider cultures of Shakespeare's dominance. In addition, the dissertation considers the concept of adaptation via the attitudes held by the creators and audiences of these works rather than outlining a history of the discipline or offering a specific theory of adaptation's inherent qualities or problems. The dissertation shall, therefore, use the terms
"adaptation" and "appropriation" interchangeably. Finally, any project in which three disciplines overlap cannot be all things to all people. While this study might interest some specialists in television and film studies, it is geared toward audiences more likely to be interested in the content that these works adapt: scholars of Renaissance drama, adaptation studies, or both.

The dissertation's first half focuses on a cluster of British television adaptations produced during the period that Jason Jacobs categorizes as "early British television" (1). This period lasts from the inauguration of regular public television service in 1936 until 1955, when the arrival of commercial television began to change the institutional structures and aesthetics of British television. Although some fascinating programs from the late fifties to mid-sixties have survived—the ITV Middleton adaptations discussed above, for example—Chapters Two and Three concentrate on an earlier era of live, unrecorded broadcasts that were just as ephemeral as the performances on which they are based. Scholars have learned much about the Renaissance stage from business records such as Philip Henslowe's diary; files housed at the BBC's Written Archives Centre (WAC) offer similar insights concerning the production of early British television drama.

The dissertation's second half shifts from television to film. Chapters Four and Five examine how four filmmakers who appropriated non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama during the nineties and early aughts either invoke or ignore their Renaissance forbears when constructing their own authorship. Chapter Five analyzes the work of one of these filmmakers, Mike Figgis's Hotel (2001), in greater detail.
Early British Television Drama, Liveness, and the Television of Attractions

Although it was not until after World War II that television became part of daily life in many British households, by that time television technology had existed for decades. As early as 1884, inventors had begun trying to turn images into information capable of wireless transmission. In 1928, a Scots inventor had sent the first distinct transatlantic TV signal; by 1930, RCA alone had spent nine million dollars on television broadcasting research (Hilmes 71) and the BBC had extended its interest beyond radio broadcasting and taken a hand in developing British television (Crisell 71). In 1936, the BBC began its first regular, non-experimental television broadcasts. After a preview during the RadiOlympia exhibition in August, regular service began on 2 November. It lasted until 3 September 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. Transmission ended abruptly—in the middle of a Mickey Mouse cartoon, in fact—ostensibly because the television signal might be used to aid German bombers. When television broadcasting resumed again in June 1946, after a short ceremony the cartoon began right where it broken off in 1939, as though the ugliness of World War II had all been a horrible dream (Rohrer).

For most of the pre-war period, transmissions lasted just a few hours each day. Broadcasts typically ran from about 3-5 p.m. and again from 8-10 p.m.. No Sunday transmissions took place until 1938, when the Service decided that a 9-10:30 PM block would not violate the sanctity of the Sabbath. The period between the weekday afternoon and evening broadcasts was called the "toddler's truce." Because children might resist bedtime if the opportunity to watch television existed, the famously paternalistic BBC
decided not to broadcast during those hours for the good of the nation (Caughie 34). The toddler's truce lasted until 1954, when a news hour was added at 7:30 p.m.

The BBC's paternalism did, of course, extend beyond the organization of transmission times and into the content of broadcasts. We may never know why the Television Service decided to produce "The Knight of the Burning Pestle," the wonderfully bizarre play Renaissance play with an audience participation element, but it was undoubtedly made possible by the "cultural uplift" policy adopted by the BBC's first director, John Reith. Although Reith left the BBC during the service's infancy and television would change a great deal after World War II, his influence lingered for decades—arguably, even to the present day. Reith believed that British broadcasting should function "as a public service, answerable neither to the government nor to the listeners, but only to higher cultural ideals. 'Our responsibility,' he wrote in 1924, 'is to carry into the greatest number of homes everything that is best in every department of human knowledge...and to avoid the things which are, or may be, hurtful" (qtd. in Hajkowski 10). In order to maintain control over content, Reith fiercely advocated for preserving the BBC's broadcasting monopoly. The British government took a firm hand in the development of broadcasting. In 1927, the "C" in BBC ceased to stand for "company" when the institution became a public corporation, "supported by a license fee paid by radio owners, thereby liberating radio from the market system and direct government intervention" (11). The government did, however, retain "a significant amount of indirect control over the BBC" in many ways, from setting the license fee and selecting the Board of Governors, to maintaining the authority to renew the monopoly as well as to take over the BBC in a national emergency (11). Thus, while Britain has never
"suffered state-controlled" broadcasting, the state has always exerted great influence upon it. Before the government allowed ITV to begin broadcasting in 1955, then, "the lack of competition gave the BBC the luxury of pursuing a high-minded policy of cultural uplift" (11).

During the pre-war period, however, not everyone in England, let alone Britain, would have been able to reap the benefits of this "uplift." In September 1936, the BBC had established television service only to London and a small radius outside the city. Even with the signal's limited reach, though, thousands of people viewed television programs during this three-year period. By the time Britain declared war in September 1939, approximately 18,000 - 20,000 television sets had been purchased (Crisell 72). Although the BBC did not conduct research about its audiences until much later, it is not unreasonable to assume that the original audience for television drama would have been small, but far from minute, and composed of people who could afford a television and their guests. Since a television could cost as much as a small car, early television would have had a lot of wealthy viewers (Hilmes 25). With an affluent, London-based audience, it is certainly possible that many viewers might have read, or at least have been familiar with, the non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays televised during the pre-war years. After broadcasts resumed in 1946, television caught on quickly and its audience expanded. By 1952, the number of television receivers in the United Kingdom had risen to about three million, and 78 percent of its population could receive a TV signal (Hilmes 12).

As early television historian John Caughie explains, "In both the prewar and the immediate postwar period, drama formed a central component of the schedules" (33).
During Christmas week of 1938, for example, the same week that "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" was broadcast, "of the twenty-two hours and thirty minutes transmitted, fourteen hours and ten minutes were given over to drama […]" (33). After the war, budget constraints affected the amount of time allotted for drama: "In a routine week in the late 1940s, drama usually occupied eight to ten hours of a very slightly expanded schedule" (33). Regardless of how many hours drama actually occupied the screen, however, the single play functioned as an "anchor-point" in the schedule:

> On any evening when a full-length drama was shown […] it dominated the evening schedule, relegating any other programme to the kind of supporting shorts familiar from the cinema. […] The single play was not simply a part of the flow of programming, but constituted a kind of anchor-point within the evening (and perhaps within the week) which structured viewing in a different way and invited a particular kind of attention. (Caughie 34).

Essentially, to both those at the BBC who created television drama and audiences who consumed the programs, drama adaptations carried "the status of special attraction which the 'big picture'"—i.e., film—"did not achieve until the 1970s" (33). Despite this status and popularity, however, people were still trying to figure out how to situate television with respect to already established forms of entertainment.

> As a medium that uses cameras to capture moving images, naturally television was compared to cinema, and it often came up short. How could television, with its low resolution and small screen size, be expected to compete with the large, pristine images audiences were accustomed to seeing in movie theaters? As Caughie explains, the
discourse surrounding "the function of television echo[es] uncertainties which had been
experienced forty years earlier by cinema. The pioneers of cinema, too, had had doubts
about a gap in the entertainment market for a public which was already satiated with
entertainment in the popular theatres of music hall and vaudeville" (32). Caughie points
to a piece by Gerald Cock, the first Director of Television, that uses cinema as a reference
point. Published in the Radio Times less than two weeks before the regular public service
began transmitting, Cock's article muses about the relationship between cinema and
television:

[T]elevised programmes should be personal to the viewer, and there is
something impersonal about films. It may be because they are meant to be
shown on a large screen, or because the person who is intended to see
them is envisaged as one of a large audience, or there may be some other
subtle psychological distinction; but I suggest that feature films are not
really suitable programme ammunition. As an extreme case, I believe
viewers would rather see an actual scene of a rush hour at Oxford Circus
directly transmitted to them than the latest in film musicals costing
£100,000—though I do not expect to escape unscathed with such an
opinion. (qtd. in Caughie 31)

When discussing Cock's comments, Caughie briefly but astutely compares the earliest
days of British television to the period that film historian and theorist Tom Gunning has
characterized as the "cinema of attractions" (33), in which cinema's "ability to show
something" rather than tell a story is its most important characteristic (Gunning 382). I
wish to pursue and refine Caughie's brief reference to Gunning's theory. The comparison
of early cinema to early television is an apt one, but Caughie's phrasing is confusing, especially considering his citation of Cock. "While the cinema of attractions [...] was to be based on spectacle," he writes, "the 'television of attractions' would be firmly founded on the immediacy and liveness of the everyday" (33). Caughie seems to be thinking of "spectacle" as manipulating images to do things that could not happen in reality, as in the trick films of Georges Melies. For the strain of early cinema that Cock describes, however, the "immediacy and liveness of the everyday" was the spectacle. When Cock mentions "rush hour at Oxford Circus," he evokes the "actualities" of the Lumiere brothers, whose short films often sought to capture a realistic slice of everyday life. Because the very act of capturing images on film was still a novelty, ordinary events such as workers leaving a factory, a train's arrival at a station, or a baby eating breakfast constituted a spectacle.

When Caughie writes about the sense of "liveness and immediacy" associated with early television, he means that television could show events as they occurred. Live television images are both continuous, or uninterrupted by editing, and simultaneous, happening at the very moment the viewer watches the broadcast. To both producers and viewers, from its earliest days British television's "assertion of immediacy, liveness, and the direct transmission of live action" was perceived "as both an opportunity and an aesthetic virtue of the medium rather than as a mere technological constraint" (Caughie 31). Unlike cinema, television could relay events instantly; its "live immediacy" gave the medium a sense of "authenticity and realism" that would later become the aesthetic foundation of much BBC television drama (Jacobs 28). Like radio, television could bring entertainment into the intimacy of "the private domestic sphere," and could do so not
only with sound but also with images (29). Unlike theatre audiences, television viewers could experience live, visual entertainment right at home. Thus instead of becoming the awkward cousin of cinema, theatre, or radio, television carved out its own niche as a "hybrid medium" that could give its audience many of its predecessors' virtues as well as some distinct advantages that it alone possessed (28-29).

A central feature of Gunning's theory is that the cinema of attractions did not entirely disappear as narrative became cinema's dominant form; rather, it went "underground," absorbed within the structure of what would become classical narrative and surfacing in devices such as gags and musical numbers (Gunning 382). These devices remain "attractions" because they are the points at which the codes that govern classical narrative break down—the comedian acknowledges the camera, or the ingenue breaks into song (382). While British television retained an attractions emphasis through its liveness aesthetic, attractions were absorbed into the structures of classical narrative.

The steady lengthening of dramatic excerpts parallels the way in which classical narrative absorbed spectacle in early cinema. In the earliest days of British television, drama excerpts were a frequent attraction. During the first year or so of broadcasting, for example, excerpts3 from six to twenty minutes long of Shakespeare's plays appeared in

3. Stephen Thomas, who produced "The Knight of The Burning Pestle," also produced a string of the Shakespeare excerpts in 1937: "As You Like It" (5 February), "Twelfth Night" (20 February), "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (12 March), "Julius Caesar" (4 April), "Richard III" (9 April), and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (23 April). Later that year, Royston Morley produced excerpts of "Romeo and Juliet" (16 August), "Measure for Measure" (25 October), and "Cymbeline" (29 November) (BUFVC database).
short programs entitled "Theatre Parade," which drew directly from the London stage (Vahimagi 5) and "Scenes from Shakespeare," which with a few exceptions seem to have been devised for the studio. As Jacobs explains, though, "During the summer and autumn of 1937, 'Theatre Parade' extracts and one-act dramas and sketches were gradually superseded by half-hour adaptations, no longer described as 'scenes'. The increase in running time indicated an increase in ambition and technical proficiency" (35-36). The last "Scenes from Shakespeare" aired on 16 August 1937; that December, an Othello featuring Baliol Holloway and Celia Johnson ran for slightly more than forty minutes. From "May 1938 onwards […] there was at least one play per week running at around an hour, with the occasional production of 90 minutes […]. Shorter 20-minute one-act plays were also part of the schedule, but they clearly did not have the same status as a drama 'event'"(36). Significantly, non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama did not follow the same excerpting trajectory as Shakespeare's plays. Even if viewers did not know the plays' stories, Shakespeare's name alone enabled television to lift scenes out of context and broadcast them as stand-alone attractions. Although BBC broadcasting records from this era are incomplete, it does not appear non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays were ever excerpted unless they corresponded to "full" versions. The first of these appropriations was the radically-cut, yet still "full" forty-minute adaptation of "The Duchess of Malfi" (Royston Morley, 17 and 21 January 1938). Two more appropriations

4. These exceptions include Cymbeline at the Embassy, Measure for Measure at the Old Vic, and the letter scene in Merry Wives of Windsor ("performed by Robert Atkin's Bankside Players") ((BUFVC database).

5. A complete database of productions does not exist. The most complete records are on microfilm, and even they are often unreliable.
appeared later that year, "The Shoemaker's Holiday" (Nancy Price and Lanham Titchener, 11 December 1938) and "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" (Stephen Thomas, 19 and 30 December 1938). A preview of "The Duchess of Malfi" might have appeared on "Theatre Parade," but as a trailer rather than a stand-alone attraction. As it became possible and practical to broadcast longer and longer versions of plays, then, more-or-less "complete" dramatic narratives quickly absorbed excerpts as the primary vehicle for dramatic narrative.

While the development of excerpts demonstrates that dramas became longer as the BBC standardized its camera technology and production practices, it is essential to understand that preserving material broadcast on television was not impossible, even in 1936. While a play performed on the Renaissance stage was by its very nature ephemeral, the ephemerality of early British television was always a production choice. Although videotape had not yet been invented, for instance, it was not only possible but also routine to broadcast material shot on film (Caughie 39). Excerpts from Paul Czinner's recent film version of As You Like It were shown during the RadiOlympia exhibition in 1936, which aired the first non-experimental, regularly-scheduled public television broadcasts in Britain from August 26 - September 5, 1936 ("First Television Broadcast: Demonstration at Radio Show"). Short newsreels were always part of the regular television line-up, and as early as 1937 scenes from feature films were even integrated into live television broadcasts. In addition to broadcasting material originally filmed for the cinema, the BBC also used film stock to record images specifically intended for television. Both German and British inventors had developed "intermediate-film" systems in which images captured using film cameras could be developed in under a minute,
scanned, and then broadcast on television (Hilmes 10; Jacobs 33); this method was used to broadcast the Berlin Olympics in 1936 (Hilmes 10).

The choice was, of course, greatly influenced by technology and money. The cost of film stock for even a short production would have been daunting: "During the pre-war and immediate post-war years the Television Service had little money to produce its own filmed material, let alone its own filmed dramas" (Jacobs 23). If the BBC struggled to finance its own stock footage, such as the "stock scenes (battle, land-scapes, rain, fog, etc.) which were used [as inserts] within the live studio transmission" (Jacobs 22), then filming an entire play certainly would have been technically possible but financially impractical. Even if budgets had permitted filming dramas with the intent to broadcast them later, the BBC made a decision in early 1937 that rendered extensive use of film undesirable. After a chaotic three-month trial period of using two rival broadcasting systems during alternating weeks, the BBC had abandoned the Baird mechanical scanning system in favor of the EMI-Marconi electronic system, which worked better for transmitting live images but did not handle film stock as well as its mechanical competitor. Finally, using an intermediate-film system to record a production as it was broadcast simply would not have been worth the trouble and expense. Any film recording process involved synchronization problems between the frame rate of film (24 frames per second) and television (25-30 frames per second) that compromised the image and made recording difficult (Jacobs 71). These synchronization issues would not be solved until the late forties; even then, recording did not become practical until after 1951, when it became possible to record images "electronically [on videotape] rather than photographically [on film]" (Jacobs 24, emphasis his). The Television Service was,
however, slow to embrace videotape, particularly because of its early editing limitations. Thus, the BBC did not regularly record programs until 1958 (Jacobs 24).

The absence of a visual record of performances has not stopped scholars from researching Renaissance stagecraft; Chapter Two continues this tradition of reconstruction by analyzing surviving documents contained in "The Duchess of Malfi"s WAC file. Although during the first year of television broadcasting the BBC often coordinated its drama offerings with plays running on the London stage in order to borrow its resources, by 1938 the Television Service was mounting most of its own dramatic programs. Of the three non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays discussed earlier in this introduction, listed above, only "The Shoemaker's Holiday" drew upon a current theatrical run. In its reconstruction of the "from scratch" adaptation of "The Duchess of Malfi," Chapter Two may surprise those who associate early television's aesthetic with the static frame of early cinema. The extant cue script and set designs indicate that the program required a carefully-choreographed ballet of mobile camerawork. Furthermore, although the script only provides lines that cue camera transitions, careful interpretation of this document reveals a simple yet elegant approach to adapting a stage play of an hour and a half or more into a television program of forty minutes.

Chapter Three shifts from the pre-war period to the first few years of post-war television drama, specifically Stephen Harrison's set of late forties non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays: "Doctor Faustus" (22 June 1947), "Edward II" (30 and 31 October

6. Unfortunately, Duchess is the only one of these pre-war adaptations for which the WAC contains a file.

This chapter does not attempt to reconstruct each program with the level of detail present in Chapter Two's treatment of the 1938 "Duchess." With the exception of "Volpone"'s single extant document, the WAC files contain so much material that even partial reconstruction of the other three programs would require a dissertation all its own. Instead, Chapter Three extracts and interprets the files' most compelling clues about what these programs looked and sounded like. "Doctor Faustus," for example, employed shadow-screens in order to suggest larger and more intricate sets than the BBC could furnish at the time. The experiment was so successful that shadow-screens became the guiding aesthetic of "Edward II" later that year. As Chapter Three shall demonstrate, Harrison thus incorporated "attractions" into his appropriations that the BBC did not hesitate to highlight in publications such as The Listener and The Radio Times. Finally, because "[t]he identity of television drama during this time was defined as much by policy and planning decisions as it was by the drama producers' decisions about such matters as camera mobility and shot-scale" (Jacobs 78), the chapter will consider how the expanding and increasingly-bureaucratic Television Service made decisions that shaped approaches to adaptation in each of these programs.

Films, 1991-2002

The dissertation's second half contextualizes four film adaptations of non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama: Edward II (Derek Jarman, 1991), Middleton's Changeling (Marcus Thompson, 1998), Hotel (Mike Figgis, 2001), and Revengers Tragedy (Alex Cox, 2002). Even when critics hesitate to claim that Jarman's film actually
influenced those of Thompson, Figgis, and Cox, they nevertheless see the three later films as picking up on Jarman's radical approach to adapting Marlowe. Chapters Four and Five interrogate Pascale Aebischer's characterization of these films as "contemporary Jacobean," i.e., distinctly and self-consciously opposed to the more conservative narrative and stylistic strategies of mainstream film. Aebischer first published her theory of contemporary Jacobean film in 2008, using *Hotel* as a case study. Her article quickly began to influence other scholars' work. In its conference paper form, this reading of *Hotel* as a contemporary Jacobean film inspired Gordon McMullan's analysis of *Middleton's Changeling, Hotel, and Revengers Tragedy*. Aebischer reiterates her theory and extends it more forcefully to Derek Jarman's *Edward II* in the editor's preface to the 2011 *Shakespeare Bulletin* issue devoted to Jarman, in which several articles cite her theory. Finally, as one of the organizers and seminar chairs of the SAA session mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, her ideas might have shaped the dozen or so articles workshoped in that seminar. Aebischer's theory of contemporary Jacobean film, however, contains significant assumptions and tensions that this study will examine and modify.

Even as a large part of her article deals with the more cinema-wide issues of gender and voyeurism, the bulk of Aebischer's essay emphasizes that these films are a *response* to the heritage film cycle (exemplified by the Merchant Ivory films) and heritage-influenced Shakespeare films of the late eighties and nineties. "Heritage" film is profoundly conservative, both in terms of its elitist vision of Britain's history and its aesthetic fetishization of period mise-en-scène.
The entire first half of Aebischer's essay argues that Hotel's non-mainstream narrative and style emerge as an aggressive, direct response to conservative heritage filmmaking as appropriated by Kenneth Branagh:

Following, as they do, a wave of productivity in high-profile Shakespeare adaptations on screens these films are striking for the way in which they pitch themselves against the nostalgic, spectacular mainstream Shakespeare productions mounted, most prominently, by the significantly named "Renaissance Films" and "Renaissance Theatre Company" associated with Kenneth Branagh's early career. ("Contemporary Jacobean" 279)

The article's second half analyzes the ways in which Hotel's cinematography attempts to offset the voyeuristic male gaze. Aebischer does not, however, acknowledge that Hotel's critique could extend beyond heritage to the wider world of mainstream filmmaking until the article's end, where the idea seems like an afterthought. Thus, the structure of her article implicitly acknowledges that Hotel takes on the mainstream film industry at large, but she focuses upon a narrow reading of the film that over-privileges the Renaissance and its modern-day counterpart, the heritage film.

Aebischer builds her theory about these films upon Susan Bennett's argument that, in British theatre of the 1980s, "'the Jacobean [...] functioned 'as a signifier bound to represent psychopathic violence and deviant desires.' [Bennett] notes, 'Unlike the idealized authenticity and authority of Shakespeare's (great) texts, these Jacobean revivals point to a less than perfect past'" (qtd. in "Contemporary Jacobean" 281). Although "radical" on the surface in their rejection of Shakespearean nostalgia, these stage
productions were ultimately as "conservative as their Shakespearean counterparts because they encourage[d] complacency: the past was no better than the present, so we can do nothing to improve things; we can at least be proud that we have taken a long-term view of the problems" (282). Bennett juxtaposes these conservative stage productions with Jarman's *The Tempest* and *Edward II*, where "'the Jacobean' provides one site where the contradictory impulses of nostalgia perform themselves in a disruptive and occasionally emancipatory mode" (qtd. in "Contemporary Jacobean" 283), such as rewriting Edward's humiliating death via anal fiery poker into an embrace with his would-be executioner, who casts the poker aside. By rewriting the past to promote his queer political agenda, Jarman "'attempt[ed] to shape the present by means of the past' and use[d] 'deliberate anachronism' to inject the concerns of the present into that past" (qtd. in Aebischer 283).

In a deliberately anachronistic move of her own, Aebischer invokes Renaissance rhetorician George Puttenham's definition of the "*Histeron proteron*" as a means of applying Bennett's ideas about deliberate anachronism to Figgis's methods in *Hotel*. She writes, "The 'Histerion proteron' or 'the preposterous,' Puttenham explained in his *Arte of English Poesie*, is 'disordered speech,' a figure in which 'ye misplace your words or clauses and set that before which should be behind & è conuerso" ("Contemporary Jacobean" 283). As Aebischer explains, Puttenham's examples of disordered speech are both temporal ("My dame that bred me up and bore me") and spatial (putting "the cart before the horse") ("Contemporary Jacobean" 283-84). On some levels, the concept of a "preposterous contemporary Jacobean aesthetic" ("Contemporary Jacobean 279) works well for *Hotel*, a film that experiments with both narrative space and time. As Chapter
Five shows, however, in attempting to graft the work of a Renaissance rhetorician upon the work of a modern-day filmmaker, Aebsicher fundamentally misunderstands the digital medium with which Figgis experiments. Ironically, her analysis of digital video is itself "preposterous" because she does misrepresents digital video's basic institutional contexts.

Because Aebischer argues that Jarman, Cox, Thompson, and Figgis deliberately, self-reflexively position themselves as anti-Shakespeare and anti-Shakespeare-as-heritage, Chapter Four examines how these directors represent their own authorship in relation to their literary forbears. Although the pitfalls of auteur criticism have been well established, examining these directors' public representations of their authorship is necessary because Aebischer's theory of the contemporary Jacobean rests largely on directorial intent. While we certainly cannot take directors' comments as unquestionable, unmediated windows into their respective artistic visions, these filmmakers all have used public forums to promote specific self-images and agendas. Cox, for example, actively links himself to Middleton in order to emphasize their shared status as rebel outsider in numerous interviews, on the Revengers Tragedy production website, and in X Films, the book he has written about his film career.

Chapter Four first focuses upon Cox and Jarman, for the ways in which Cox and Jarman represent their own authorship in relation to Middleton, Marlowe, and Shakespeare informs Aebischer's reading of Hotel as a contemporary Jacobean film. Chapter Four acknowledges that Renaissance authors are important in relation to how Cox and Jarman represent themselves as auteurs, but it underscores that the ways in which the filmmakers invoke these playwrights is much less stable than current criticism
suggests. After discussing Cox and Jarman, the chapter then demonstrates how little the Renaissance figures into the ways in which Thompson and Figgis represent their authorship in *Middleton's Changeling* and *Hotel*. Chapter Five then analyzes *Hotel* with an eye toward the history of film rather than Renaissance drama. This chapter highlights *Hotel*'s relationship with Figgis's previous work and demonstrates its deep roots in two non-mainstream cinema traditions: art cinema and experimental / avant-garde cinema. Figgis demonstrated his engagement with the concerns of art and experimental cinema in films prior to *Hotel*. One of his aims might be to deploy his filmmaking style against heritage and Shakespeare-as-heritage, but that is not the primary purpose of narrative and style in *Hotel*. Like *Timecode* before it, *Hotel* examines the very nature of filmmaking, seeking out ways that emerging digital technology enables new methods of film storytelling.

Chapter Four uses the definition of art cinema established by David Bordwell in his seminal 1979 article, which characterizes art cinema as "a distinct mode of film practice" challenging the formal conventions that became entrenched in mainstream cinema during the heyday of the Hollywood studio system. While the classical Hollywood era was also a historical period, its patterns of story and style are still standards in much of the world's mainstream cinema today. In classical cinema, "cause-effect logic and narrative parallelism generate a narrative which projects its action through psychologically defined, goal-oriented characters. Narrative time and space are constructed to represent the cause-effect chain," and the primary purpose of style—mise-en-scène, sound, and cinematography—is to "advance the narrative" (57). Classical realism comes from a sense of "verisimilitude (is x plausible?), of generic
appropriateness (is x characteristic of this sort of film?), and of compositional unity (does x advance the story?" (57). In art cinema, however, causality "becomes looser, more tenuous"; characters "lack defined goals and desires" instead of possessing "clear-cut traits and objectives" like their classical Hollywood counterparts; stories often privilege ambiguity and resist closure; style is often an end in itself rather than a means of serving the narrative; and "realism" shifts away from preserving seamless coherence within a diegetic world and toward conveying greater truths about objective or subjective reality (57-61).

"Impossible to define in a capsule formula," Bordwell and Kristin Thompson explain, "avant-garde cinema is recognizable by its efforts at self-expression or experimentation outside mainstream cinema" (367). Figgis's work is most closely related to strains of experimental cinema that "explore some possibilities of the medium itself" (366). While for some filmmakers such exploration might mean scratching the emulsion from film stock in order to create images, or bypassing film stock altogether in favor of working with glass, note cards, or mylar sheets, experimental techniques have long been appropriated for narrative ends. Just as filmmakers before him experimented with the materials of cinema, Figgis exploits the possibilities presented by digital video's essentially non-material form, using the frame as the film's guiding aesthetic and organizational principle in order to underscore that an art cinema narrative and experimental cinematography are inextricably linked in the film.

As I hope that this introduction has shown, non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama appropriations on television and film offer a rich and almost untapped vein for scholarly inquiry. As Chapter Six's concluding material shall reiterate, the dissertation is
a gesture toward things to come rather than a comprehensive overview of this topic. In the chapters that follow, particularly the two devoted to early television, I have merely attempted to take initial steps into what promises to be a very exciting field.
CHAPTER 2

The BBC's Pre-War "Duchess of Malfi"

To promote the first television broadcast of (Royston Morley8) in January of 1938, a short piece in the BBC's *Radio Times* remarked that "Webster is indeed strong meat. For horror in drama, Webster, after three hundred years, can still hold his own as a master. Today he is neglected, just as Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Dekker are neglected, because he happened to be contemporary with the overshadowing figure of Shakespeare" ("Transmissions for Sundays"). Later that year, the BBC televised two more plays by the "neglected" playwrights mentioned in the *Radio Times* article: Dekker's "The Shoemaker's Holiday" (Nancy Price and Lanham Titchener, 11 December 1938) and Beaumont and Fletcher's "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" (Stephen Thomas, 19 and 30 December 1938).

Unfortunately, these three early television programs pre-date regular television recording at the BBC and have not survived. Although "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" and "The Shoemaker's Holiday" have left behind few written records, the BBC's Written Archives Centre (WAC) does, however, contain a slim but fascinating file on "The Duchess of Malfi" that provides some insight into how that play was adapted into a forty-minute television program in 1938. This chapter analyzes the file's set diagrams, organizational documents, memos, cast lists, and partial camera script to situate this "Duchess" within the context of early British television in general, and early British

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8. Although names associated with these productions are, technically speaking, producers, they also directed the programs (Jacobs 1 n 2).
television drama in particular, in order to reconstruct part of the program. These documents reveal four important details about the program. First, it was not based upon a contemporary stage production. Second, casting of lead roles remained in flux until thirteen days before the first broadcast, and one of the principal parts was recast between the first and second broadcasts. Third, the cue script and set diagrams support Jason Jacobs's argument that the early television frame was much more mobile than scholars had previously believed. Finally, in addition to the fairly standard device of cutting subplots, this version of "Duchess" adapted a stage play of an hour and a half or more into a television broadcast of forty minutes by cutting the entire last act and ending the program with the Duchess's murder.

**Timelines.**

Like most early television drama, "The Duchess of Malfi" was broadcast twice, and both performances were live. The first transmission lasted from 9:20-10 p.m. on Monday, 17 January 1938, while the second ran from 3:10-3:50 p.m. on Friday, 21 January. An organizational document\(^9\) dated 30 December 1937 calls for "six preliminary rehearsals at B.H.," or Broadcasting House, as well as a camera rehearsal on each of the broadcast dates. The camera rehearsal on 17 January was scheduled to last two and a half hours. Presumably the cast would be better prepared for the second broadcast, for the 21 January rehearsal was allotted only an hour and a half.

\(^9\) This document also provides the program's budget: £150. If the budget for "The Duchess of Malfi" was similar to the one used for "Clive of India," which aired a month later, most of the money probably went to paying actors (Jacobs 53), or "artists" in BBC parlance of the day.
The final scene, or perhaps only part of it, may have aired on 14 January as a preview of the production. Beside the Scene and Property Plot's list of requirements for the final scene, a note clarifies, "As used in 'Preview 14.1.38. for Duchess of Malfi." The *Radio Times* television page for that week does contain a listing at 3:15 p.m. for a "Preview: Highlights from next week" ("Television: Monday, January 10, to Saturday, January 15" 15). If the scene was not actually performed during the preview, evidently the stage was at least arranged for a televised discussion of the program.

The file's memos show just how quickly this "Duchess" was produced. Both Jason Jacobs and John Caughie discuss how nostalgia for the spontaneity of live transmissions is a theme in the oral histories of early BBC television employees. This file shows that the planning stages for "The Duchess of Malfi" were full of spontaneity as well. With less than three weeks before the first broadcast, casting choices were still very much in flux. Morley copies the Television Production office on a document naming the first actor who would actually appear in the production (Stephen Haggard as Antonio) on 31 December 1937. Morley had sent word the previous day that Marie Ney would play the Duchess. Catherine Lacey's name, however, replaces Ney's on the revised cast list of 6 January. With only eleven days left until the first broadcast, the 6 January list is more detailed but still incomplete. In addition to Antonio and the Duchess, Bosola (Esme Percy), Ferdinand (John Laurie), Delio (Norman Claridge), and the Executioner10 (Robert Adams) have been cast. The roles of the Cardinal (Neil Porter) and Cariola (Gwynne Whitby) have not yet been filled, though. Porter's name first appears on a memo dated 10 January from Morley to designer Peter Bax, requesting caption cards. No mention of Whitby occurs until the undated Scene and Property Plot; since it refers to the 14 January preview in the

10. Adams would also end up playing the Servant.
past tense and the first broadcast aired on 17 January, it seems as though Whitby was cast as Cariola with very little time to prepare.

Even after the first broadcast, however, the cast was not yet stable. A memo from Morley to Bax requesting additional caption cards for the repeat performance indicates that a new card should be made for Torin Thatcher, who would replace Haggard as Antonio. As with the Ney-Lacey switch, no reason is given for the substitution. Whatever the reason, it did not keep Haggard from working with the BBC again in February 1939, when he played Ariel in the production of "The Tempest" that featured Peggy Ashcroft as Miranda ("The Tempest").

**Cameras and Set-ups, Shot-scale, and Captions**

Like other television dramas of the pre-war era, "The Duchess of Malfi" incorporated multiple sets and both studios\(^{11}\) at Alexandra Palace, the Television Service's headquarters (Caughie 39). As the diagram on the next page (Figure 2.1) illustrates, Studio One had been the EMI-Marconi studio when both the Baird and EMI-Marconi systems were still being used during the first three months of broadcasting. It became the main stage after full conversion to EMI-Marconi. Until Studio Two was fully refitted in the autumn of 1938, most broadcasts were transmitted from Studio One. A piece in the *Radio Times* announcing the refit provides a delightful example of how using both studios during the same program could cause problems:

\(^{11}\) These studios are often referred to as Studios A and B. For clarity's sake, I shall follow the WAC file in designating them Studios One and Two.
In the past, when [Studio Two] has been used as well, all kinds of complications have arisen. One of them is that artists often have to charge down the corridor from one studio to another.

An amusing example was seen the other day during the televising of "Ah! Wilderness," when Simon Lack had to make the inter-studio journey three times. Possibly he owed the intensity of his love-making in the beach scene to his breathlessness. ("Studio B to be Equipped")

The Duchess would have had to make that trip twice: once before the scene in which she woos Antonio, and again before she is imprisoned in Ferdinand's palace. Since Morley did not ask Bax to paint an interval caption, we can only assume that Lacey was a decent sprinter.
The file contains four different set-ups for Studio One (labeled A-D). The diagram above shows Set-up A (Figure 2.2). Each numbered circle represents one of the three cameras in Studio One, with arrows indicating the directions in which they would be aimed. Studio Two had only two set-ups (A and B). Set-up B used the same set components as Set-up A (arches, flats, etc.), but with different props to signify the change in location.

If the actual broadcasts followed camera arrangements planned in these documents, the frame was far from static. Camera One probably stayed near the set's center throughout the program, but it was mounted on a dolly and could be moved while

Fig. 2.2. Studio One, Set-up A. Source: undated studio plan from BBC Written Archives Centre, file T5/156.
shooting. Camera Two at screen left was even more mobile. Mounted on a tripod and placed on one of the more rugged, "O.B." (Outside Broadcast) dollies, it could be moved quickly. Camera Three at screen right, however, was mounted on an "iron man." BBC historian Bruce Norman describes these mountings as "iron pedestals which could be raised or lowered by turning a handle, and on top which was a panning head on which was mounted the camera itself" (134). While an iron man could be moved, it "was not designed to be moved in vision because it tended to be 'bumpy', and was only intended to be moved between shots" (Dungate, emphasis added). Camera Four, located in Studio Two, was also typically mounted on an iron man (Dungate). Although Morley acknowledges the BBC policy that "three dollies may no longer be used in production," he requests that Camera Four be mounted on a dolly made from parts of the Austin Seven automobile, with a "low tripod if available." The file does not indicate whether Morley's request was granted. Nevertheless, attempting to trade a heavy, awkward camera mounting for one made from automobile parts indicates that Morley had aesthetic ambitions. Knowing the capabilities of these dollies is important because in a mode of production without editing, camera movements essentially "edit" live transmissions. "Cutting" was still impossible: "For the pre-war BBC Television Service the cinematic instant 'cut' did not exist at all, and transitions from picture to picture were achieved by mixing between available camera images, a process that took up to eight seconds" (Jacobs 46, emphasis his). Notes regarding camera transitions and movement therefore reveal what was emphasized in close-up, for example, or what Morley considered important enough to make the production more challenging than it necessarily had to be.

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12. The process of mixing probably looked like a cinematic dissolve.
According to Maurice Gorham, who directed the Television Service when it resumed after the war, "producers and technicians acquired a high degree of skill in mixing and fading; scripts were even written with this requirement in mind" (qtd. in Jacobs 47). Not content with mix times, however, "Over a period of months, the BBC and EMI engineers reduced the eight-second time lapse [...] to four, to about two, though the 'cut' was not finally achieved until after the war" (Norman 136). Since in September 1937 the *Radio Times* asserts that mix times occurred "in five seconds, not a fraction before and not a fraction after" ("Heroin Too Big for the Studio"), it seems reasonable to assume that by January 1938 mixes were closer than not to their top speed of two seconds. Although a two-second mix time is "still significant" (Jacobs 46-7), these transitions probably happened quickly enough to emphasize particular speeches and actions in "The Duchess of Malfi."

The process of mixing between cameras during live broadcasts meant that shot-scales needed to be forgiving. Thus most shots framed the actors in variations of long and medium shots.13 The surviving portions of "The Duchess of Malfi"'s cue script, for example, employs its only two close-ups to foreshadow the disastrous outcome of the Duchess's secret marriage. Unfortunately, Morley's shot-scale notes are often difficult to

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13. As Jeremy Butler explains, to this day many "multiple-camera shows frequently favor *medium* shots and *medium* close-ups and not true close-ups [...]. Certain craft practices encourage this "medium" framing. Camera operators cannot obtain precise, tight framings while the actors move about the set in a live-on-tape multiple-camera production. And certain comedians—as established early on by Jackie Gleason and Lucille Ball—need loose framings so that they can freely improvise and so that their entire bodies can be seen doing physical comedy" (Butler 85).
decipher. When the cue script calls for a mix between cameras, for example, it is not clear whether the camera begins shooting at its last-specified location, reverts to long shot, or uses the same scale as the previous camera. As frustrating as interpreting the cue script can be, though, Morley deserves credit for bringing "a new form of shot notation for television drama (borrowed from film script notation): medium close-shot—M.C.S., close-shot—C.S., medium long shot—M.L.S." during his production of "The Ascent of F6" the previous year (Jacobs 64). Jacobs cites Morley's notation system as further evidence that television had aesthetic ambition: it indicates the need to discriminate between different shot-scales at the planning stage, and that the distinction between them was important" (64). Far from the "theatrical pictorialism" typical of very early cinema and mistakenly associated with early television drama, "This is evidence of a greater precision when planning" than scholars had previously realized "and an ambition to visualize a narrative and spatial continuity that is not primarily segmented around the 'scene'" as in theatre (64). A few months later, Morley's second adaptation of "The Ascent of F6" would provide "evidence of a sophisticated planning and choreography of the cameras moving through sets in real-time that was to become the standard means of studio and camera organization even into the 1960s and after" (Jacobs 71, 75). Despite coming to television from radio—one of the few producers to do so—Morley was clearly interested in experimenting with the visual possibilities of television.

"The Duchess of Malfi" was at the vanguard of programs experimenting with captions, which were usually painted on cards held by an easel in front of a specially designated camera (Wilkie 321). More than four weeks after the first broadcast of "Duchess," the Radio Times cites the upcoming program "Not Really?" as

an example of a tendency in television presentation that seems to become more marked every week — the elimination of the spoken announcement in favour of printed captions. In "Not Really?" all the introductions will be made with the camera, unaccompanied by a microphone. Producers now think it worth while to allocate one camera for captions exclusively. Better, they think, to have one camera out of action as far as movement is concerned than to have spoken announcements obtrusively holding up the show. ("Came the dawn...")

Like "Not Really?" "The Duchess of Malfi" goes further than merely dispensing with a narrator. First, rather than allocating one camera solely for captions, Cameras Three and Four shoot both captions and action. Camera Three shoots "ordinary" captions that provide the play's title, author, and scene locations. At the program's beginning, these captions are superimposed upon the medium long shot of the Duchess's palace from Camera One, fading in and out as the cards are changed. Camera Four provides "rotating" captions that, according to the cue script, would "turn in vision slowly on cue." These captions quickly superimpose the names of the main characters, as well the names of the actors who portray them, as each enters during the opening minutes of the program. Most

15. I am indebted to Jason Jacobs for referring me to this source during our correspondence. Although noting that Wilkie's discussion of captioning does not adequately explain rotating captions, Jacobs was kind enough to offer his best guess about how they worked: "I always imagined the caption machine to be a drum-like contraption, with the cards fixed on them, which would then be rotated (the cylinder that is, with the cards on them) but that is a guess." His suggestion matches well with the Radio Times's description of the Big Wheel in "Not Really?"
likely, Camera Four's captions were animated in much the same "ferris wheel" style that "Not Really?" would use weeks later: "The caption cards, which vary in size, are mounted on a variety of contraptions, including a sort of Big Wheel a lâ Blackpool, which will be used as a silent compere for the 'Not Really?' show" ("Came the dawn..."). In whatever manner these caption effects were achieved, the practice of animating captions is remarkable, especially given that a producer's willingness to forego voiceovers was considered noteworthy,

Employing caption cards rather than a narrator also underscores the play's status as an English literary classic. The first two captions recall the title page of the play's first published edition, the 1623 quarto, but they alter the title in a way not reflected by any of the other surviving quartos. After using the play's full title, "The Tragedy of The Duchess of Malfi"\(^\text{16}\) in the first caption, the second paraphrases the title page's venue information. The quarto version specifies that the play has been printed "As it was Presented privatly, at the Black-Friers; and publiquely at the Globe, By the Kings Majesties Servants." The caption, however, omits reference to the public performance at the Globe, which in the twentieth century is the more well-known of the two theaters, in favor of mentioning the more elite, private playhouse: "As it was performed by the Kings Majiesties Servants at the Black Friars Theatre." While this omission may be mere coincidence, it certainly seems as though this second caption's purpose was prestige rather than accuracy. Certainly, the television performance was so short that it did not correspond to the play "as it was performed" during the Renaissance. After first linking the play to the traditional English stage and page, though, caption effects and camera movement quickly emphasize the visual capabilities of television. Two more captions provide Webster's

\(^{16}\) The caption modernizes the quarto's spelling, using "Malfi" instead of "Malfy."
name and the scene location, and the shot then mixes over to Camera Two at screen left, which tracks upstage to Antonio and Delio. Camera Four produces the superimposed rotating captions that introduce the players, and the play begins.

**Beginning**

From Antonio's opening lines until he and Delio exit the scene, their almost "choric" (Marcus 73) descriptions of other characters motivate camera movement and transitions. Some of these transitions could be eyeline matches, for surely Antonio and Delio look toward other characters occasionally as they discuss them. The cue script, unfortunately, does not provide such details. If not motivated by eyelines, these camera transitions at the very least correspond with the descriptions that the newly-arrived outsiders give of the Malfi court's main characters.

Camera Two tracks up to Antonio and Delio, which suggests that they are somewhere in the vicinity of the "Carnaval' seat" at screen left. Delio's opening speech is cut, so Antonio is the first speaker. Omitted are the lines, however, establishing that Antonio is a good man returning home from a French court newly rid of "flattering sycophants" and "dissolute / And infamous persons" (1.1.8-9). Instead, Antonio's first line simply announces Bosola's entrance: "Here comes Bosola" (1.1.22). Since the program begins with Antonio's entire speech about Bosola, its initial emphasis is upon Bosola's flaws rather than Antonio's virtues. The cue to mix from Camera Two to Camera One, away from Antonio and over to Bosola, comes just three lines into Antonio's speech. It quite literally shifts perspective from Antonio to Bosola:

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17. All line numbers follow Leah Marcus's 2009 Arden edition of the play. Unless otherwise noted, though, punctuation from the cue script has been preserved.
Here comes Bosola,
The only court-gall; yet I observe his railing
Is not for simple love of piety.\textsuperscript{18}
Indeed he rails at those things which he wants;\textsuperscript{19}
Would be as lecherous, covetous, or proud,
Bloody, or envious, as any man,\textsuperscript{20}
If he had means to be so.—Here's the cardinal.\textsuperscript{21}

The opening moments of the program, then, are devoted to characterizing Bosola as the ultimate court satirist who would not hesitate to imitate the subjects of his derision if only given the opportunity to do so. As Leah Marcus notes in her edition of the play, "A gall can also be a bitter plant or pustule, hence the source of the infection rather than its corrective" (136 n 23, emphasis hers). Marcus's point about the pustule seems particularly appropriate for this adaptation. In Webster's version, Bosola serves as both an instigator of tragic action and also its "corrective" through his role of revenger in Act 5. Because the BBC version concludes with the end of 4.2, however, in the program he never serves as anything more than the "source of the infection."

The cue script contains only two lines of Bosola's exchange with the Cardinal. Because background music\textsuperscript{22} playing since the program's opening credits fades out at the

\textsuperscript{18} "Mix to: Camera 1"

\textsuperscript{19} "Superimpose Camera 4 (rotating Cap.) 'Esme Percy as Bosola'"

\textsuperscript{20} "Fade out: Camera 4 (turn Caption on cue [ ] )"

\textsuperscript{21} "Superimpose Camera 4 (rotating Cap.) 'Neil Porter as Cardinal'"

\textsuperscript{22} This chapter cannot provide more than basic information about the function of sound in these broadcasts. At the program's beginning, the cue script specifies a fade up
end of Antonio's speech, Bosola's opening line to the Cardinal might have seemed forceful in the sudden silence: "I do haunt you still" (1.1.29). While less emphatic, Bosola's second line subtly underscores his outsider status: he probably delivers his complaint about the Cardinal and Ferdinand in a soliloquy rather than to Antonio and Delio. If he could get close enough to the brothers to be treated like the other parasitic courtiers, Bosola says, he could at least "hang on their ears like a horse leech, till I were full and drop off" (1.1.52-54) rather than suffer their abandonment. Since no camera change takes place, Antonio and Delio would need to move toward center stage with Bosola in order to interact with him as he rails against Ferdinand and the Cardinal. Because they must be back at the Carnaval seat just two lines later to deliver their own of "Record Decca X114," which is a 1936 recording of Vaughan Williams's "A London Symphony" (Symphony No.2). The cue script calls for it to start from the beginning of Side 2, which is "'Allegro risoluto (contd.)' continuing from 'Lento – Allegro risoluto' on side 1" (McKee). Other records in the five-disc symphony were used, but the script only notes the record number and side with the designation "from mark." Thus we can only get a general idea of what was playing during the broadcast. Aside from the symphony, the only other record noted in the script is "H.M.V. DB3370," a 1937 recording of the BBC symphony orchestra performing Williams's "Symphony No. 4 in F minor" ("Discographical data") which plays during the final medium close-up of Bosola at the program's end.

23. Since ellipses in the cue script such as the ones here often cover great stretches of dialogue, we cannot know whether Bosola mentions the two years of hard labor that he had endured as a result of his former service to the Cardinal. If this information was included, it would certainly mitigate Antonio's unflattering description of Bosola.
disparaging remarks about the Duchess's brothers, however, it seems likely that they would simply remain near Camera Two. Furthermore, providing Bosola's exit cue as "drop off" rather than continuing on to Webster's next phrase, "I pray, leave me" (1.1.54), strongly implies that Bosola does not address Antonio and Delio. Essentially, Bosola is such an outsider that he cannot even communicate with the other outsiders.

After Bosola makes his angry exit, the Cardinal is joined by Ferdinand, Cariola, and the Duchess, probably at screen right. The shot mixes from Antonio and Delio on Camera Two over to Camera Three's medium close-up of the Cardinal. Delio asks whether the scandalous rumors about the churchman are true: "Now, sir, your promise: what's that cardinal? / I mean his temper? They say he's a brave fellow, / will play his five thousand crowns at tennis, dance, / court ladies, and one that hath fought single combats" (1.2.69-72). After the medium close shot of the Cardinal, Camera Three mixes back to Camera Two. Antonio explains that the Cardinal employs minions to deal with his enemies: "...he lays worse plots for them than ever was imposed on Hercules, for he strews in his way flatterers, panders, intelligencers [...]"(1.2.77-80). When Antonio and Delio begin to discuss Ferdinand, the shot mixes to Camera One at center stage. A medium close-up of Ferdinand and the Duchess accompanies Antonio's equally dim view of Ferdinand's character: "The duke there? A most perverse and turbulent nature. / [...] / If he laugh heartily, it is to laugh /All honesty out of fashion" (1.2.86-90). Antonio may seem like a pessimistic gossip at this point, but his tone soon changes when he describes the Duchess.

Antonio's admiring speech about the Duchess takes advantage of the reduction in mix times during the previous year of television broadcasting. The medium close shot of
Ferdinand and the Duchess would have been quite short. It lasts only for the time required to speak two or three lines, which would not have been possible if accomplishing mixes still took eight seconds. Camera Two then returns to Antonio as he contrasts the sinister brothers with "their sister, the right noble duchess" (1.2.105) for about five lines. The shot then mixes back to the Duchess and Ferdinand, or perhaps even the Duchess alone, at Camera One. Another quick mix back to Camera Two shifts attention back to Antonio for three or four more lines. At this point, he delivers his double entendre about how the Duchess can not only "raise" a man from the dead but also make him "dance" vigorously: a look from her can "raise one to a galliard / That lay in a dead palsy" (1.2.114-15). The shot mixes back to her with Camera One, though, for four more lines that soften the bawdy humor. While Antonio is on camera during his naughty joke, the shot shifts back to the Duchess when her would-be suitor becomes serious again. Showing that Antonio is not just interested in her looks, he says that the Duchess's angelic beauty "cuts off all lascivious and vain hope" (1.2.118). Finally, a mix to Camera Two concludes Antonio's long speech about the Duchess. All women should break their metaphorical mirrors and strive to be like her: "Let all sweet ladies break their flatt'ring glasses/ And dress themselves in her" (1.2.122-23). Such a succession of quick mixes supports the furtive nature of Antonio's private conversation with Delio, which is being conducted in a public space. It also captures the exciting rush of Antonio's romantic feelings toward the Duchess.

The cue script provides little information about the next section. Camera Two mixes to Camera One in order to shoot Ferdinand's request that his sister employ Bosola in her household. Presumably, the Duchess exits while Ferdinand instructs Bosola to spy
on her, paying particular attention to any suitors. Ferdinand and the Cardinal fear that if their widowed sister were to remarry, they would lose any influence that they currently exert upon her. Widowhood was, of course, the only stage of life when most Renaissance women could legally own property in their own right. Bosola agrees to safeguard Ferdinand's interests ("I am your creature" (1.2.204)), and a mix to Camera Three then shows the Duchess re-entering with her maid, Cariola, and the Cardinal.

Unfortunately, the cue script provides few lines in the next section; we shall never know how much this program allowed the Duchess to showcase her saucy independence and sexually mature wit. Camera Three mixes to Camera One when the Cardinal begins speaking. He warns his sister to behave since she has no husband to supervise her and her brothers are leaving: "We are to part from you, and / your own discretion / Must now be your director" (1.2.208-9). As Ferdinand extols the lecherousness of remarriage, Camera Two tracks up to shoot the siblings' argument about the Duchess's freedom. In Webster's version, she refutes the idea that remarrying is bad: "Diamonds are of most value, / They say, that have passed through most jewelers' hands" (1.2.215-16). Morley might have opted to cut that line, though, because it works best if we hear Ferdinand's reply: "Whores, by that rule, are precious" (1.2.217). Whether the BBC would use such language during this era is anyone's guess. Producers had much more freedom than they would have after the war, but the BBC's Reithian moral climate may have dictated censorship in this case. In the late forties, the television drama department had to defend its use of "whore" when Stephen Harrison adapted "The Duchess of Malfi." The later production ended up retaining strong language in the script because it preserved the authentic feel of the "classic" drama. Regardless, it is impossible
to be certain about Morley's cuts because the cue script elides all of the lines between Ferdinand's invective against remarriage (the "Laban's sheep" passage) and his insistence that his sister guard her reputation: "A visor and a mask are whispering rooms / That were never built for goodness; fare ye well" (1.2.249-50). Although the cue script elides much of the scene we can, however, infer one important detail about this segment from the Scene and Property Plot. Because the list contains no object that could possibly be considered a weapon, Ferdinand does not threaten the Duchess with their father's poniard. In addition to removing one of the play's phallic symbols, this choice might make Ferdinand seem less impulsive and more sane—and ultimately, for dangerous for his self-control.

**Wooing and Wedding**

The diagram on the next page (Figure 2.3) presents the wooing scene's set arrangement (Studio Two, Set-up A). In Webster's 1.2, the Duchess woos and artfully weds Antonio in the larger public rooms of her palace. The program, however, relocates the scene to the Duchess's private apartment. Because this adaptation cuts or streamlines Bosola's spying activities, moving the action from public to private space subtly conveys the play's theme of surveillance. In many ways, this theme becomes even more insidious because of the relocation. Instead of dangerously conducting a secret marriage out in the open, the Duchess sensibly chooses the privacy of her apartment. This Duchess attempts discretion and yet still meets a tragic fate.
To begin the scene, Camera Three establishes the location change with the caption "Duchess' Apartment" and the shot mixes to Camera Four over in Studio Two. Again, the cue script elides most of the scene, and no notes indicate movement instructions for Camera Four. Either Morley's request for an Austin Seven dolly was not approved and thus the scene was shot with the less mobile iron man, or camera arrangements were less formal. Because Studio Two contained only one camera, Morley did not have to worry about its frame accidentally capturing other cameras. He and the camera operators could, therefore, afford to plan the camera arrangements more loosely for this scene.

After Cariola enters and the music fades out, the Duchess immediately tells her to hide "behind the arras" in order to witness and therefore validate the Duchess's *per verba de presenti* marriage to Antonio. Antonio does not realize that his professions of love

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24. Lacey and Whitby have just hurried down the long corridor between studios after exiting the opening scene.
bind him in marriage, but the Duchess's subterfuge is not malicious. Rather, she creates a situation in which her social inferior can marry her without worrying about his status. By declaring his intent to marry in a witness's company, and using words in the present tense, he enters into a marriage considered legally binding upon consummation. If affronted by the Duchess's trickery, Antonio simply could avoid validating the marriage simply by not consummating it. In addition to the Duchess's articulation of their marriage's validity, at least part of her closing speech concludes the scene. "Oh let me shroud my blushes in your bosom, / Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets" (1.2.408-9) cues the music to fade up for her exit with Antonio. The music fades into the background for a moment before Cariola foreshadows the trouble to come: "Whether the spirit of greatness or of woman / Reign most in her, I know not, but it shows / A fearful madness: I owe her much of pity" (1.2.410-12). Leah Marcus explains that stage productions sometimes have Cariola speak these lines within earshot of the Duchess and Antonio underscores the play's surveillance theme (76-77). Considering that this Duchess conducts her marriage more carefully, however, delivering the lines in soliloquy merely underscores the situation's danger. Legally, the Duchess is free to remarry anyone she likes, but her controlling brothers and Antonio's inferior social position make her marriage a scandalous, risky proposition.

**Plotting**

Two crucial bits of stage business occur in Studio One while the wooing scene takes place in Studio Two. No information about actors off-screen appears anywhere else.

25. "How can the church build faster? / We now are man and wife, and 'tis the church / That must but echo this. Maid, stand apart: / I now am blind" (1.2.397).
in the cue script, but "[d]uring the Love Scene between the Duchess and Antonio, Camera 2 must get into position for M.C.S. [medium close shot] in grotto." Although Morley uses separate diagrams for each set-up, the "grotto" (Studio 1, Set-up B; Figure 2.4 on next page) probably had been arranged along the wall at screen left throughout the program. As the diagram below demonstrates, Camera Two moves downstage to shoot the equivalent of 2.5 in Webster's version, where Ferdinand and the Cardinal receive Bosola's letter about their sister's pregnancy and subsequent childbirth.26

Before the grotto scene, however, the cue script describes an effect involving Bosola unlike anything else in its surviving pages. Upon Cariola's exit from the wooing scene in Studio Two, the music grows louder and the shot mixes back to Studio One, where Cameras One and Two shoot alternating close-ups of Bosola.27 He does not speak any lines. Rather, Bosola's image becomes a substitute for story events not included in this adaptation: his discovery of the Duchess's pregnancy in 2.1 and the baby's horoscope

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26. Only two phrases from this scene appear in the cue script, both Ferdinand's: "I have this night digged up a mandrake," and "...and fix her in a general eclipse." The action has been relocated to "Milan: the Palace of Ferdinand," instead of Rome.

27. "Bosola, Esme Percy, into marked position; Cam. 1 & 2 to get C.U. from either side."
in 2.3, as well as his intention to write a letter informing Ferdinand of these events. Bosola's close-ups, the only two close-ups in the entire extant cue script, provide the necessary causal link between the Duchess disobeying her brothers' instructions and the means by which they discover her disobedience. This adaptation does not show the Duchess's pregnancy, the goings-on during her clandestine labor, or Bosola finding evidence of the baby's birth. Viewers know that Bosola has agreed to spy on the Duchess and could infer that he had reported his suspicions to Ferdinand. Providing the close-ups,
however, visually reinforces that causal chain of events and implicitly increases the centrality of Bosola's character.

**Relaxing, Interrupted**

At this point, the program skips from 2.5 to 3.2, a choice which has at least two significant effects. First, the play's timeline ceases to be an issue. Questions regarding the ages of the Duchess's children no longer matter. Second, the Duchess never lies to Ferdinand about her marriage and pregnancies. Without the chance to behave deceitfully the Duchess might seem a bit less human than in some adaptations of the play, but her death might seem all the more tragic.

Instead of returning to Studio Two, where the Duchess's apartment is already set up, this time her apartment is arranged in Studio One (Set-up C, Figure 2.5). A number of factors could have prompted the decision to set up the same story location in two different studios. Flats, arches, chairs, and tables are arranged in the same way, but this

Fig. 2.5. Studio One, Set-up C. Source: undated studio plan from BBC Written Archives Centre, file T5/156.
time a bed figures prominently in the set. Perhaps incorporating the bed into Studio Two's set without interfering with the set used by producer Andrew Miller-Jones proved difficult. In addition, Studio Two housed only one camera; perhaps Morley wished for the flexibility that Studio One's multiple cameras could provide.

As in its previous shift from the opening scene to the grotto, Camera Two must cover quite a bit of ground in order to shoot the next scene. After finishing up at the grotto, the shot mixes to Camera Three, which has been pulled back off the set in order to provide the location caption ("The Duchess' Apartment"). After the caption, the shot then mixes back to Camera Two, which "tracks back." Camera Two has just been downstage at the grotto, so the tracking instruction could be interpreted in one of two ways. Camera Three could shoot the caption card long enough for Camera Two to cover the considerable distance between the grotto and apartment. That shot would begin with a medium shot or medium close-up of the Duchess, then track backward on her opening line. Alternatively, Camera Two could turn away from the grotto during the caption, then "track back" upstage toward the apartment once the shot mixes back to it. Since Morley's notation system borrows from film script notation, however, it seems as though he might describe this second option using film terminology: tracking in rather than tracking back. In either case, the cue script does not provide a scale for the scene's establishing shot, so we cannot be certain.

All signs suggest that the cozy scene of domestic bliss from 3.2 begins with the Duchess seated at screen left, performing her toilette. Since Camera Two shoots the scene's opening, and the chair is angled sideways in front of the table, the frame would probably capture her in profile. Furthermore, the prop list for this scene calls for a comb
and brush, as well as the jewelry chest and hand mirror that she asks either Cariola or Antonio to bring to her: "Bring me the casket hither, and the glass" (3.2.1-2). The cue script provides no reference to their playful banter about Antonio's social status. It seems, though, that she must "stop [his] mouth" (3.2.19) with a playful kiss. Otherwise, Antonio's next lines in the cue script would not make sense. He solicits another kiss from his wife by comparing her kiss to one of Venus's doves: "Nay, that's but one; Venus had two soft doves / To draw her chariot; I must have another" (3.2.20-1). The metaphor is sweet, but also unfortunate, because doves "mate for life and, if parted, forever mourn their lost mate" (Marcus 215 n 20-1). For this production, however, the metaphor seems particularly apt. Antonio dies in Act 5; by concluding the program with the Duchess's death in Act 4, Antonio survives to mourn his wife.

At this point, the cue script appears to contain an error. Camera One is cued to "Track up to M.C.S" during the second kiss, but nothing indicates a mix from Camera Two to Camera One. It does not seem that Camera One simply moves into position for its next shot, either. If that were the case, Camera Two would have to achieve the impossible: mixing to itself. Assuming that shot does, in fact, mix to Camera One, camera movement could be choreographed in a variety of ways. For each scenario suggested below, Camera One has moved to center stage and points toward the edge of the bed and the chair just beyond it.

1. Camera Two frames Antonio and the Duchess during the first kiss.
   Antonio goes over to the bed and asks for the second one, but then they do not actually kiss. Perhaps he gestures for her to join him and she playfully refuses. When Camera Two could tracks up, then, it frames
Antonio, or possibly Cariola. Emphasis upon Cariola here might highlight her embarrassment when Antonio teases her about her own prospects for marriage.

2. Camera Two frames Antonio and the Duchess during the first kiss. He crosses over to the bed and asks for the second kiss. She follows him over to the bed and Camera One tracks up to shoot that moment in medium close-up. During the portion of the exchange elided in the cue script, Antonio moves into suitable range to deliver his analogy about Paris in front of Camera Two. When the mix cue comes four lines later, Antonio is either back in Camera One's range near the bed, or he stays in place and the mix to Camera One becomes a shot-reverse shot of Antonio and Cariola. The latter option might capture Cariola's reaction when Antonio describes the "stark naked" (3.2.39) goddesses vying for Paris's affection. Regardless, the Duchess returns to Camera Two's range as they conclude their merriment.

3. Camera Two shoots both kisses, tracking up to get a medium close shot of the second kiss. If this scenario is the correct one, however, the set diagram is incomplete: the only arrow attached to Camera One points toward the bed. Since these documents represent a plan for the broadcasts, however, rather than a complete and infallible record of what occurred, this option is certainly a possibility.
Some combination of elements from these scenarios could, of course, have taken place. Regardless, the scene is a happy one. The Duchess explicitly reflects on her contentment ("When were we so merry?" (3.2.52)) just moments before it is shattered.

In Webster's version of this scene, Antonio and Cariola play a prank on the Duchess. They slip away, setting up the Duchess to realize that she has been speaking to an empty room. Unfortunately, Ferdinand steals into the room and overhears enough to know that she has taken a lover. When the Duchess notices her brother's presence, he offers her a poniard with which to kill herself. She tells him that she has married, and he angrily refuses to meet her husband. The program alters the Duchess's argument with Ferdinand, though. Instead, a knock at the door interrupts the scene's warm, domestic atmosphere. Antonio exits lest he be discovered in the Duchess's private room. Bosola enters, and the program jumps ahead to 3.5, when he arrives to take the Duchess captive on her brothers' behalf. Cutting from 3.2 to 3.5 at this moment elegantly simplifies the program's plot and story. Several subsequent events become unnecessary because the Duchess has no chance to escape: Antonio's cover story and flight, the Duchess revealing Antonio's identity to Bosola, and her failed attempt at escaping to Ancona. Furthermore, relocating the moment of her "capture" from the busy marketplace in Ancona to the Duchess's apartment underscores the program's motif of violated spaces. In an instant, the private space that seemed so joyful and safe just moments ago suddenly becomes her prison.
**Imprisoning and Adapting**

Unfortunately, the cue script contains only a few lines of Bosola and the Duchess's exchange, which continues onto the missing fourth page. The surviving portion, however, offers an intriguing line alteration. Upon entering, Bosola delivers a line that Webster gives to the Duchess: "I am your adventure, am I not?" (3.5.96). In Webster's version, the Duchess addresses these words to the soldiers accompanying Bosola. Marcus's illuminating note on the line adds that "'adventure' in this context means not only 'target' or 'quarry' but also 'commercial enterprise' (OED 7), suggesting the soldiers are mercenaries" (274 n 96). By giving this line to the predator rather than the prey, however, the program shifts the meaning of "adventure" away from "target." The word acquires two new layers of significance. As "chance, fortune, [or] luck" (OED 1b), the word resonates with the play's motif of fortune, particularly Renaissance drama's oft-used metaphor of Fortune's Wheel lifting up princes only to make them fall. Even though the Duchess has found private happiness with Antonio, her role as a public figure ensures her ultimate downfall. If power were not at stake, her brothers would be far less concerned about her marital status. In addition, Bosola arrives as the instrument of "risk, jeopardy, [or] peril" (OED 3a). The camerawork supports the scene's shift from its earlier atmosphere of relaxed camaraderie to one of sudden, imminent danger. Cameras One and Two mix back and forth, capturing the Duchess and Bosola in series of medium close shots, the only such series specifically noted in the cue script. While BBC producers at this point are unlikely to have agonized over the OED, of course, the line's shift in meaning is nevertheless in keeping with the program's more abbreviated, and thus perhaps more aggressive, persecution of the Duchess.
As the action proceeds, Bosola provides the cue script's first direct reference to the Duchess's children: "Can they prattle?" (3.5.112). Until this moment in the cue script, one wonders whether the children resulting from the Duchess and Antonio's marriage might have been eliminated from the production altogether. None of the file's documents provide insight about how children would be incorporated into this scene, or into the rest of the production, for that matter. No casting documents mention children's parts, and the prop lists contain no entry for dolls or even infant-sized bundles of cloth. How children figured into the program remains a mystery.

**Missing**

Obviously, the missing cue script page cannot offer clues about how this adaptation dealt with the Duchess's imprisonment. Other documents provide some hints, largely through absences, about how the program engaged with Webster's version. For example, the "dead man's hand" and fake bodies from 4.1 certainly would appear in the Scene and Property plot if Ferdinand and had employed Bosola employ them to convince the Duchess that her family has been slaughtered. The cast list does not mention the "mad folk" Ferdinand sends to torment his sister, so they probably were cut. Finally, at least part of this section had to be shot in Studio Two. The Scene and Property Plot designates a Set-up B for Studio Two that could not fit into the cue script anywhere else, and using Studio Two would enable set-shifters to rearrange Studio One for the final death scene.
**Dying**

The cue script's fifth page picks up just as the Duchess nonchalantly asks in what manner she shall be murdered: "Now what you please, what death?"(4.2.198). As camera positions in the final set diagram below illustrate (Studio One, Set-up D; Figure 2.6), most of the action takes place on the rostrum and steps. Camera One shoots the Duchess's question, mixing to Camera Three when she declares that she does not fear death and shall not become hysterical: "I would fain put off my last woman's fault, / I'd not be tedious to you" (4.2.218-19). As in Webster, her last words send a message to her brothers: "Go tell my brothers, when I am laid out, / They then may feed in quiet" (4.2.28-9). Crucially, the camera does not show the Duchess as the Executioner strangles her. Instead, Camera Three mixes to Camera One for a medium close shot of Bosola's reaction. Bosola summons Cariola; Camera One tracks back to medium long shot as she
enters. As Bosola tells her that she shall die alongside her mistress, Camera Three frames her pleas for mercy in a medium close shot. The shot mixes again to Camera One when Bosola loses patience with the maid: "Delays:—throttle her" (4.2.242). Because Bosola tells Cariola that her "credit's saved" (4.2.246), Cariola evidently did plead pregnancy in the hope of avoiding her fate. While the shot-scale is not specified for this moment, it must be a medium shot or closer, for Camera One tracks back to medium long shot after the Executioner strangles Cariola and Bosola orders him to take away her body. The program, therefore, almost definitely did not show the Duchess's murder, but it might have shown Cariola's.

The cue script elides Bosola's closing conversation with Ferdinand. In fact, the only words that Ferdinand definitely speaks are the final lines of the program: "I'll go hunt the badger by owl-light; / 'Tis a deed of darkness" (4.2.323-4). Although this might seem like an odd line on which to conclude the program, it recalls the earlier predatory connotations of the Bosola-Duchess line switch. Whether Ferdinand seems insane, regrets the murder, or threatens and refuses to pay Bosola for his services remains unclear. Viewers familiar with the play might have realized that these are the last words Ferdinand speaks in Webster's version before the Duchess briefly revives. In the program, she dies and stays dead, never hearing from Bosola that her family yet lives. Webster gives Bosola a few repentant lines before Ferdinand declares his intention to go hunting, but Bosola does not embrace his role as revenger until the pathos of her true death makes him realize his sins. By eliminating the Duchess's momentary revival, then, this appropriation thus offers Bosola no chance at redemption. Instead, the music fades
up, Camera Two provides one last medium close shot of Bosola, and then mixes to a long shot from Camera One over which the final credits are superimposed.

Although this adaptation cuts an entire act from the play, it seems to have been no less a tragedy than Webster's version. Carefully interpreting documents in *The Duchess of Malfi's* WAC file reveals a thoughtful, well-crafted adaptation of a full-length stage play performed in only forty minutes. This Duchess was conceived for television rather than molded around the personnel and props from an existing stage production. Although its performance was ephemeral, surviving written records show that the program fully exploited resources available to BBC television of the era. Its radically-abbreviated run time, instead of detracting from the program, produces this adaptation's defining feature and greatest strength. Although many scholars argue that its fifth act detracts from the play, eliminating the final act altogether is an unusual production choice. By ending this adaptation with the Duchess's murder, though, the program focuses on the Duchess herself rather than the men around her. Repeated violations of her private space lead to the tragedy of her death, which takes precedence over the regret, repentance, madness, and desire for vengeance that it produces in the play's male characters.

This "Duchess" was produced for a small, urban, affluent, and educated audience; even if viewers had not read the play, they were probably familiar with Webster. The television adaptations from the next chapter, however, emerged in a much different world. Like other cultural institutions, the BBC was affected by World War II. Television broadcasts ceased for the war's duration. When transmissions resumed, BBC administrators sought tighter control over television drama; the days in which producers had the freedom to take on "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" came to an end. As the
next chapter explains, the BBC also tried to focus on drama that would appeal to a less "elite" audience as the signal reached farther beyond London. While the late forties were a time of great change and even tumult for the Television Service, standards were formed after the war that affected television production for decades to come. "Liveness" remained an important quality of the medium, but as the following analysis of Stephen Harrison's cluster of non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama appropriations shall show, the liveness aesthetic began to change with the times.
CHAPTER 3

Stephen Harrison's Harrison's Post-War Appropriations

When the war ended and transmissions resumed on 7 June 1946, the BBC Television Service experienced serious growing pains. Alexandra Palace had been crowded before the war, but it soon began bursting at its seams. As Jacobs explains, "The BBC Board of Governors fixed the operational costs of television for 1946/7 at a level below that of 1939 (when production costs were lower): the pressure on space, equipment and people increased, particularly as the length of programs expanded" (79). While the financial situation overall began to improve as early as 1947 (21), the strain upon television drama eased little until the end of 1949, when the BBC bought the Rank Film Studios at Lime Grove. Furthermore, television administrators repeatedly clashed with Broadcasting House, which did not yet understand that financially, organizationally, and aesthetically, producing television was quite different from producing radio. Ideological conflicts would cause a streak of resignations28 within the Television Service before 1950 (80).

Tensions grew within the Television Service itself, as well. Even administrators and producers who believed in the medium and were fighting earnestly for the Service's

28. Among the most notable of these resignations were Maurice Gorham, first post-war Head of the Television Service (Jacobs 21); Norman Collins, Gorham's replacement (96 n 64); Denis Johnston, Deputy Head of Television (82); and Robert MacDermot, Head of Television Drama (88).
expansion often could not agree upon policy. One particularly contentious issue involved curtailing producers' freedom. Before the war, producers could choose, within Reithian limits, the plays that they wanted to produce. After the war, however, the "recalcitrant band of individualists' that were drama producers" (Jacobs 77) found that upper management wanted more input about drama selection. As the Television Service expanded, "the drama schedule—its contents and organization—became the primary site where management and organizational conflicts were played out" (82). Although some drama personnel wanted to rely less upon adaptations and concentrate on developing plays written specifically for television, senior administrators considered adaptations a far safer, less expensive choice given the Service's strained resources. Consequently, plays that had already proved themselves on the stage or page dominated television drama throughout the late forties and fifties (Caughie 38). Disputes also raged about the financial and logistical value of repeat broadcasts.

Amidst this disequilibrium, Stephen Harrison produced at least four non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama appropriations: "Doctor Faustus" (22 June 1947), "Edward II" (30 and 31 October, 1947), "Volpone" (27 June 1948), and "The Duchess of Malfi" (4 and 8 December 1949). Considering that during this period BBC television produced only five full-length Shakespeare plays that did not draw upon the resources of repertory companies, the very existence of Harrison's adaptations seems utterly

29. The British Universities Film and Video Council's database contains entries for Royston Morley's "King Lear" (22 August 1948), a "Romeo and Juliet" for which the producer is unspecified (5 October 1947), and George More O'Ferrall's "The Tragedy of Macbeth" (20 February 1949), "The Merchant of Venice" (1 July 1947), and "Hamlet" (7 December 1947). Although the website does not clarify this point, transmission dates
remarkable. This chapter explores several institutional contexts that influenced Harrison's cluster of non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama adaptations and analyzes select stylistic features gleaned from their WAC files in an attempt to recover, if only partially, these fascinating programs.

**Play Selection**

Of the three non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays adapted for television during the pre-war period, "The Duchess of Malfi" was not a popular play, and "The Shoemaker's Holiday" and "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" were downright obscure. The late forties non-Shakespearean Renaissance appropriations, however, were more well-known. While "The Duchess of Malfi" had only just begun to interest twentieth-century audiences when Morley adapted the play in 1938, in 1945 George Rylands's "watershed production" raised the play's profile at a time when human agency and savage, senseless death occupied the public's consciousness:

*The Times'* review of the production appeared immediately under searing photographs of the Nazi concentration camps at Nordhausen and Buchenwald. Edmund Wilson later recalled the particular power of the Duchess's torture and death scenes 'at the moment of the expose of the German Concentration camps'. [...] at this moment, *The Duchess of Malfi* suddenly took on something of the profundity and timelessness more usually associated in this era with Shakespeare himself. (Barker 50)

probably indicate only the first transmission of each program.

30. *The Duchess of Malfi* had been revived in 1850 after a hundred-year absence and experienced some success and in the 1920s and 1930s (Barker 47).
Rylands's *The Duchess of Malfi* would lay the groundwork for major stage versions for decades to come. Revived in 1885 after an absence of more than a century and a half from the English stage, by the late forties *Doctor Faustus* "had become part of the standard classical repertory" (Bevington "The Performance History" 46, 49). The Old Vic and Theatre Royal Haymarket had mounted successful productions in 1944 and 1946-7, respectively (49). *Volpone*, too, had been revived in the 1920s after falling out of performance for 136 years. Donald Wolfit's wildly successful production in 1938 made the play a fixture on British stages throughout the 1940s (Yearling 37-39). Only *Edward II* was not frequently performed when Harrison adapted it in 1947. Although iconic in gay literary circles, the play garnered little mainstream interest after its 1903 revival until the late fifties and sixties. In 1969, Toby Robertson's groundbreaking stage version made Edward's sexuality a feature of its production (Forker 107-8).

Harrison's play selection might reflect the BBC's desire to accommodate a broader television drama audience during the post-war period. Before the war, Caughie explains, "its limited audience gave television drama the freedom to experiment with some of the cutting-edge modernist dramas of the interwar years" (37-8), as well as lesser-known plays from earlier eras, such as the non-Shakespearean Renaissance plays broadcast in the thirties. Caughie notes that after the war, television drama "targeted [...] middlebrow rather than high-brow taste, its imaginary viewer distinctly suburban "as the television signal began to reach greater distances outside London (37-8). Thus "the classics of the world stage" and "adaptations from the Great Tradition of English literature" constituted much of television drama (37-8). Indeed, the Service's "cultural uplift" function grew more important as it expanded beyond London's cultural center: "television could bring,
in the shape of drama, a culture which bore the imprimatur of middle-class taste, carrying a form which had a particular significance in approved British culture into the heart of everyday entertainment" (Caughie 37-38). By choosing plays that were not popular yet still more famous than "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" and "The Shoemaker's Holiday," Harrison ensured that administrators would approve his program selections and that the programs would have broader appeal than did the pre-war adaptations.

**Recording**

By the time that "Doctor Faustus" aired in 1947, the BBC could telerecord a live television signal. None of Harrison's late forties adaptations has survived, though. The BBC had little incentive to overcome the many obstacles that made recording impractical merely to preserve television dramas, which they considered to be inherently ephemeral.

Among the most important of these obstacles was image quality. Telerecordings, called kinescopes in the United States, were produced by placing a film camera in front of a television monitor in order to record images on sixteen or thirty-five millimeter film stock. Unfortunately, telerecording distorted images. Not until Bing Crosby's company developed the means to record images "electronically rather than photographically" on videotape did recording live television become more practical: "The optical and photographic developing losses of film recording were eliminated; as videotape recorded electronic signals rather than visible images, there were no optical distortions at all. [The recording] could be played instantly; and it could also be recorded over and used again" (Jacobs 24, emphasis his). Although videotape appeared in 1951, the BBC had not even fully embraced telerecording at that point, and would not do so until exporting British
television abroad proved profitable in the mid-fifties. The Television Service would not begin using videotape until 1958 (Jacobs 24).

Television drama's liveness aesthetic persisted, however, long after telerecording and videotape made preserving programs possible. Jacobs points out that "videotaped material from the 1960s was routinely wiped by the BBC and ITV television companies, partly in order to re-use tapes and to save space, but crucially because tapes and space were more valuable than the preservation of television programmes" (11). Furthermore, "segments of drama lasting up to thirty minutes continued to be recorded 'as if live' until the introduction of time-coded signals on the tape in the mid-1970s, which allowed faster and more accurate post-production editing" (24). Therefore while Harrison's adaptations appear during a moment in which ephemerality becomes a production choice rather than a technological necessity, deeply-ingrained associations of television with liveness would continue to last for decades.

Perhaps the most fervent testament to how little telerecording affected television drama in the late forties appears in the section concerning repeat broadcasts below. Recording would have solved many problems articulated in the "repeats" debate, particularly the need to store sets for several days longer than usual once Television Programme Director Cecil McGivern reorganized the drama schedule. That telerecording was possible but not more widely implemented could not more strongly reassert television drama's essential ephemerality.
Repeats

Debates concerning repeat performances of live broadcasts created a great deal of consternation at the Television Service during the late forties. Repeats stretched the tight television budget, especially since most television dramas ran ninety minutes or more: "With the exception of Copyright," which of course did not apply to Renaissance plays," the cost of a single performance of a play is about the same as a double" (Jacobs 85). Thus,

a typical week would include at least one new production and at least two further repeats of previous week's plays. The Sunday night performances were repeated on Tuesday afternoon, and a Thursday night play repeated on Friday afternoon, a rhythm that remained in place until February 1948. Repeat programming saved money, and the low visibility of afternoon repeats did not disgrace the Service and meant a varied evening schedule. (Jacobs 83)

Curiously, neither of Harrison's 1947 adaptations followed this general pattern for drama repeats. "Doctor Faustus" aired during the prime Sunday evening slot (22 June 1947), but no repeat broadcast followed. A major production promoted in The Listener for its innovative set design, "Edward II" aired twice, but neither performance took place on Sunday evening. Instead, the play aired on Thursday and Friday, October 30 and 31. Regardless, these plays' scheduling oddities demonstrate the drama schedule's flexibility during the immediate post-war period.

In February 1948, however, McGivern attempted to change the drama schedule template in an effort to wrangle the most out of the Service's budget. His "bomb-shell"
memo, which argued that afternoon repeats were not cost-efficient enough, unleashed a frenzy of protests from drama administrators and producers (Jacobs 83-4). McGivern's new policy dictated that the Sunday night play would remain the anchor-point of the week, but it would be repeated on Thursday night rather than Tuesday afternoon. The second play of the week would run on Tuesday night and repeat Friday afternoon.

Replacing non-drama evening shows (talks, varieties, etc.) with drama repeats was more cost-efficient than the Service's current schedule template. Even though the Service would still offer two plays a week, some drama personnel worried about public reaction to being given repeats on Thursday night, a night on which they were used to seeing a new play. Repeats were unpopular, for frequent viewers had nothing new to watch when the same play aired on two separate evenings (Jacobs 33).

The problem with McGivern's plan extended beyond public perception, though; it also created logistical issues. As Jacobs explains, "the new schedule would cause congestion in terms of storage space. Financial limitations caught the Service in a vicious circle: McGivern wanted to save money by using repeats as the main evening's television, but the lack of money meant no extra storage space for the sets was available" (Jacobs 84). Before, sets from the Sunday night play remained in place until after its Tuesday afternoon repeat. McGivern's plan required sets to be struck after the performance and redone four days later. Furthermore, the pre-1948 pattern "allowed actors to work on Sunday evening (when theatres were closed) and Tuesday afternoons (before their evening performances)" but McGivern's system did not. He even acknowledges this quandary in the "bombshell" memo: "This, unfortunately, will tend to weaken the casting, as the present system allows actors and actresses in the theatre shows to be booked."
Producers should attempt to get over this to a certain extent by arranging to book star actors and leads well ahead, fitting in plays to suit their free periods." Head of Television Drama Robert MacDermot replies by saying that it is "hard enough as things are at present to book any star artist far ahead unless that star artist is unlikely to be in work on stage or film, and therefore probably not the star he or she once was." Although the Service would eventually find that it was able to secure good actors in spite of the new schedule, MacDermot might have reacted harshly because McGivern seemed more concerned with finances than good television. Since McGivern frequently canceled or rescheduled programs at the last minute (Jacobs 87), which no doubt cost the Service money, his behavior also might have seemed infuriatingly inconsistent.

Ultimately, McGivern's new system was not fully established in 1948, "work[ing] intermittently against the trenchant demands of drama producers and of MacDermot" (Jacobs 85). By mid-summer, the clashing systems "had effectively alienated the drama producers and management from McGivern: MacDermot was unwilling to divulge drama content before booking, and McGivern could see that his scheme was not being implemented" (Jacobs 85). Because Harrison's 1947 adaptations did not conform to the standard television schedule, one can only guess how "Volpone" (27 June 1948) figured in the McGivern-MacDermot clash. The program aired on a Sunday evening, but like "Doctor Faustus" the year before, "Volpone" aired only once. When Harrison adapted "The Duchess of Malfi" in 1949 (4 and 8 December), however, the program aired on the "McGivern schedule" of Sunday and Thursday evenings. By that time, McGivern had won the battle; MacDermot resigned during the summer of 1949 (Swift 155). McGivern's drama schedule remained the standard until ITV's arrival in the mid-fifties made drama
administrators "wary of the accusation of repetition and homogeneity, particularly since it was clear that ITV drama departments had no intention of scheduling repeat showings of their dramas in the same week, if at all" (Jacobs 115). The "battle of the Macs," then, would become irrelevant just a few short years later when ITV thoroughly shook up British television.

**Harrison's Research**

Judging from WAC documents, Harrison was an able researcher who made the most of available resources. The files for his late forties programs contain numerous documents referring to past stage and radio productions. The 1949 "Duchess" file contains a cast list for Rylands's version as well as an August 1947 BBC radio broadcast of the play. Likewise, Harrison took notes about sound broadcasts for both "Edward II" and "Doctor Faustus." He also requested travel allowances to attend production of *Doctor Faustus* at Stratford, where he recruited two actors. The "Faustus" file includes a list of books that he had acquired and others he wanted to consult. Harrison's Marlowe

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32. This radio broadcast featured Alec Guiness as Faustus (5 July 1946).

33. Hugh Griffith played Mephistophilis in both versions. David King-Wood played the Chorus at Stratford but became Harrison's Faustus.

34. His notes indicate that he already had *Marlowe—A Conspectus* (Robertson, 1931), *Christopher Marlowe* (Bakeless, 1937 or 1942), and C.F. Tucker Brooke's edition of Marlowe's plays (first published 1910). Harrison "would like" *Marlowe and his Circle* (Boas, 1929), *The Death of Christopher Marlowe* (Hobson, 1929), and "recent critical
research for "Faustus" probably gave him the idea to adapt the seldom-performed "Edward II" later that year.

It seems that Harrison, who had worked as a film editor for Paramount (Jacobs 37), also had the heart of a performance scholar. The first line of his "Doctor Faustus" production notes pithily sums up the task before him: "It has not been easy to arrive at a satisfactory text of the play itself, quite apart from the question of arranging it for television." He does, of course, mention that the play exists in two versions, one from 1604 (the A-text) and another from 1616 (the B-text): "The earliest surviving printed copy of the play is dated 1604; after this edition had been twice reprinted, a considerably longer version was published in 1616." Although he does not mention William Birde and Samuel Rowley by name, Harrison explains that the longer version contains additions by writers other than Marlowe: "no-one knows for certain which passages are by Marlowe himself and which are the later additions for which two other authors are known to have been paid." Harrison's handwritten list of Marlowe resources shows that he already owned C.F. Tucker Brooke's edition of Doctor Faustus, which is based on the 1604 A-text. It seems, however, that Harrison's research led him in a different direction inspired by the "recent critical editions" of the play that he wished to acquire.

While most editors championed the A-text's authenticity during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, arguments in favor of the B-text gained primacy during the 1930s and 1940s (Keefer xv). Michael Keefer explains that this "transition began in 1932, with Frederick Boas, who maintained that both texts have independent authority, that B contains Birde and Rowley's additions but preserves the main features of the play's original form and that where the texts are parallel, the 1616 readings are editions of Dr. Faustus."
preferable" (Keefer 18). In 1946, "Leo Kirschbaum asserted that the A-text is a bad quarto, that it 'reports the 1616 text, which is a good quarto; and that since it existed in 1594, the 1616 version is very close to Marlowe's original" (Keefer 18). Harrison's production notes clearly show the influence of one or both of these arguments. He writes that while the 1616 B-text "undoubtedly contains the later additions [...] it also contains what seem to be better versions of scenes in the 1604 copy. From this it has been argued that the publisher of the 1616 edition may have had access to a better manuscript than his predecessor in 1604." Ultimately, then, Harrison based his adaptation upon the B-text and further adapted the play to suit his needs:

[...] I have made a composite version, using mainly the 1616 edition, after eliminating from it what the critics believe to be the later additions. Fortunately both editions tally on the most important scenes, those at the beginning and end of the play involving mostly Faustus and Mephistophilis. These are being used unchanged, except for the cutting of some obscurities and some topical allusions which would mean little to a modern audience. The order of the scenes (which in any case varies in the early editions) has been slightly re-arranged, but no line or word has been written in.

Despite what seems like an obsession with "authenticity" that would become a feature of British "heritage" film and television, Harrison nevertheless seems eager to embrace the possibilities of television style. The remaining sections demonstrate that his approach to adaptation was every bit as concerned with "the visual" as his research had been with "the text."
Sets

The most striking stylistic feature of "Doctor Faustus" and "Edward II" is their set design, particularly their use of penumbrascopes. These projectors used cardboard cut-outs to back-project shadows onto screens or walls in order to create sets out of thin air. Penumbrascopes also resonated deeply with the practices of Renaissance stagecraft. Just as "Elizabethan dramatists left scenery to the imagination," the BBC's penumbrascopes "stimulated the imagination to create of shadows the air of mystery, murder and magic which four-square scenery would have killed stone dead" (Norman 183-84). These tools did, of course, have virtues just as important as their aesthetic qualities. Using penumbrascopes allowed a cash-strapped Television Service to save money on sets, and this equipment took up far less space in a storage-challenged facility than would a traditional set.

Plans for "Doctor Faustus" include four "cutouts": a grove, and the three palaces of the Pope, Emperor, and Duke of Anholt. The following pages contain designs for the Grove and Anholt cutouts as well as a production still from “Edward II" that demonstrates the penumbroscope effect. On the Grove Cutout (Figure 3.1), tiny "X" marks indicate areas of the cardboard to be removed. The projector's light shining through them would produce an image of grass and bare trees. In the Duke of Anholt's palace (Figure 3.2), removing the "X" portions would give the impression of light streaming through large windows, as well as the folds of curtains draping gracefully from an interior arch. Here, as in the production still from "Edward II" (Figure 3.3, on next page) these cutouts provide what one of Harrison's contemporaries called "a sweep and sense of space which would not have been possible if the studio had been cluttered.
upwith sets" (Swift 162). Harrison's penumbroscope experiments in "Doctor Faustus" proved so successful that they became the guiding aesthetic principle of "Edward II." The latter program's penumbrascopes even merited a mention in the *Radio Times*: "The action is set in seventeen different places. This would have presented no difficulty in the Elizabethan theatre, where no one expected any scenery. In Stephen Harrison's production 'Penumbraskope screens' will be used to suggest the different backgrounds by means of shadow effects."

Fig. 3.1. Grove Cutout. Source: undated set designs from BBC Written Archives Centre, file T5/148.
Fig. 3.2. Anholt Cutout. Source: undated set designs from BBC Written Archives Centre, file T5/148.

Fig. 3.3. "Edward II" production still. Source: John Swift, *Adventure in Vision: The First Twenty-Five Years of Television* (London: John Lehmann Ltd., 1950; print; Plate XXI).
The Camera

Although Harrison's production notes assert that "Doctor Faustus" would not strive for "anything in the way of spectacle," according to The Listener this adaptation was "produced [...] with considerable elaboration" ("Critic on the Hearth" 34). Harrison's notes describe the first element of his adaptation strategy as "[a]voiding the 16th century 'stage magic' of fireworks and trap-doors, and using what should be equally effective modern 'television magic' for things like appearances and disappearances of devils and spirits" (emphasis added). According to The Listener, this "television magic" proved a success: "the materializations of Mephistophilis out of air were cunningly managed." No camera script survives to provide precise details about how the program accomplished otherworldly entrances and exits, but Harrison's notes do mention superimposition in the list of "technical resources" that he intended to mine. Pre-filmed images from a telecine machine easily could have been superimposed upon the live transmission, as could live images shot simultaneously from another part of the studio.35 Along with set design, these

35. Another superimposition method might have existed at that point, but it seems needlessly complicated for Harrison's purposes. In his 1950 account of early television, John Swift describes a technique that George More O'Ferrall used in his 1948 adaptation of "Blithe Spirit" (Plates XXII and XXIII). The actor playing the ghost stood off-screen, her image reflected by a mirror "on to a small rectangle of plate glass. This in turn reflects a faint image into the camera lens, which is already focused on the pair [of live actors] in the background" of the scene being transmitted. Since at several points Swift singles out Harrison for his technical innovations, however, it seems as though he would have given Harrison credit for achieving such an effect a year before More O'Ferrall used it.
supernatural occurrences seem to have been a defining feature of Harrison's "Faustus."

As if special effects were not enough, Mary Skeaping, a dancer whose star was ascending in the late forties,\textsuperscript{36} choreographed "the movements of these beings to music taken from the Faust Symphony by Liszt." An image of strikingly-posed figures in Faustus's study appears below (Figure 3.4). Unfortunately, like most television drama images from BBC publications such as \textit{The Listener} and the \textit{Radio Times}, it is almost definitely a promotional still rather than a photograph taken during transmission.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Fig_3_4_Dr_Faustus_production_still}
\caption{"Doctor Faustus" production still. Source: \textit{The Listener} (London: BBC, 3 July 1947; print; 34).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{36} Mary Skeaping was a "British dancer, choreographer, ballet director, and international authority on early ballets." In addition to studying "with some of the great teachers of the period," her many accomplishments include directing "the first live full-length classic for the BBC, 'Sleeping Beauty' (1951)" and becoming the "director of the Royal Swedish Ballet (1953-62) where she not only produced the standard 19th-century classics but revived historic Swedish court ballets (often in collaboration with Ivo Cramér)" (Craine and Mackrell 435).
After mentioning special effects in his production notes, Harrison writes, "But most important is to try to show—especially by means of close-ups—the full sense of the tragedy played out, in some of the most lovely poetry in the English language, between Mephistophilis, the fallen spirit, and Faustus, the insatiable seeker after power." Here, Harrison most fully articulates his intention to enhance dramatic language with television style. During the era of live transmission, television close-ups were much more difficult to achieve than in film. On a film set, stopping to re-light figures in a shot was, and still is, a routine matter. Live television close-ups had to be choreographed carefully in order to position figures in relation to the lights, whereas cinema lights would be positioned around the figures. The "delicate" lighting required for close-ups could not be arranged until engineers worked out the entire lighting scheme, which only happened after the set had been fully erected on the day of transmission (Swift 148, emphasis added).

Employing close-ups successfully therefore required producers to envision framing precisely, without the benefit of either set or cameras until mere hours before the live broadcast aired. While certainly not the only BBC producer to use close-ups, Harrison had begun to gather something of a reputation for them. The Radio Times comments on Harrison's technique in an article discussing his second adaptation of "Rope" in 1950: "Harrison produced the play three years ago and showed how effectively the close-up technique of television could be applied to a presentation of this kind in which the reaction of the characters is as important as their action and speech. His technique will be similar this time, and we should notice some subtle camera work" (qtd. in Jacobs 104).

In his compelling analysis of the WAC file for "Rope," Jacobs shows shot-scale to be among features of Harrison's style that evolved in the late forties, one that represents
the "television style that was to become standard by the early 1950s" (Jacobs 108). The 1950 Rope script bears many handwritten alterations, for example "the specification of some shots as low angled shots, and one as a high angled shot" (Jacobs 107, emphasis his). The frame also becomes more mobile: "the majority of revisions add movement to the shot. The 1947 script indicates that camera movement is motivated by character movement, but the 1950 version adds movement even when the characters are static" (107). In addition to the movements and transitions themselves, the later script features "a revision of nomenclature: some shots labeled 'C.U.' (close-up) become 'C.S.' (close-shot) so that the 1950 script has a distinction between close-shot and close-up. Close-shots are usually mobile shots, whereas close-ups are either static or constitute the beginning or end of a shot" (107, emphasis his). Since Harrison's non-Shakespearean Renaissance appropriations fall between the 1947 and 1950 versions of "Rope," examining them offers insight into how his style evolved during this three-year period.

"Edward II"s camera script shows that the Harrison began using both "close-up" and "close-shot" as early as October of 1947. At that time, however, the terms had not yet taken on the meanings that Jacobs identifies in the 1950 "Rope" script. In fact, their meanings are reversed: close-ups, rather than close-shots, usually signal camera movement. Three of the five tracking shots are associated with close-ups. Two of the eight close-shots are described as "becoming" two-shots, in which two people occupy the frame. Unfortunately, the script does not specify whether in these instances the camera reframes the shot or actors rearrange themselves in front of the camera. Even if characters move while the camera remains stationary, though, motion nevertheless remains an important quality of the shot. According the The "Duchess of Malfi"s surviving camera
cue cards, characters reframe themselves in front of cameras at least nine times. Bosola, for example, begins one sequence in medium close-shot, "picking up paper between columns" before eventually "coming down into C.U." A bit later, during a medium close shot of the throne "Ferdinand walks into C.S. Camera R (right)." The file contains cards for only Cameras Three and Four, which in the post-war era still were often mounted upon the less-mobile iron men. If the cameras could not easily move, however, noting character movements significant enough to modify shot-scale demonstrates that motion remains important to the frame. Alas, the camera cards call for only three close-shots and one close-up and thus it is impossible to state conclusively whether mobility serves as a distinction between the two shots. Finally, whereas the full camera script indicates no high or low angled shots in "Edward II," twelve low shots appear in the cards for just two of "The Duchess of Malfi"s cameras. While the WAC files, particularly for "Duchess," provide plans for camerawork rather than a record of what actually occurred, it is nevertheless clear that Jacobs is correct: Harrison progressively experimented with shot-scales and mobile, angled framing.

"Not for children"

As the previous chapter briefly mentioned, a series of memos demonstrates that violence and strong language in "The Duchess of Malfi" caused some administrative concern. On 11 November, Harrison sent the script to Television Program Organizer Cecil Madden with a memo showing that he had researched the BBC's past approach to

37. Camera operators placed these cards, which listed camera positions and shot order, above their viewfinders during rehearsals and transmission.
broadcasting the play. Although Harrison had already discussed "Duchess"'s content with the Head of Television Programs, the topic apparently warranted further conversation:

Here is the script of "The Duchess of Malfi", in case you want to see it.

As I have already explained verbally to H. Tel. P., there is no debatable line in it which has not already been broadcast in the Home Service (World Theatre, August 1947). I have removed three stranglings and one poisoning from the play as written.

In 1938, Morley's version had depicted the Duchess's and Cariola's stranglings but mitigated their horrific effects through camerawork. How Harrison removed them altogether remains unclear. Harrison cuts Julia's subplot entirely rather than just her death, but adding her poisoning to his list of omitted horrors certainly adds to his memo's implication that this adaptation shall be the model of restraint.

Because the play's strong language had already been broadcast in a radio version two years before, Harrison seems more concerned with visual representations of violence. A memo from Cecil Madden to the Head of Television Programs dated three days later focuses upon language rather than images: "I think there is no doubt that this must go out with a 'not for children' label and a careful special announcement, take for example page 47, where I have marked two paragraphs. The following words pop out all over the play and they obviously cannot be cut: LECHER, BASTARD, WHORE, URINE, and the rest." Madden underlines the phrase "two paragraphs" by hand in order to stress the frequency with which these capitalized words occur. Harrison's memo to Madden on the same day concurs that the program must come with a warning: "I entirely agree that a special announcement will be necessary, for both the very sensitive and the young that
this is not suitable for them. I have, in fact, already been discussing it with John
Humphreys, who will be on duty, I think, on the day of transmission." Another memo to
Humphreys dated 2 December recommends wording the announcement to ward off
criticism about the appropriation's editorial choices: "I think we should make it clear that
this [choice] is both because of the freedom of expression and because of Webster's
dramatic use of horror. To cover ourselves, I suggest we refer to as it as 'Webster's
famous tragedy' and 'this Jacobean classic.'" Just as important to Harrison as the content
advisory, however, is educating viewers about how to watch the program: "Can we also
incorporate a strong recommendation to people not to meddle with their sets, as the
action definitely calls for some parts of the play to be performed in almost complete
darkness." In this series of memos, Harrison explicitly addresses strong language only to
dismiss its potential to cause problems. Instead, he concerns himself with the text's visual
rather than aural effects: the performance of violence and a lighting scheme vital to his
adaptation.

The other great violent and controversial episode in Harrison's non-Shakespearean
Renaissance drama appropriations is, of course, the king's death in "Edward II." Its
WAC file contains a surprising lack of information about the scene; certainly, nothing
like the fuss about mature content in "Duchess" appears in the "Edward II" file. The
murder described in Hollinshed, Marlowe's source, makes the Duchess's strangulation
seem tame by comparison. Lars Engle's introduction to the play succinctly summarizes
the scene in Hollinshed: "Edward is held down on a bed under a table and has a red-hot
poker thrust into his intestines through a horn inserted in his anus—partly, no doubt, so
that no physical mark of his death will be evident (Renaissance kings were usually not
autopsied)" (356). Marlowe hints at the murdered described in his source but does not explicitly represent the scene's horrors:

Lightborn, Mortimer's hired assassin, a specialist in deniable homicides, mentions untraceable poisons and inconspicuous modes of asphyxiation, then tells the Protector that "yet I have a braver way than these" (5.4.37). But he will not say what the "braver way" is, and when he commits the murder, the stage directions are vague, perhaps deliberately so, since the play script still had to pass under the eyes of the censor. Nonetheless, in having Lightborn order his accomplices to prepare a red-hot spit, a table, and a featherbed, and in mentioning Edward's loud cry as he is murdered (which rules out suffocation) (5.5.30-32, 113), the text gestures clearly enough at the murder clinically described in Hollinshed […]. (Engle 356)

Nothing in the file suggests that Harrison, like Marlowe, used Hollinshed's details but left the precise manner of Edward's murder up to the audience's imagination. The prop list contains no entry for a spit or poker. It does, however, call for a "drab mattress, same size or little bigger than bed, to be held on top of Edward in murder scene." The production engineer's notes mention that the scene features "heavy screams," but those screams easily could have come before the suffocating began. The camera script likewise offers few clues. Camera Four shot the action; the last two shots are a close shot of "King sitting on bed" and a medium shot of the bed. Since the production used penumbrascopes and shadow-screens, it would have been easy to "suggest" the poker's role in Edward's death. It does not appear, though, that Harrison's program made that choice.
Perhaps the strongest indication that Harrison did not subject his Edward (played by Harrison's brother, David Markham) to death-by-poker comes from his undated production notes. Usually so expansive and thorough in these notes, here Harrison is brief and vague:

Marlowe seems to have relied chiefly on Hollinshed's Chronicles as the main source for his play. He took considerable liberties with the facts, but the main characters he created correspond closely with the views formed by the latest authorities on the period. Incidentally, it may be worth noting that Marlowe was almost as far separated in time from the reign of Edward II as we are from Marlowe's time.

Although Marlowe's characters accord with "the views formed by the latest authorities on the period," then, Marlowe still "took considerable liberties with the facts." Harrison, whose production notes for "Doctor Faustus" carefully explained the play's complex production history, does not specify of which "facts" he speaks. Furthermore, he implies that "truth" has been affected in some way by the hundreds of years between Marlowe and his subject matter. Because Harrison has shown himself to be such a careful researcher and thoughtful adapter, this vague passage in his notes and the absence of any reference to Hollinshed's account of the murder in the WAC file suggest that Harrison purposely left the poker out of his program. Given the BBC's conservative atmosphere during the period, one can hardly blame him.

That one producer should helm what seem to be the only post-war appropriations of non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama at the BBC until the late fifties, and do so in such a short period of time, is nothing short of remarkable. While it may seem odd to
consider Stephen Harrison an early television "auteur" of sorts, this chapter has done so because the BBC's mode of production during the late forties justifies such treatment. Although administrative structures and production routines were becoming standardized during this period, BBC television remained a far cry from the extremely specialized classical Hollywood mode of production. Harrison could not, of course, control what happened during a live broadcast; in the planning stages, however, producers exerted an auteur-like level of control upon their programs. As the article about Harrison's use of close-ups in "Rope" demonstrates, the BBC also used its producers' names to promote programs.

Even if the concept of the auteur had existed when Harrison produced these programs, he probably would not have thought of himself in those terms. The filmmakers in the next chapter, however, came of age in a post-*Cahiers du Cinéma* world. Derek Jarman, Marcus Thompson, Mike Figgis, and Alex Cox have all made films that bear distinctive marks of their authorship. Furthermore, they have publicly reflected on their authorship in interviews, online production diaries, social media, and books that they have written about their films. The next chapter provides an alternative to current critical treatment of their non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama appropriations, exploring how these filmmakers either invoke or ignore Renaissance playwrights when constructing their own public identities as auteurs.
In her second article employing a theory of "contemporary Jacobean" film, Pascale Aebischer reiterates the shared radical characteristics that she and other critics have noted in *Edward II* (Derek Jarman, 1991), *Middleton's Changeling* (Marcus Thompson, 1998), *Hotel* (Mike Figgis, 2001), and *Revengers Tragedy* (Alex Cox, 2002). The connections between *Edward II* and *Revengers Tragedy* are particularly compelling. Both are politically charged films, a fact made all the more striking because both Jarman and Cox received government funds in order to create these appropriations. Jarman advocates for queer rights; Cox criticizes media and American domination of international politics. Both directors foreground their politics via endings that significantly reshape their Renaissance sources: Jarman lets Edward live rather than punishing him with death by sodomy, while Cox suggests that nothing can (or even should) change in a mediatized political culture. Furthermore, Jarman and Cox have linked their authorship in these films with the authors they adapt, both using Shakespeare as a foil against which to situate Marlowe and Middleton. Jarman's journals and the companion book that he published in conjunction with *Edward II* provide brief statements that refer to both Shakespeare and Marlowe. Cox is much more expansive, actively situating himself with Middleton and against Shakespeare in several interviews, the *Revengers Tragedy* production website, and the book he wrote about his movies entitled *X Films: True Confessions of a Radical Filmmaker*. Without a doubt, both
Jarman and Cox publicly represent themselves as oppositional filmmakers by invoking Renaissance authors.

Marcus Thompson and Mike Figgis, however, do not connect themselves in any meaningful way to the authors that they adapt. In public representations of their authorship, these filmmakers both have clear, specific agendas that have little to do with Renaissance plays, heritage film, or Shakespeare-as-heritage. Thompson's interviews and website barely mention Middleton. His primary concern is establishing how he, through superhuman effort, vision, and guts undertook the process of producing and directing a chronically-endangered independent film. Figgis, whose Hotel Aebischer uses as a case study for her theory of contemporary Jacobean film, has produced one book on digital filmmaking and a companion book to Hotel in which he has ample opportunity to consider his authorship in relation to Shakespeare and Webster. His brief comments on Renaissance authors only underscore how little Webster and Shakespeare matter in the context of his primary mission in Hotel: making an independent film that experiments with digital video. While criticizing the heritage "Shakespeare industry" seems to be part of Hotel's project, that criticism is only one aspect of the film's larger indictment of mainstream cinema. If these filmmakers actively embrace a self-consciously Jacobean aesthetic, as Aebischer asserts, it would seem that they might incorporate some comments about their Renaissance source texts, or modern-day Shakespeare-as-heritage, into their public representations of themselves as independent auteurs.

As a way of questioning Aebischer's model of the contemporary Jacobean film, this chapter shall foreground the ways in which Thompson and Figgis do not situate themselves in relation to Shakespeare, Webster, or Middleton, instead hammering home
larger film industry issues and emphasizing their connections to film history and legendary auteurs. In addition to showing Thompson's lack of engagement with the Renaissance, the section devoted to his authorship also reveals how carefully future scholars should treat his website as a reliable source of production information. Before turning to Thompson and Figgis, however, the chapter first complicates the Renaissance author / auteur filmmaker paradigm that critics have established with Jarman and Cox. Aebischer asserts that Jarman, who had previously appropriated Shakespeare to radical ends, had come around to a "Jacobean" mindset by 1991. Her argument, however, tends to privilege subjective information. Finally, while not disputing the degree to which Cox figures his own authorship through his radical connections with Middleton, this chapter de-stabilizes even Cox as a "contemporary Jacobean" filmmaker by analyzing a moment during which Cox's remarkably consistent message about Shakespeare and Middleton falters.

**Jarman**

By the time that he adapted *Edward II*, Jarman had long been engaged with the Renaissance. He had made a film about the Italian painter *Caravaggio*, had incorporated Queen Elizabeth I into *Jubilee*, and appropriated both Shakespeare's drama in *The Tempest* and sonnets in *The Angelic Conversations*. In the latter two films, Jarman had shown that Shakespeare can be radical. Aebischer argues, however, that by *Edward II* Jarman had begun to form a distinction between the "violent and sexy 'Jacobean' playwrights, whose plays act as catalysts for a political engagement in the present day, with a more conservative, gentle (if not quite genteel) 'Elizabethan' Shakespeare, whose
political edge is dulled" ("Early Modern" 497). To support this argument, she looks to two of Jarman's published remarks. While one of Jarman's published journals does contain a two-sentence statement that the in-process script for Edward II is becoming more "Jacobean, sexy, and violent" (Modern Nature 293, qtd. in "Early Modern" 496), Jarman does not pursue the idea further. The second source is Queer Edward II, which is not the Edward II "screenplay," as Aebischer describes it, but a "companion piece" published largely through the efforts Colin MacCabe, Jarman's friend at the BFI. As a work of art itself, however, Queer Edward II resists straightforward interpretation as a direct window into Jarman's mind.

Queer Edward II provides small excerpts of Edward II's script alongside other text and images: production stills, anecdotes about both the film and Jarman's life, and pro-queer slogans, among other things. In addition to citing some comments demeaning costume drama ("Early Modern" 496), Aebischer points toward the page on which Jarman refers to a media appearance of Shakespeare scholar A.L. Rowse: "On 'The Media Show' A.L. Rowse said Shakespeare was a conservative, Marlowe much more radical. Shakespeare's wilful misinterpretation of the 15th century to bolster Tudor dynastic claims has blighted our past" (Queer Edward 112). Aebischer seems to take these words at face value: "[b]y the time he was working on Edward II [...] Jarman had moved from [considering Shakespeare as radical] towards an implicit, if not explicit, agreement with A. L. Rowse's assessment of Shakespeare as 'a conservative' and of Marlowe as 'much more radical' ("Early Modern" 496). Jarman's book, however, is modeled upon a collage. Its separate "pieces" acquire new meaning when read in the contexts of the book's two-page spreads and in Queer Edward II as a whole.
One two-page spread, for example, shows the image of Lightborn welding next to the impassioned lines of text in which the imprisoned Edward expresses his desire for revenge against his persecutors ("let their lives blood slake The Furies' hunger"). As Edward unleashes his fiery rage "to the empty, echoing dungeon" (96-97), Lightborn uses literal fire to bend metal to his will. In large font, the slogan "out, proud and livid" connects Edward's fury about his imprisonment to the indignation of modern-day queers. The page bears three short sentences of comment from Jarman: "Edward II (1302-1327) was 23 when he became king. His love of Gaveston lasted 13 years. My temperature is 102º degrees." In these lines, Jarman's literal fever reflects the "fire" metaphor present in the rest of the spread. In addition, specifying that Edward was twenty-three when he took the throne implicitly links the king both to the actor who played him and to Jarman himself. Jarman notes that his first sexual experience with a man happened when he was twenty-three years old (32), and he notes his surprise to learn that Steven Waddington was the same age while shooting Edward II, years younger than Jarman and everyone else had thought (100). The book, like Jarman's films, creates "truth" out of fragments, anachronicity, and ambiguity.

The "Rowse" page on which Jarman mentions a "conservative" Shakespeare is composed of four parts. The large text reverses a question that homosexuals, particularly HIV positive homosexuals, had probably heard a million times in 1991: "So, what do you think caused your heterosexuality?" The question emphasizes that sexual orientation is not a choice, and it also turns heterosexuality into a "disease." Smaller text gives three of Edward's lines: "Ah, Spencer, not the riches of my realm / Can ransom Gaveston! He is mark'd to die! / I know the malice of Mortimer." The small-font text also describes the
image featured on the opposite page: "Edward very worried at his desk pouring over Ordnance Survey maps with Spencer. The light flickers." Together, these three parts point to a theme. People are unable to choose sexual orientation, just as Edward cannot by sheer force of will marshal even his kingly resources (emphasized by the vast map spread out before him) against Mortimer, who represents oppressive heterosexuality.

While these three elements of the spread seem to fit together coherently, Jarman's italicized block of comments is richly allusive, but defies a fixed, stable interpretation. After his comment about Rowse, Jarman provides "Crookback Richard" as an example of Shakespeare's "wilful misinterpretation," then offers an ambivalent reflection upon Shakespeare's "genius": "God save us from genius, though Wittgenstein thought him second rate compared with Michelangelo, or Beethoven (though Wittgenstein could be seen as a mere stutterer)" (112). Mentioning Wittgenstein, whom Jarman would make a film about in 1993, likewise holds up another "genius" only to undercut him as "a mere stutterer." Furthermore, Wittgenstein's philosophical idea that people can only communicate if they are playing the same language-game emphasizes the difficulties and relativity of communicating meaning.

The second section of comments returns to Shakespeare: "For the 'Sonnets,' though, all Shakespearean historical inaccuracy is forgiven. 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?'") Of course, this particular sonnet famously takes aim at Petrarchan clichés by employing and then immediately deflecting them. The comment then says that Jarman considered but rejected using the sonnets in Edward II: "I thought of using them as voice-over, then I decided against . ' The Angelic Conversation' is my film of the 'Sonnets'. I have a deep hatred of the Elizabethan past used to castrate our vibrant
present" (112). It is not clear, though, what Jarman means by the castration comment. He could refer to debates surrounding the identities and genders of the beloved in the sonnets. Or, perhaps he means that by putting the sonnets in Edward II, he would himself be using the past to castrate the present. The comment is ambiguous. As though to underscore the ambiguity of his remarks, Jarman's last comment on the opposite page mentions the lamp that the text notes is flickering throughout the scene: "Sudden thought —lamp should flicker off to end scene."

Thomas Cartelli has written about how Jarman's "casual ambivalence about his actual debt to Marlowe" can be seen on the dedication page of Queer Edward II. Cartelli quotes the lines on the dedication page that almost everyone notes in scholarly discussions of the film: "'How to make a film of a gay love affair and get it commissioned. Find a dusty old play and violate it' (qtd. in 201). As Cartelli explains, "Marlowe's play becomes, in this formulation, merely an enabling medium or ruse that affords Jarman the means / financial backing to stage something else entirely, 'a film of a gay love affair'" (201). Cartelli is correct to foreground Jarman's comments as self-fashioning. Jarman is too smart and savvy about the industry to make such a statement without irony. Even as he points toward the adaptation-bent attitude of British heritage, Jarman must have known from the beginning that accepting BBC funding would force him to make compromises. After appearing to dismiss Marlowe, however, Jarman writes: "'Marlowe outs the past—why don't we out the present?' thereby appearing to enlist Marlowe as a kindred spirit or collaborator who has done for the past what Jarman hopes to do for the present" (qtd. in Cartelli 201). The dedication page, like so much of Jarman's work, resists stable meaning in favor of tension and ambiguity. Even considering
Jarman's continued use of Renaissance themes, history, and literature as a subject, the only thing that is clear from his films and published writings is his unequivocal support for radical queer politics. Jarman's work is steeped in art and experimental traditions that foreground ambiguity and ultimate unknowability. Thus, while Jarman does compare Shakespeare and Marlowe in one highly interpretable context in *Queer Edward II* and use the term "Jacobean" in a journal entry, pinning down these authors as a fixed referent deserves reevaluation.

**Cox**

Cox frequently highlights his relationship with Middleton and Shakespeare. As Gretchen Minton and Ramona Wray have explained, Cox repeatedly represents his authorship in terms of a Shakespeare – Middleton binary in which Shakespeare is "conservative" and Middleton is "radical." Cox positions himself as the inheritor of Middleton's legacy, linking himself with his Renaissance progenitor through "a romantic vision of the artist as a forward-thinking rebel, an iconoclast, a revolutionary and a questioner-critic of norms" (Wray 544). In the article that Cox wrote for the *Guardian* to promote *Revengers Tragedy*'s release, however, the binary that Cox usually employs to represent his authorship momentarily breaks down. In "Stage Fright," the forum in which Cox most fully articulates his equation of Hollywood with a corrupt Elizabethan government, Cox's Renaissance referent "slips" as he briefly aligns himself with Shakespeare rather than Middleton.
Although he does not tell *Revengers Tragedy*’s "origin story" in "Stage Fright," Cox repeats it often in interviews, online, and in *X Films*. The following account comes from the *Revengers Tragedy* production website:

> It was 1976... and I was sitting in the college library, intending to revise for my law exams. Unfortunately I was a very poor student and couldn't concentrate on the law books in front of me. There were all these other books on the shelves all around me—big, leather-bound olde bookes from the previous century. So I dragged down this two or three volume collection called *The Works of Cyril Tourneur*...and started browsing through it. And in among the poems and rather undistinguished plays was the one called the *Revengers Tragedy* (production website, qtd. in Minton 141).

Minton, who excerpts this section in her analysis of the film, notes that by telling this story, "Cox's dissatisfaction with studying law and with the political system of the 1970s becomes part of the political framework in which he appropriates Middleton" (140). In *X Films*, where Cox begins the chapter on *Revengers Tragedy* with its origin story, he adds an additional layer of context: "[...] I went up to the Worcester College library, to study for my law exams. The same week, I was directing a play at the Playhouse: the musical *Cabaret*. I was a poor student, with little interest in the law, and since it wasn't yet time for me to go and check on my actors, my eyes wandered across the leather-bound Victorian books [...]" (245). This time, Cox is also a director when he discovers Middleton's play. True, Cox specifies that he is working on stage rather than film, but Middleton nevertheless becomes part of his "destiny" as a budding director.
In both versions of the origin story, Cox is a poor but daring student. He is more like Middleton than Shakespeare; while "Shakespeare had brains and brilliance [...] the author of Revenger's had balls—mocking dukes, lords and a corrupt, syphilitic court . . ." (qtd. in Wray 543). Wray explains that "[i]n terms of his own self-construction, Cox traces the uniqueness of [his] "voice" to his early modern forbears. [...] the dominant impression is of Cox and Middleton's consanguinity: the former is emancipated and unconstrained, while the latter is similarly mocking, insouciant and ahead of his time" (Wray 544-45). Wray's assessment of the origin story is worth quoting at length:

If Middleton is clear, it is because Shakespeare is obscure; if Middleton is modern, it is because Shakespeare is old-fashioned. Recognizing Middleton's radical attributes means attending to Shakespeare's reactionary nature; Shakespeare is toadying, Middleton tells it as it is; Shakespeare is cowardly (and, by implication, feminine), while Middleton is in possession of a nice big set of "balls." The Revenger's Tragedy, it seems, can be "explained" only in relation to and when set against a Shakespearean imprimatur. (Wray 543-4)

Cox's explicit comparison between himself and Middleton, and his juxtaposition of them both with Shakespeare, thus certainly seems to fit Aebischer's model of the "contemporary Jacobean" more closely than do the films of Figgis and Thompson. In "Stage Fright," however, Cox carefully mitigates Shakespeare's cowardice, a feature present in none of Cox's other public constructions of his authorship.

Perhaps the reason that Cox does not tell the film's origin story in "Stage Fright," is that his purpose here is not to highlight his own genius, but to attack Hollywood and its
monolithic absorption of the film industry. He begins by alluding to the recent spate of big-budget Shakespeare adaptations:

These days it seems possible to get almost anything made into a movie if it was written by a bloke called Shakespeare. Even his weaker works—

*Titus Andronicus,* for example— get made into $20 [million] features. In the space of five years, we've seen Mel Gibson, Kenneth Branagh and Ethan Hawke play Hamlet. How many more Danes do we need?"

Cox, however, soon softens his usual critique of Shakespeare: "Don't get me wrong: I've nothing against the Bard. But why are Big Bill's plays a shoo-in with studios and foreign sales agents, while those of his playwriting successors—Middleton, Webster, Jonson and Tourneur—remain apparently ignored?" Cox's kinder, gentler attitude toward Shakespeare sets up what may be his least vitriolic comparison of the two playwrights.

After making his opening points, Cox offers up and then rejects the three most obvious reasons why more Jacobean plays have not been adapted on film. There is, he says, an "audience" for non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama adaptations: "*Revenger's* and other Jacobean tragedies are constantly on our exam syllabi, which means that there is a solid student audience for such films, both in the cinema and on VHS and DVD." He also dismisses the difficulties of verse and points out that the Jacobeans do not have the market cornered on explicit themes: "Nor can we blame the 'difficult' language— it is closer, after all, to our own than Shakespeare's was. And it can't be the outdated themes, either: these plays are mostly about sex and violence, which are, to put it mildly, popular and contemporary subjects." Cox concludes the paragraph by setting up his implicit comparison of Hollywood filmmaking to the corrupt Elizabethan monarchy: "I suspect it
is that old devil politics that frightens studio-financed producers, and keeps this great unlooted treasure-house of drama off our screens." The essay, however, never explicitly states exactly what "politics" frighten the studios away.

Cox begins the next paragraph by assuming the mantle of historical authority, underscored by beginning the next section with the phrase, "Permit me to explain."

Ironically, his account of Renaissance history contains a falsehood that Cox reiterates in multiple sources.38 Gretchen Minton notes: "Cox's embracing of Middleton includes its own kind of historical misunderstanding—he repeatedly refers to Middleton as a Jacobean playwright and to Shakespeare as an Elizabethan playwright" (146 n 18).

Shakespeare, of course, wrote during the last decade or so of Elizabeth's reign and probably retired from writing about a decade into the reign of James I. Cox draws a sharp distinction between the two periods, though. He sees the time of the Tudors, whom he describes as a "horrific bunch," as a "hideously reactionary time" during which Shakespeare not only tried to stay out of trouble, but also "worked as a propagandist for the Tudors." When James came to the throne, though, "Cox imagines the new king bringing in his train a 'loosening of . . . power' and a new theatrical freedom: this was a moment at which playwrights were able to challenge older systems of hierarchy, authority, and institutional allegiance" (Wray 544). Cox is wrong about the history, but his binaries remain intact.

In the next section, however, comes the point at which Cox seems to see himself more in Shakespeare than Middleton. Cox rarely defends Shakespeare, yet here justifies

38. One can only imagine Ben Jonson's cringe of horror at hearing himself described along with Middleton as one of "Shakespeare's students" ("Stage Fright").
the behavior of an author who, like himself, compromised his artistry by accepting
government money. Cox only sought government funding for *Revengers Tragedy*
because his private financing unraveled at the last minute: "[...] two weeks into
preproduction and the finance completely fell out. We had an office full of people, were
making offers to cast, the production designer and the art director were flying in from
Mexico... . It was a disastrous moment. But the film ended up the better for it"
(*Revengers Tragedy* production site). Luckily for Cox, the UK Film Council had just
been set up to oversee National Lottery funding for British film production. The Film
Council came through with £500,000, and *Revengers Tragedy* became one of the four39
films to benefit from the New Cinema Fund, designed "to back experimental filmmakers
and emerging talent" (Kemp). Cox's situation resonates with his depiction of
Shakespeare's, particularly the way he describes money flowing from a governmental
"propaganda fund" to Shakespeare's patron, which then trickled down to Shakespeare.
Because "[t]heatre people didn't make much money then—or now," Cox writes, "it is
reasonable to assume that a young actor-writer called Shakespeare was one of the
beneficiaries of that fund. Such a relationship would explain the mystery surrounding De
Vere, which has led certain eccentrics to claim him as the author of Big Bill's plays." The
structures of patronage are complex; if a naive Shakespeare benefited from those
structures, one cannot find too much fault with him—and by extension, Cox.

Cox next sets up another excuse for Shakespeare, then immediately undermines it.
He begins by emphasizing that the Renaissance was a dangerous time for playwrights:

39. The others were *This Is Not a Love Song* (Bille Eltringham), *Bloody Sunday*
(Paul Greengrass), and *Ape* (Rory Bresnihan) (Kemp).
Even if Shakespeare wasn't on the Tudor payroll, he had another very real reason to toe the party line: the fate of his immediate predecessors. In 1593, Marlowe was stabbed by government agents in a bar fight, and Kyd was arrested on trumped-up charges and tortured. Marlowe stood accused of atheism; Kyd's crime was basically being Marlowe's pal. In 1594, Shakespeare wrote *Richard III*, a play falsely depicting the Tudors' defeated adversary as a child-murdering hunchback. As the broken Kyd died of his injuries, Shakespeare's star rose.

Thus, at the same time that Cox frames Shakespeare's negotiations with power as understandable and event prudent, he indicts Shakespeare for becoming successful. Cox portrays Shakespeare as a less courageous person than his fellows, one who not only shied away from danger but also reaped the rewards of his cowardice. To make matters worse, Cox says, Shakespeare made submission to authority a central feature of his art. Cox cites *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth* as examples of Shakespeare's writerly cowardice: "In the years that followed, Bill developed his number-one theme: that there was no crime greater than regicide, the killing of a king (unless the king was Richard III, of course)." Middleton, though, was a rebel, his *Vindici* a hero who could almost single-handedly topple the establishment: "One man and his brother (Carlo/Hippolito, played in our film by Drew Schofield), armed only with knives and poison, bring down a corrupt political dynasty." While Cox is ready to excuse Shakespeare's work within a corrupt system, then, the real problem is that Shakespeare profited from his work rather than trying to undermine the establishment like Middleton. Essentially, Cox seems to be working through his anxieties about accepting patronage. Cox will retain his integrity. As
long as Cox stays true to his radical roots and does not sell out to the mainstream, he will not become a Shakespeare, but a Middleton instead.

In the next paragraph, Cox builds toward his theme by quoting what he sees as the play's emblematic line, Vindici's "Great men were gods, if beggars couldn't kill 'em!" (2.2.97).\(^{40}\) Institutions are not invulnerable; they can be overturned, just as a rich man might easily be killed at the hands of a beggar. For Cox, Middleton's criticism of social hierarchy "was not a message we ever heard from Shakespeare, who, increasingly fretful about the fate of kings, retreated into the ruminations of King Lear and a litigious retirement." Finally, Cox turns from his Renaissance history lesson to the present-day mainstream film industry: "Nor is it the message we hear nowadays from Hollywood—or from the British financiers who seek to ape Los Angeles' increasingly reactionary, triumphalist and imperious fodder." Significantly, though, Cox stops short of unpacking the "politics" that he earlier used to link Hollywood with Elizabethan government.

The essay's structure implies that Hollywood, like the Elizabethan state, is a big institution with no interest in shaking things up or sticking up for the little guy (i.e., the Jacobean playwrights and Cox). Hollywood, also like the Elizabethan government, dislikes radical (Jacobean) artists. Consequently, Hollywood does not adapt more Jacobean plays for two reasons. First, they do not come with Shakespeare's conservative culture prestige. Second, and somewhat less logically, Jacobean were the rebels of their day and their day, and Hollywood does not like rebels. If an artist does not work within the "system," then the system will overcome the artist. At least Cox, unlike Marlowe and Kyd, will very likely escape that system with his life. In making the transition from

\(^{40}\) The Bevington edition to which these line numbers refer uses "could not" rather than the contraction.
Renaissance history to the present-day film industry, however, the usually-confident Cox fails to offer a forceful, explicit indictment of mainstream film. When writing "Stage Fright" Cox had already clashed with his government patrons but had not begun to generate scathing attacks upon them. The essay captures a moment when Cox, who usually seems to filter his opinions very little, appears frustrated by the film industry but still too worried about his Shakespeare-like complicity in its game to clearly articulate his critique.

In a later interview, Cox contends that Film Council funding for *Revengers Tragedy* was largely a lucky accident of timing. In the beginning, the Council had not yet developed strict rules regarding which features received funds: "[...] as the process went on, they developed these very retrograde policies that tended to favor big producers over small ones, tended to favor London over anywhere else, and tended to favor Los Angeles most of all (Soul Smithy). By 2003, Cox had become a vocal critic of the Film Council's policies, particularly the pro-Hollywood sentiments espoused by its head, Alan Parker. While "giving the keynote speech at the Cambridge film festival's inaugural Independent Film Parliament," Cox "called for his his fellow film-maker Alan Parker to be 'decapitated'" (Macnab). Cox compared the Cambridge parliament to the parliament that King Charles shut down, an act which ultimately resulted in the king's decapitation.

Not only did Cox call for Parker's head, he recommended Parker's replacement: the popular children's glove puppet called "Sooty." As Cox says, Sooty is "not a film-maker, so he has a lot in common with the Council's 200-strong army" (Macnab). At this same meeting, Jarman was invoked via a memorandum written by Tilda Swinton, Jarman's longtime friend and collaborator. Swinton's memo compared "cultural film in the UK" to
"a dead language no longer in current use, at least not supported by the government"
(Macnab). Macnab writes that Swinton's "implication is clear. Talents like Derek Jarman
[…] Greenaway or Bill Douglas would struggle to launch their careers in today's
climate."

**Thompson**

*Middleton's Changeling* has some noteworthy features, but by far the most
interesting thing about the film is the story of its production, or more specifically, the
romantic story of an independent movie getting made against all odds that its director and
star have constructed. In terms of his own authorship, Thompson has almost nothing to
say about the Renaissance; his construction of himself as a daring, independent auteur
roots itself solely in the film world. This section analyzes the production story for
*Middleton's Changeling* as presented on Thompson's website, aiming to accomplish two
goals. First, it attempts to demonstrate how Thompson and his wife Amanda (Ray-King)
Thompson, who created the website and starred in the film, construct Thompson's
authorship through industry clichés and references to famous subjects from film history.
Second, it reveals the inconsistencies in Thompson's story that critics have thus far
accepted without question.

While portions of the production story boggle the mind, even its basic outline
seems like the stuff of classical Hollywood cinema. From initial screen tests to finished
product, Thompson claims that it took eight years to make *Middleton's Changeling*
"The Making of The Changeling"). Thompson had trouble raising money for the project from its conception in 1990. Even though no major producers were interested, Thompson began shooting in Alicante, Spain—the actual setting of Middleton's play—in 1994, finishing up the shoot at Pinewood Studios in England the same year ("Promo Showreel"). In 1995, the film was screened at the Glastonbury Music Festival and the Empire Theatre in Leicester Square, featuring Jimi Hendrix's music on the soundtrack (Ronson). Then, as a result of the legal battle between the Hendrix family and an old Hendrix friend who had become involved in the estate's administration (Alan Douglas), Thompson was not allowed to use any of the late star's music on the soundtrack (Jury). Finally, the film was released with a soundtrack written especially for it in 1998 (McMullan).

Several factors suggest that the information from Thompson's website should be treated with care. First, the website is "designed, constructed and managed by Amanda Thompson," née Amanda Ray-King. While the close relationship between the "auteur" and website creator strengthens the site's credibility as a text that constructs Thompson's authorship, that relationship means that we must examine the information it presents with a particularly critical eye. Second, it does not appear that the website has been updated for several years. Thompson's "career history" ends in 2000, for example ("Filmography"). Furthermore, the page devoted to Liberator, a biopic about Simon Bolivar classified as being in pre-production, specifies that the film is "[s]cheduled for late 2005 in Latin America, London, Paris and Rome" (Wood). The page indicates that "announcements […] are expected this year during the Cannes Film Festival," and that

41. Unless otherwise noted, all material from Thompson's website comes from "The Making of The Changeling" page.
"the multi-national co-production has the industry buzzing with speculation regarding the star-studded international cast. The producers at Liberator Films in London have been careful to keep progress regarding cast strictly to key agents and personnel" (Wood).

Finally, there is at least one serious inconsistency on the site. It reports that Middleton's Changeling "was screened to four thousand people at two o'clock in the morning on Sunday 25th June 1996" at the Glastonbury Music Festival ("The Making of The Changeling"). The timing was particularly poignant for Thompson because the film's release coincided with the twenty-fifth anniversary of Jimi Hendrix's death. That anniversary, however, occurred in 1995, not 1996. A newspaper article describing the film's premiere confirms that Middleton's Changeling was, in fact, screened at the festival in 1995 (Ronson). Thompson's own website thus incorrectly lists the film's premiere date.

Thompson's web biography positions him as an auteur who has navigated the commercial portions of the entertainment industry as a means to an end. It begins by establishing his avant-garde roots before justifying his start in television as a means of gaining film experience: "After producing several experimental films (Last Orders, Cows, Samaritans etc.) during his years at art college, Marcus Thompson joined Granada Television as an assistant film editor in order to learn the craft of professional film production" ("Showreel.") After getting his start with Granada in the late seventies, he also worked as a film editor with BBC TV, London Weekend TV, and Thames TV. While the aforementioned statement casts his early work as a sort of apprenticeship, the next sentence implies that Thompson simply paid his dues in television while gathering commercial portions of the entertainment industry as a means to an end. It begins by establishing his avant-garde roots before justifying his start in television as a means of gaining film experience: "After producing several experimental films (Last Orders, Cows, Samaritans etc.) during his years at art college, Marcus Thompson joined Granada Television as an assistant film editor in order to learn the craft of professional film production" ("Showreel.") After getting his start with Granada in the late seventies, he also worked as a film editor with BBC TV, London Weekend TV, and Thames TV. While the aforementioned statement casts his early work as a sort of apprenticeship, the next sentence implies that Thompson simply paid his dues in television while gathering

42. During this period Thompson produced and directed the feature film Malevolence, a noir-inspired psychological thriller. He also "created, wrote and directed" Neat and Tidy: Adventures Beyond Belief, a television series and subsequent made-for-
the funds for his more creative film work: "It was not until the early eighties that he was able to find the resources to put his hard learned experiences into practice, with the production of Edward, the 35mm cinema short about the lifestyle and work of artist Edward Bell, which he wrote, directed and produced" ("Showreel"). Edward, which was included in the Los Angeles International Film Festival, led to jobs directing "corporate film productions" for "Philip Morris, Marie Claire, Harrods, etc." ("Filmography"). In the early nineties Thompson directed commercials for "Honda Motorcycles and several cosmetics products" as well as music videos; the most famous band with which he worked was probably Jesus Jones ("Filmography"). Again, these corporate jobs enabled him to pursue creative work: "Freed from the cutting rooms, Thompson was now able to pursue his directorial career on a full time basis" ("Promo Showreel").

His fortunes must have taken a quick downturn, for "by November 1993 Thompson was desperate. Having turned down lucrative offers to produce and direct more music videos in order to pursue his dream, Marcus was now struggling to pay the rent." Inexplicably, however, 1993 was also the year that "Thompson decided the time had come to concentrate on his real ambition; to write and direct his own feature films, and as a result, principle [sic] photography commenced on Middleton's Changeling on May 30th 1994 in Alicante, Spain" ("Promo Showreel"). A filmmaker who can begin shooting while fending off eviction is a passionate, daring person, indeed.

The process by which Thompson cast the film also sounds like the stuff of Hollywood myth and legend. The timeline is a bit blurry, but both the parts of Beatrice-Joanna and Alsemero are presented as being cast in the nick of time:

Hollywood movie about the wild exploits of Nick Neat (Skyler Cole) and Tena Tidy (Jill Whitlow) ("Filmography").
It wasn't until two days prior to shooting that Thompson, after endless searching, stumbled across the young actress, Amanda Ray-King. Technicians working with her on Ken Russell's *Alice in Russialand* knew of Marcus' predicament and suggested he audition her. She was successfully screen-tested in costume and went straight from Russell's set onto *The Changeling*'s makeshift scaffolding stage built on the back lot at Pinewood studios.

Thompson thus inherits a talented ingénue from no less a director than Ken Russell. For Alsemoro, however, the story invokes not one, but two clichés. Thompson discovers Colm O'Maonlai both across a crowded room and in a perfectly ordinary place:

Four days prior to setting off for Spain to commence principle [sic] photography the actor to play Alsemoro failed to make a definite commitment, leaving the production in the lurch. Thompson and Ray-King were having dinner in a pizza restaurant in Notting Hill Gate when their gaze fell on a guy at a table across the room. On the way out Marcus introduced himself to Colm O'Maonlai, who by chance turned out to be an actor. They met up a couple of days later, and O'Maonlai did a test reading with Ray-King on the street, Thompson offered him the part and two weeks later he was in front of the cameras in Alicante.

The methods by which Thompson found these two actors actually makes him sound lucky. The completely unverifiable Fernando Rey debacle does, however, restore Thompson's status as a thwarted artist: "Marcus had always wanted Fernando Rey (Bunuel's *Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, *The French Connection*, etc.) to head the
cast, but as he was Spain's most respected actor it was going to be difficult with no money yet committed" ("The Making of The Changeling"). Thompson therefore kept soliciting investors: "He met several Spanish agents and producers including a young aristocrat called Maria Figueroa, who eventually became one of the executive producers, raising desperately needed cash" After finally raising what he considered to be a suitable amount of money, Thompson "visited Fernando Rey's agent, explained his financial position and pleaded with him to ask the actor to star in the film." According to the website, Rey committed to the film: "Having read Marcus' adaptation Fernando Rey agreed to play the part of Vermandero, father to Beatrice, providing it was shot during June and July. Thompson hurried back to London to start organising the rest of the cast and crew." A few weeks later, however, Rey died, and "Marcus sat in a bar, watching the T.V. as Fernando's coffin was lowered into the ground, taking, he felt, the movie with him." While it is certainly possible that Rey actually did commit to Middleton's Changeling, confirming that fact would be a daunting proposition for any scholar. More important for this chapter's purposes, within the "production story" Rey links Thompson to the indisputably legitimate auteur Buñuel. Finally, finishing the final despite the death of its only real "star" actor only underscores Thompson's determination to achieve his dream.

As we can see from the depiction of Rey's casting, Middleton's Changeling suffered financial troubles at every stage of its creation. Thompson's fund-raising efforts portray him as a man who shall not rest until he achieves the means to fulfill his dream: "He went to meetings across Europe with executives who would wish him a good flight to the next capital city unaware that the journey would involve days of rattling around in
a beaten up camper van and sleeping on the roadside." The website depicts financial set-
backs as a series of heroic obstacles to be overcome. Matters became so serious that
Amanda Ray-King's parents even intervened. They not only designed the sets but also
contributed money that they had saved to help their daughter buy a flat; hence, their
producer credits (Ronson). The story does, however, grow even stranger: "Two weeks
into the shoot Peter Greer, a friend of the director of photography came to visit the unit in
Alicante. He realised that the production was in deep trouble financially and a few days
later a man arrived at Alicante airport with some cash to tide the production over until
further finance was in place" (emphasis added). Greer's intervention provided crucial
assistance, but it was not enough. The cast endured Survivor-like conditions: "The cheap
plane tickets the production had been forced to buy meant that people could only go
home on the dates booked. This meant that they had to keep going at any cost, or be
stranded. Half way through they ran out of film stock and food" (emphasis added). A few
weeks later, the aforementioned Maria Figueroa "saved the day by raising further funds
from businessmen she knew in Madrid. The crew had food, petrol and roofs over their
heads and another 30,000 ft of stock was shipped over to Spain. After many trials and
tribulations the location shoot in Alicante finally wrapped on June 24th 1994."

Another significant production hurdle remained. After wrapping in Spain,"[t]he
production had completely run out of money once again" and had no funding left for the
interior scenes that Thompson had planned to shoot upon returning to England:

Thompson went to talk to Pinewood and pleaded with them to allow him
to build his sets on the back lot once again, for a small fee. The production
were allotted derelict car park 4 which meant working day and night for
the next month, as the location was scheduled for resurfacing, so all sets would have to be struck in time.

Even with Pinewood's help, the film yet again ran low on money: "Peter Greer, by now the co-executive producer, stepped in and helped raise the final finance for the rest of the shoot." While Thompson at this point might have needed to film some portions of the main plot, he made a production decision that completely defies logic. He began the process of casting actors for the madhouse subplot, which is often cut in stage productions. Ultimately, however, the production wrapped at daybreak on Thompson's last day at Pinewood, with actor Billy Connolly addressing Thompson: "it was great to be part of your dream."

In charting a quest so long to make *Middleton's Changeling* that its creators can no longer remember when the film premiered, Thompson's website mentions the authors of the *The Changeling* only once. Oddly, it identifies both authors of the play rather than just the one that Thompson invokes in his film's title: "On reading Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's tragic drama it became former film editor Marcus Thompson's dream to bring it to the big screen." From that point on, the website focuses on Thompson's passion and persistence in the face of remarkable odds. The stories of mysterious men arriving with suitcases full of money, film stock and food running out, and missing out on Fernando Rey by just a few short weeks might all be exaggerations, if not outright fabrications. One thing, however, remains true: Thompson's dogged pursuit of his dreams makes an excellent story.

**Figgis**
Mike Figgis's *Hotel* of course, serves as the case study in which Aebsicher models her theory of the contemporary Jacobean film. In her editor's preface to the Jarman issue of *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Aebsicher mentions what might be the only instance in which Mike Figgis links himself or *Hotel* to Shakespeare, two lines of text in Figgis's companion book to *Timecode* and *Hotel*:

Mike Figgis, when looking for a play-within-the-film around which to structure his experimental *Hotel*, first thought of using a play "Written specially for HOTEL in the style of Shakespeare" (71). As the project evolved, he instead chose to concentrate on "the weirdest bloodiest, sexiest scenes" of "John Webster's Jacobean tragedy 'The Duchess of Malfi'" and to include in his film material that poked fun at the Shakespeare industry as represented by *Shakespeare in Love* (158, 205; see Aebsicher "Preposterous" 287-89). ("Early Modern" 497)

In Aebsicher's essay, it might seem as though Figgis made a conscious shift from Shakespeare to Webster. Instead, the switch is presented as one of many alterations that took place as the project moved from a vague outline to a film that was largely improvised by Figgis's actors. The logic behind shifting from a Shakespeare-style play to an actual play by Webster is never explained. Figgis later simply notes: "Heathcote Williams adapted the 'Duchess of Malfi' for me—the weirdest, bloodiest, sexiest scenes in John Websters [sic] extrordinary [sic] play. We worked on each scene, moving text around, taking liberties—until we arrived at a short 'Fast Food MacMalfi'" (*In the Dark* 158). Rather than an act of purposeful rebellion against Shakespeare, the decision to use Webster's *Duchess* might have been merely a gesture toward Williams's interests.
While Aebischer claims that the film responds to heritage film and Shakespeare-as-heritage, Figgis does not seem particularly concerned with connecting himself to Shakespeare, Webster, or even the Renaissance. He does, however, consistently represents himself as the inheritor of European art cinema's legacy of stylistic innovation made possible by developments in filmmaking technology. Although *Timecode* in particular invites comparisons between Figgis and Andy Warhol (Verevis 168), Figgis tends to associate himself with the very group who "created" the auteur: critics and filmmakers of the French New Wave. Aided by the development of lightweight, relatively affordable cameras, young filmmakers such as Francois Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard rebelled stylistically and narratively against the "cinema of quality" tradition dominating French cinema of the 1950s. These filmmakers took movies out of the studio and onto the streets of Paris, eschewing "high art" literary adaptation, conservative cinematic conventions, and traditional methods of making films. Rather than take the time and expense to lay tracks for mobile shots, for example, "Godard and cinematographer Raoul Coutard used a mail cart and a wheelchair for dollies in *Breathless*; review after review marveled at such revolutionary simplicity. Of course, by the mid-1960s almost every film school in the world adapted the practice" (Neupert 40-1).

Much like Godard, Figgis sought a creative way to capture smooth traveling shots when he began filming with wobble-prone, hand-held digital cameras. Figgis's solution was slightly more complicated than a wheelchair; he and a design student developed the steering wheel-like device pictured below (Figure 4.1) that not only minimized wobble but also could hold lights and microphones. Essentially, the "Fig Rig" turns a camera
operator into a one-person film crew. From at least 2009-2010, Figgis's MySpace page invited film-savvy viewers to equate his innovations with Godard's. Prominently displayed near Figgis's profile picture was the exclamation "all you need is a girl and a gun...and a fig rig!" The first half of the sentiment is Godard's, who famously said that "all you need is a girl and a gun" to make a movie. By appending "and a fig rig" to Godard's statement, Figgis emphasizes that he, too, has found innovative ways to use filmmaking technology, and that he advocates movie-making by independents rather than by studios with large budgets and equally large financial agendas.

![Mike Figgis and his "Fig Rig"](image)

Fig. 4.1. Mike Figgis and his "Fig Rig"

Figgis often lists Godard as one of his major influences, and had implied a connection between them as early as 2001. In an article Figgis wrote in 2001 to celebrate the release of Godard's *Eloge de l'Amour*, Figgis states:
I've never written anything about Godard before. I'm always quoting him in interviews about film, though. I've been so severely influenced by what he has said about cinema that I can say without hesitation that for me he is one of the giants of our culture, and every time he makes a film or talks about film I feel a sense of gratitude and relief. ("I Came Out of the Cinema High as a Kite")

He also notes that Godard had been "quietly working in video years before it became acceptable in the mainstream, " remarks on the French auteur's use of hand-held video cameras, and explains that "Godard has also been involved in the design and development of small lightweight cameras with the French company Aaton" ("I Came Out of the Cinema High as a Kite"). Although Figgis does not mention his own recent experiments with video or his partnership with camera equipment company Manfrotto to manufacture the Fig Rig, it seems clear that Figgis is celebrating traits that he and Godard have in common.

Although he has made mainstream films, Figgis's identity as a filmmaker is inextricably linked with the art and experimental film traditions for which Godard serves as his public referent. The next chapter shows how digital video has forged those links, explaining how it has functioning in both Figgis's films and the wider film industry in recent years. By analyzing the narrative and stylistic composition of Hotel, Chapter Five shall show that in comparison to his concern with form, this filmmaker does not "give a fig" about responding to Shakespeare.
CHAPTER 5

Art and Experiment in Mike Figgis's Hotel

In Hotel (2001), Mike Figgis continued the experiments with digital video and split-screen storytelling that he had begun in Timecode during the previous year. As in Timecode, digital video in Hotel serves as both an aesthetic and ideological marker of difference between the film and classical Hollywood narrative. After discussing the role of digital video within mainstream and independent cinema during the last decade or so, this chapter shows how digital technology connects Hotel to long-standing concerns of art and experimental cinema.

Since the two other scholars who have written about this film offer analyses of Hotel's "contemporary Jacobean" engagements with The Duchess of Malfi, this chapter shall take a different and unconventional approach given the dissertation's topic. Rather than interpreting Hotel's arresting narrative and visual style as a response to the heritage film cycle and Shakespeare-as-heritage, Chapter Five demonstrates that Figgis's concern with art cinema as a mode of film practice predates Hotel, his only adaptation of a Renaissance play. Furthermore, his experimental interest in the materials of cinema extends well beyond the impulse to differentiate his film from Shakespeare in Love or A Room with a View. Criticizing the Shakespeare industry is no doubt an important part of Hotel's project, but here Shakespeare and heritage represent classical Hollywood at large. To illustrate the functions of Hotel's non-mainstream forms, this chapter analyzes the
film's narrative structure and employment of various frame sizes as its presiding organizational principle.

**Digital Video**

Mike Figgis had some mainstream success in the mid-nineties, first with *Internal Affairs* (1990) and then *Leaving Las Vegas* (1995), which earned him two Academy Award nominations for Best Director and Best Adapted Screenplay. When Figgis found himself growing disillusioned with Hollywood as the nineties waned, he looked to digital filmmaking technology as an alternative to studio production. Digital video (DV) lacked the image quality of standard thirty-five millimeter filmstock, but it had some distinct advantages over the "standard" film gauge. DV's cost efficiency has enabled many independent filmmakers, who by definition do not have the financial support of a large studio, to create their movies in the first place. Instead of having thirty-five millimeter film developed and then scanned onto hard disc for editing—the process of creating a digital *intermediate*, which became standard in the nineties—images are available for viewing and editing from the moment that they are captured. Using DV thus avoids the expense of developing and scanning film. DV also saves filmmakers valuable time and money because they can see immediately if a scene needs re-shooting rather than wasting production time while waiting for a print ("dailies" or "rushes") to be

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43. Screen captures in this chapter retain the outer border of the computer screen in order to provide a sense of perspective with regard to the frames' different sizes.

44. While Figgis did not win either of these awards, Nicolas Cage won the Oscar for Best Actor in a Leading Role for his performance in *Leaving Las Vegas*. 
produced. With the widespread availability of affordable digital video cameras, Figgis states:

Now there is no reason to prevent anybody from making a film. The technology exists, the equipment is much cheaper than it was, the post-production facilities are on a laptop computer, the entire equipment to make a film can go in a couple of cases and be carried as hand luggage on a plane. There is nothing to stop people making films. (qtd. in Millward)

Although Figgis overstates the democratizing power of DV, its development did help more independent films get made, particularly in countries with smaller national cinemas. For independent filmmakers, shooting on video is sometimes the only feasible way to make a movie. Hollywood feature films, however, have historically opted for the 35 millimeter's higher image quality. 45

A transition from shooting on tangible rolls of film stock to the mysterious ones and zeros that make up images on hard disc might seem like the natural evolution of technology to the average theatergoer. In cinematographic terms, however, "digital" does not necessarily mean "better." David Bordwell's blog provides a succinct explanation of "digital"'s evolution, as both a technology and a term:

Not so long ago, the difference was pitched as film versus video. [...] Then came high-definition video, which was still video but looking somewhat better (though not like film). But somehow, as if by magic, very-high-definition video, with some ability to mimic photochemical imagery, became digital cinema, or simply digital. (emphasis in original)

45. The films of George Lucas, Robert Rodriguez, and Michael Mann provide some notable exceptions to this general rule in the early years of DV's adoption.
Bordwell explains that even in 2012, the best digital images capture less information than traditional thirty-five millimeter film stock:

Film has a greater color range than digital: billions of color shades rather than millions. Resolution is also different, although there's a lot of disagreement about how different. A 35mm color negative film is said to approximate about 7000 lines of resolution, but by the time a color print is made, the display yields about 5000 lines—still a bit ahead of 4K digital. Furthermore, those statistics cannot account for phenomena that science cannot yet explain about the ways in which our eyes perceive film images. Bordwell cites "the characteristic film shimmer, the sense that even static objects have a little bit of life to them. […]. Watch fluffy clouds or a distant forest in a digital display, and you'll see them hang there, dead as a postcard vista. In a film, clouds and trees pulsate and shift a little" ("Pandora's ...files"). Thus, while digital image quality has improved tremendously since *Hotel* was shot in 2000, even today thirty-five millimeter should not be dismissed as "outdated technology" as in Aebischer's essay ("Contemporary Jacobean" 285).

Furthermore, until very recently most films were transferred back to thirty-five millimeter film for exhibition in theaters. Although digital production has many advantages for independent filmmakers, most exhibitors spent the last ten years resisting digital conversion. Throughout the millenium's first decade, American movie theaters had little incentive to spend the $75,000-$120,000 that conversion from standard thirty-five millimeter projectors to digital projectors required. Bordwell explains that "[i]n December 2000," for example, "the world had 30 commercial digital cinema screens. In 2005 it had 848" ("Pandora's...multiplex"). It was not until 2010 when, "[w]ith its record
$2.7 billion worldwide box office, *Avatar* convinced exhibitors that digital and 3D could be huge moneymakers"("Pandora's...multiplex"). Thus the world's total number of digital screens had risen by the end of 2010 to "36,103—about thirty percent of the total 123,067 screens. In North America, the jump was dramatic, from about 330 d-screens [digital screens] at the end of 2005 to over 16,000 at the end of 2010" ("Pandora's...multiplex"). To put these statistics into perspective: "No technological development since 1930 has demanded such a top-to-bottom overhaul of theatres. Assuming a modest $75,000 cost for upgrading a single auditorium, the digital conversion of US screens has cost $1.5 billion" ("Pandora's...multiplex"). Digital exhibition, then, is an altogether different matter than digital production.

Given 35 millimeter's superior image quality, as well its importance in both production and distribution in the global film industry, Figgis's use of DV in *Timecode* and *Hotel* twelve years ago becomes much more than a visually provocative method of serving an "anti-Shakespearean: narrative. Rather, its use of DV becomes the material and ideological marker of difference between *Hotel* and classical Hollywood style, an assertion that DV is not inferior to the standard thirty-five millimeter film stock on which most Hollywood films have been made throughout cinema's history. DV becomes one more of the "inferior" film gauges, like sixteen millimeter and Super Eight, that gave independent and art filmmakers the practical means with which to create films.

*Hotel's Narrative*

*Hotel's* story is, to say the least, complex. Its over-arching structure contains the dual plot-line characteristic of classical narrative: a group of people arrives in Venice to
adapt *The Duchess of Malfi* into a Dogma film tentatively entitled *Malfi*, and they stay at a hotel where the staff uses its guests for sexual and culinary pleasure. Each of these plot-lines, however, has distinct art cinema features. Causality still exists, but cause-effect connections are much looser than in classical narrative. Furthermore, the narrative is far from classically efficient, spinning off several threads that connect the plot-lines and enhance themes but do not drive action forward.

Production on *Malfi* has barely begun when the mysterious Assassin (Andrea di Stefano), assisted by the hotel staff, shoots director Trent Stoken (Rhys Ifans) as the cast rehearses a scene. When his colleagues notice Trent lying upon the floor, they interpret his behavior as a creative tantrum and decide to "give him some space." They allow him to lie mute, motionless, and staring at the ceiling, speaking to him occasionally about their own problems or giving him ideas about the film. After the shooting, Trent's best friend Jonathan Danderfine (David Schwimmer), exchanges a significant look with the Assassin, revealing the source of the hit. The film never explicitly states Jonathan's motivation for arranging the shooting. Although Jonathan's romantic feelings toward Trent's girlfriend (who plays the Duchess of Malfi) are strongly implied, as is his weariness with Trent's volatility, Jonathan exhibits no burning desire to steal his best friend's film or lover.

Trent survives the shooting but enters an "attentive coma" state, which halts production for two weeks. Then the Flamenco Manager (Burt Reynolds) arrives. After a troupe member performs, the Flamenco Manager visits Trent's hospital bed and urges someone else to take charge of the film (and honor Trent's contract with the flamenco company, although he never elaborates upon or resolves that issue). Jonathan thus
becomes the new director. Still in an attentive coma, Trent might or might not astrally project himself in order to terrorize Jonathan. Trent revives when the Maid (Valentina Cervi) removes strategic pieces of her clothing and joins him in his hospital bed, describing another sexual encounter in a whisper all the while. Trent arises from his attentive coma. Now recovered, Trent confronts Jonathan not with words but with the growling, sniffing, and howling of one dog asserting its dominance over another, an echo of the lycanthropia afflicting Ferdinand at the end of Webster's version. Trent thus re-establishes his control over the group. In the next scene Jonathan, shunned, enters the cannibals' lair. That he commits suicide-by-cannibal seems likely, but ultimately his fate remains ambiguous.

Charlee Boux (Salma Hayek), the entertainment "journalist," arrives at the beginning of the film with her producer AJ (Danny Sapani) in order to shoot an MTV-style documentary of Malfi's production. Charlee asks inane questions and generally makes herself ridiculous until she accidentally discovers butchered human body parts suspended from the lair's ceiling. The hotel staff discovers her intrusion and she disappears from the film. Kawika (Lucy Liu), a more "serious" journalist, arrives toward the end of the film and provides its closing interview with Trent. By describing Kawika's tattoo and precise details of her activities before bed the previous night, Trent proves that during his attentive coma state he has been able to leave his body and observe people in the hotel.

With its "making of" documentary, the Malfi production itself, Trent's attempted murder, and the loosely-connected but narratively-pivotal Flamenco Manger's intervention, Hotel's main plot-line contains much more action than would a classical,
streamlined plot. In addition to its other points of connection with the "hotel staff" plot-line, the film develops several interwoven spin-off threads culminating in an extended, thematically rich episode that does not advance the action of either plot-line.

Boris (George DiCenzo), the producer who has put up more than a million dollars for the film's production, also stays in the hotel with his wife Greta (Laura Morante), whom he verbally abuses. Boris also employs the prostitute Sophie (Stefania Rocca), to satisfy a fetish. In a scene cross-cut with the Malfi crew as they shoot the Duchess's opening conversation with her brothers, Sophie stands atop a conference table behind which Boris takes a phone call. She removes her top, then assumes a push-up position in order to dip her breasts into two goblets of milk that Boris then drinks. During her performance for Boris, the Assassin calls and arranges to meet her later that night in the hotel bar. He tells Sophie to wear a red dress so that he can recognize her. Their meeting goes awry, though. Boris has asked Greta to go downstairs on his behalf and meet business associate Steve Hawk (Christopher Fullford). Greta wears a red dress, so the Assassin assumes that she is Sophie. They go to Greta's room and have sex. Steve sees Sophie in the bar and finds Boris's wife to be very friendly. Likewise, they go upstairs and commence intimacies.

Still more narrative threads exist. At one point, the hotel staff abducts a guest (Elisabetta Cavallotti), dragging her to their basement lair. The abductee's protests elicit only minor concern from Steve Hawk, who is apparently the only person to notice a woman being dragged kicking and screaming through the halls. The Hotel Nurse (Chiara Mastroianni) seduces cast member Italian Actress (Valeria Golino), blindfolding her in a dark room where the hotel staff goes about their business of ironing, reading newspapers,
etc. The only "hotel staff" thread completely removed from the *Malfi* plot occurs at the very beginning of *Hotel*. Omar Jonnson (John Malkovich) checks in, then has a candlelight supper with the hotel staff. He does not seem bothered that he alone occupies the end of the table located behind the bars of a prison cell. Jonnson never reappears, but whether he becomes supper itself rather than a supper guest remains ambiguous.

Clearly, the sheer abundance, not to mention strangeness, of narrative threads in *Hotel* situate it against the classical filmmaking tradition's much neater constructions of story and plot. Although *Hotel* is very much an ensemble film, Trent is the closest it comes to having a protagonist. He could not be more unlike the goal-oriented classical Hollywood protagonist. He certainly begins with the goal of making a movie, but he spends most of the film unable or unwilling to move, only to be inexplicably revived by the sexual ministrations of a stranger. Aside from the filmed segments of *Malfi*, *Hotel*'s engagements with Webster appear as fragmented visual motifs throughout the narrative.

**Mainstream vs. Dogma**

While *Hotel* takes classical Hollywood narrative to task, art cinema does not escape unscathed. *Malfi* is, after all, supposed to be a Dogma film. In 1995, Danish independent filmmmakers Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterburg created an elaborate set of rules—the "Vow of Chastity"—designed to "purify" narrative cinema from its reliance upon Hollywood-inspired special editing and effects. Dogma's primary rules included

- location-shooting (no imported sets or props are allowed), direct sound

(produced at the time of filming and not dubbed over the images
afterwards), hand-held camera (always following the actors, rather than forcing the actors to move to where the camera is standing), colour film stock and available lighting (rather than special film lighting) and Academy 35 mm format. They also forbid optical work and filters, superficial action (that is, murders and weapons 'must not occur'), genre movies, 'temporal and geographical alienation' (films must be set in the here and now'), and state that 'the director must not be credited' (qtd. in Chaudhuri 153).

From Hotel's beginning until Trent's shooting waylays the production, Dogma is frequently mentioned. The Tour Guide (Julian Sands) discusses the Dogma Malfi as he and the staff dine with Jonnson: "Dogma means in this case unwatchable, unwatchable garbage...a completely senseless interpretation of The Duchess of Malfi, which I've talked to them about but they don't listen." When Charlee Boux arrives, she mentions that she'll be lit attractively for her documentary, whereas the actors will not because their project is Dogma film: "And we're very excited, so we're going to follow some of your Dogma rules. For example, no good lighting—on you actors, I'll have the good lighting on me...". As they shoot the first scene, Trent grows frustrated that no one else in the film pays close attention to Dogma rules. Before the scene starts, he tells the cast, "There's a lot of people out here, work with them, work through 'em, use these fucking pigeons ...." Later, frustrated that a pigeon landing on one actor has distracted the group, Trent yells, "Use the fucking pigeon, if a pigeon lands on your head, fucking use it! Stop that fucking laughing! If a pigeon shits in your mouth, carry on." When Jonathan halts a take because
a loud, distinctly un-Renaissance jack-hammering noise happens off-screen, Trent tells him to "make the hammering work because that's Dogma."

*Malfi* clearly violates Dogma rules, though, no matter how loosely one interprets them. Dogma is supposed to focus on the here and now; *Malfi* focuses on people in the here and now adapting an old play into a film. While *Malfi* is not a costume drama in the traditional, heritage sense, the actors are clearly wearing Renaissance-inspired costumes appropriate for their "punk" take on the play. Dogma forbids props, but *Malfi* uses them to tell its story. Murders and weapons are not supposed to happen in Dogma, but they are a vital part of the play being adapted. Finally, *Malfi* employs digital cinematography.

While the Vow of Chastity acknowledges that technology is coming ("Today a technological storm is raging, the result of which will be the ultimate democratization of the cinema"), the Dogma founders were also suspicious of it: "The rule regarding the Academy 35 mm format was originally intended as deterrent to shooting on video which, the founding members believed, was more susceptible to manipulation than film" (155). Ultimately, however, the rule "has been freely interpreted so that film-makers can utilise the cheaper video format for shooting as long as they transfer to Academy 35 mm for exhibition" (155). By 2000, shooting on DV had become almost standard for Dogma films. Thus Hotel keeps in constant tension *Malfi*'s ostensible Dogma project and the film that they actually make. In doing so, *Hotel* demonstrates that Dogma has compelling aspects, but it is not suited to all kinds of stories, particularly adaptations. Furthermore, even non-mainstream rules still stop the sort of free play with editing that works so compellingly at the levels of both narrative and style in the larger film of *Hotel*.
**The Frame / Quadrants / Narration**

In *Hotel*, different frame sizes and visual textures organize narration. The largest frame, the film's 1.85:1 aspect ratio, is used to signal the overall diegetic world of *Hotel*. The images below compare this large frame, with "washed out" color (Figure 5.1), to the smaller frame with more saturated color that denotes the *Malfi* adaptation (Figure 5.2).

![Figure 5.1. Aspect ratio for *Hotel*'s diegetic world (1.85:1)](image1.png)

![Figure 5.2. Smaller *Malfi* frame](image2.png)
In this example, the crew has been filming *Malfi*’s opening scene and cuts when the pigeon causes the actors to lose concentration. At other times transitions between frame sizes are less visible, but here the cut calls attention to the pattern being established, jolting the frame between the smaller *Malfi* version and that of the larger story world.

In addition to these two frame sizes, another smaller, square frame with an inset red border represents the night-vision surveillance camera that focuses on the hotel staff (Figure 5.3). This surveillance camera captures the Assassin's entrance into the hotel before he shoots Trent, as well as the Maid's nocturnal visits with Trent. Its more gray-based color and grainer texture set this frame apart from several other smoother, more blue-toned night-vision moments in the film that do not include the red border. The surveillance camera does, however, have a "twin." When Charlee stumbles upon the hotel staff's basement lair, her camera frame shows images of the same size and with the red border (Figure 5.4). Her shot is distinctly green-toned, though, which suggests that

![Figure 5.3. "Hotel staff" surveillance camera](image)
she is not the unindentified camera operator who follows first the Assassin and then the Maid. Charlee's night-vision camera enables her to see images that she otherwise could see in complete darkness: human limbs hanging suspended from the ceiling, a table full of grisly remains, and the hotel staff and Tour Guide standing before her. After this incident, she disappears, unacknowledged, from the rest of the film. Twinning the surveillance camera with that of the "documentarian" not only literalizes The Duchess of Malfi's themes of surveillance, but also suggests the questionable value of any "truth" the camera may provide. Being able to see what the dark conceals in front of her does Charlee little good.

In addition to the three single-frame sizes that organize narration, Hotel reworks Timecode's four-quadrant split-screen technique. Timecode's four interwoven storylines each run simultaneously in separate quadrants of the screen for all but the first and last few moments of the movie. Each plotline was shot in one unedited take of ninety-seven minutes. Furthermore, these takes were all simultaneous. Rather than shoot the entire film multiple times and then choose the best take for each quadrant, it was shot fifteen times.
and the best set of four takes became the movie. Initially, Figgis had planned to take a
similar approach with Hotel, shooting it "as a quad-split in real time, but in 10-minute
segments. Early on in the production, however, he abandoned that method in an effort to
become more flexible" (Bankston). Figgis explains his choice to change methods:

There were certain areas where I wasn't quite satisfied with one section of
the quad. At that point I made a decision that proved to be key: rather
than reshooting everything in a quadrant in real time, I would take the
timings from the other two or three that I thought worked, and I would
then reshoot the scene that I felt needed a bit more help as a single-image
take. I would personally work my way around the quadrant and reshoot
the scenes that I felt needed to be redone. (Bankston)

Hotel's quad screen episodes are thus carefully shot and edited, with more of an eye
toward aesthetics than the more sheerly experimental Timecode. In Hotel, the quad
screens appear at only eight points rather than lasting for the film's entire duration. In
addition to the same establishing shot of the hotel that appears on four separate occasions,
one quad screen appears in each of Hotel's three "acts." One other quad screen episode,
thematically appropriate but wholly tangential to the narrative, is also incorporated into
the film's second half.

The four-quadrant "establishing shot" creates a wholly new fictional hotel distinct
from the non-diegetic space where Hotel is shot. To create this unique diegetic space
from an actual, real-world location, a partial shot of the aptly-named Hungaria Palace
was placed in each of the frame's four quadrants, the shots skewed at various angles to
create an Escher-like building, seen below (Figure 5.5). Unlike in any other part of the
film, the quadrants overlap. This building is badly fragmented and distorted, but rather than highlight those characteristics through clearly separated frames as with the other quad screen episodes, this shot's overlapping quadrant boundaries here symbolically "cover over" the image's artificiality. Just as the shot's frame barely conceals the constructedness of this image, the hotel itself barely conceals its staff's cannibalism from guests like Jonnson, who are too self-involved to notice anything insidious. First appearing after Jonnson checks in, the hotel shot next re-establishes the production's return from shooting in St. Mark's Square, and it relocates the action from the street back to the hotel once Trent revives and reasserts his "alpha dog" status over Trent. Once, however, the shot appears on screen without a clear "establishing" function. After the scene in which Charlee discovers the lair and seems to be attacked by the Tour Guide, a brief scene commences in which Kawika quickly evaluates Charlee's documentary for AJ, Charlee's producer: "It's shit." The "hotel shot" then joins that scene to the Duchess visiting Trent's sickbed, telling him that she thinks Jonathan wants to sleep with her.
Because Trent's "hospital room" is in the hotel itself, the shot does not signal a clear change of location. It is almost as though this third "hotel" shot exists only to complicate its otherwise too-neat, too-classical establishing function elsewhere.

Aside from the composite "hotel shot," the first quad screen occurs after the Jonnson episode. It introduces several characters associated with the Malfi production: Boris and Greta in their room, and Jonathan with the actors who play Bosola, Ferdinand, the Cardinal, and the Duchess downstairs in the hotel lobby. Thematically, the episode emphasizes tension produced by sexual relationships. Boris acts impatiently and insults Greta; "Ferdinand" calmly reads his violent lines about burning the bodies of his sister and her lover and boiling their child into a broth; the Duchess complains to Jonathan about her impatience with Trent's erratic, irresponsible behavior and threatens to leave for London. The only two women who seem content are the smiling, alabaster statue in the hotel lobby and the Maid, who makes cappuccino and nibbles lettuce from the plate she delivers to the rehearsal space.

This quad screen's primary function, however, seems to be establishing and then immediately undercutting a pattern of simultaneous action within its four frames. Boris in the upper left quadrant calls for room service, then places a sandwich order with the maid after she answers the phone at bottom right. Their conversation implies that at least two quadrants are temporally continuous. As soon as he hangs up, though, the top two quadrants show Boris performing contradictory actions while seeming to occupy the same space (Figure 5.6, next page). In the top left quadrant, he continues straightening his suit in the mirror. At top right, he begins trimming his nose hair and telling Greta that her
increasing girth and somber behaviour have grown tiresome. Since Boris cannot be performing two different actions at once, the frames cannot both represent simultaneous, objective reality. One frame might represent Greta's subjectivity, the insults her imaginings of what Boris would really say if he had not simply stopped with urging her to "snap out of it." After the quad screen episode ends, though, Boris is shown telling Greta that he will put her "in a fucking mental hospital" if she tries to divorce him, as well as later apologizing for his behavior. Thus while temporal discontinuity could signal character subjectivity, it seems somewhat more likely that this moment shows authorial expressivity, distinguishing between Figgis's employment of quad screens in *Timecode* and *Hotel*. Every moment of *Timecode* appears continuously on screen; in *Hotel*, perhaps both scenes are objectively real with just a few moments between them elided through editing. While in *Timecode* temporal continuity unifies the four quadrants' action into a coherent story, temporal discontinuity in *Hotel*'s quadrants immediately undermines coherence. *Timecode*'s attempts to access "truth" about filmmaking with simultaneous,
unedited stories is reversed in *Hotel*, where truth becomes the sum of fragmented, contradictory, and ambiguous images.

The second quad screen episode (Figure 5.7) is a meditation on both temporal relationships and causality. Two quadrants show "classical" action linked by clear cause-and-effect relationships, action which can only occur if the Assassin, Greta, Sophie, and Steve are in close proximity to each other in time and space. Boris cannot meet his business associate. He picks out a sexy dress for Greta to wear in order to impress Steve. The Assassin mistakes Greta for Sophie. The upper right quadrant shows what happens after Greta, whose marriage to Boris seems lackluster at best, returns with the Assassin to her room. The upper left quadrant shows the second "mistaken identity" thread. Sophie, expecting to meet the Assassin, meets and seduces Steve instead. The screen capture demonstrates the stylistic links between the frames. the Assassin and Sophie's bodies are graphically matched through their similar postures. These two frames also feature prominent motion blurring, which is actually a temporally-induced effect: slower-than-usual shutter speeds are employed to capture the images, giving them a surreal quality.
The action at bottom right contains looser, but still present, causal ties. Taking advantage of a lull in rehearsal, Italian Actress adjourns to an unidentified space with the Hotel Nurse, who had kissed her earlier, for a fleeting sexual encounter. Why the Hotel Nurse would take Italian Actress into a room where the hotel staff is present but does not watch them remains unclear. Activity in both the Trent and Italian Actress / Hotel Nurse quadrants are temporally linked, but nothing explicitly indicates that their action occurs simultaneously with the Assassin / Greta and Sophie / Steve quadrants. Finally, causality's thematic function in Trent's quadrant only becomes apparent in time. Several stylistic features suggest that his injuries from the shooting have enabled him to "see" the action in the other quadrants, but this knowledge is only revealed as the film progresses.

Lullaby music interwoven with other non-diegetic music underscores the dream-like state that Trent's shooting has instigated. Throughout the episode, Trent's upcast eyes, the only parts of his body to show any sign of life, seem to be watching the action in the quadrants above him. Temporal manipulations of Trent's frame underscore his altered state of being as the image alternates between time lapse and slow-motion effects. Finally, the quadrants are superimposed upon the image of Trent's supine posture four separate times, always fading back to him as the unifying shot and concept between superimpositions. His shooting is in the loosest sense a "cause" of the other quadrants' effects. The others interpret his actions as a tantrum, so rehearsal is halted and Italian Actress has time for the Hotel Nurse, and both instances of the identity mix-up happen because the Assassin coordinates his meeting with Sophie after his job for Trent is done. Later, however, the state into which the shooting has put Trent seems to give him powers of sight well beyond what his eyes can objectively see. If by the film's end Trent
can accurately describe the minutae of Kawika's evening alone in her hotel room, perhaps his second sight begins here.

Although *Hotel*'s third quad screen episode (Figure 5.8) has narrative ties, thematic and metacinematic significance trump its contributions to plot. The entire episode revels in the beauty of the flamenco dancer's performance and the varied, rhythmic sounds of her feet upon the floor. Two stylistic features distinguish the flamenco episode from its quad screen counterparts. Unlike the previous two episodes, time here remains continuous throughout the episode. Its aspect ratio is also smaller; since it shares the same size frame as *Malfi*, this might signal that the dance was meant to be part of Trent's movie. Trent's opening lines are, after all, half-Spanish instructions for someone to arrive in Venice in two weeks, the period of time that has elapsed since his shooting. While the episode provides a narrative justification for the Flamenco Manager to arrive and get *Malfi* going again, though, its sensory and thematic impact seem much stronger. The Flamenco Manager and his action-driving imperative to continue the film are not the quad screen episode's subject; the dance is. The episode celebrates privileging
visual and aural pleasure at the expense of tightly motivated and unified plot.

Furthermore, the dance picks up on one of Trent's earlier instructional motifs. When shooting the scene in St. Mark's Square, Trent remarks, "I wanna hear that flamenco right the way through this text. I wanna hear it buzzing, I wanna hear it frothing, I want it moving through you like fucking lava." He mentions flamenco twice more; once, he simply repeats the word three times in succession: "Flamenco, flamenco, flamenco." For Trent, Malfi's lines should carry flamenco's essence, an essence that this episode so clearly demonstrates: its nuanced and varied rhythms, its changes in force, and its passion.

The last quad screen episode's use of continuous time suggests that Trent's powers of "sight" did not wholly disappear when he arose from his sickbed. The other episodes occasionally remove one or more frames for a few seconds in order to emphasize activity in other quadrants. In this final episode, the blank quadrants help to chart Jonathan's expulsion from the group and signal continuous time. The following series of frame captures illustrates Jonathan's final journey as he moves clock-wise through the quadrants from the upper regions of the hotel to the staff's lair and, it would seem, his death.

First, the upper left quadrant shows Jonathan walking through the hotel lobby alone, drink in hand (Figure 5.9). He picks up a key from the front desk. He enters the production's previous rehearsal space, now set up with a long banquet table at which assorted cast members, Boris, Sophie, and an unidentified man share a meal. When
Jonathan pauses in front of the table, the upper right quadrant materializes (Figure 5.10). Although he and Trent are positioned along different axes of action, they appear to be facing each other from across the same 180 degree line. In contrast to the other episodes, this time the frames touch. They do not overlap, however, as in the composite "hotel" shot, though. To emphasize the rupture in the men's relationship, the frame borders do not attempt to match objects, colors, etc. Trent places his arm along the back of the empty seat beside him, an ambiguous gesture that could be interpreted as either an invitation for
Jonathan to sit, or a pointed reminder that Jonathan no longer sits at Trent's right hand because he tried to get "between" Trent and the Duchess, who is seated on the other side of the empty chair. Jonathan resumes his walk through the room, moving into the upper right frame (Figure 5.11). He passes through it; Boris, Sophie, and the unidentified man at the table's end glance at him and whisper amongst themselves. Jonathan moves into the bottom right frame, passing the Maid on his way through the door. As he makes his way

Figure 5.11. Final quad screen 3

Figure 5.12. Final quad screen 4
down the stairs, the other frames disappear for a moment (Figure 5.12), his descent the frame's sole focus. When he approaches the kitchen, however, the top two frames reappear. The banquet table now occupies the screen's top half, a deliberate overlap of Trent and the Maid at center calling attention to its disjointed frames (Figure 5.13). Its staging recalls, but does not duplicate, the image of Da Vinci's *Last Supper*. In Da Vinci's painting, of course, Judas sits at the table while Jesus prophesies his betrayal. Similarly prescient, Trent appears to have "tuned in" to Jonathan's journey through the hotel. All but the Maid, however, fail to notice Trent's altered state. He takes her hand, pulling her down into the empty chair beside him. Meanwhile, Jonathan surrenders his belongings, then hands the key he picked up from the hotel desk to the Assassin. The Assassin opens the door to the lair and locks Jonathan inside. Only their frame and the one occupied by the still-costumed Ferdinand, Duchess, and Cardinal appear on screen (Figure 5.14, next page). Jonathan had briefly assumed control over *Malfi*, but now the cast and crew go on
without him. Trent's frame reappears at top right and Jonathan enters the lair at bottom left (Figure 5.15). Trent remains attuned to Jonathan's progress, the Maid still observing
him (Figure 5.16). The Duchess, Cardinal, and Ferdinand notice Trent's behavior as Jonathan enters the bottom left frame and pauses before continuing, the Assassin looking the door in his wake at bottom right (Figure 5.17). As Jonathan begins his surreal, night-vision journey through the lair, the top two frames fade out. Jonathan, his eyes closed, passes Italian Actress, the bottom two quadrants forming mirror images of each other (Figure 5.17). Jonathan proceeds to grope blindly along in the dark. A smaller frame
appears at top left of one child chasing another, and the lullaby music returns for a moment (Figure 5.18). After it fades, a mirror image of the Hotel Nurse occupies the bottom two frames, fading as it appears to breeze by with a faint "whooshing" sound. As Jonathan continues walking, mirror images of Cariola (Figure 5.19) and the abducted guest also appear and collapse inward upon themselves, accompanied by the same whooshing noise. Next, Jonathan opens his eyes and looks upward, his up-tilted
head a graphic match to Trent's posture in the frame that has appeared at top right (Figure 5.20). The Tour Guide appears before Jonathan, but it is unclear whether Jonathan knows that the Tour Guide comes at him in the darkness. In yet another graphic match, Trent's open mouth resembles the Tour Guide's as the latter ominously rushes toward Jonathan (Figure 5.21). For a moment, Trent seems to be smiling, but his expression quickly transforms into one of grief and sorrow (Figure 5.22). As the quadrants begin to fade away, Jonathan's frame does not immediately turn black. Instead, the frame becomes blank but retains its night-vision blue tint. Once Trent's best friend, Jonathan is finally reduced to an absent presence in the form of the blank video screen.
The final quad screen episode certainly blurs the lines between objective and subjective reality. Trent's path through the hotel seems objectively real: he leaves its public space and enters the private, dangerous space of the hotel staff. Once he gets inside, though, the frame in which one child chases another definitely is not an objectively real image. It might represent Jonathan's mental subjectivity, a memory from his childhood. Alternatively, that frame might be a moment of authorial commentary upon lost innocence. Likewise, Jonathan could realistically encounter the Hotel Nurse, Italian Actress, Cariola, and the abducted guest as he passes through the darkened space. None attend the banquet above-stairs, after all. Or, these images might represent the various refractions of the Duchess's character that Aebischer has identified as doppelgängers in the film ("Contemporary Jacobean" 293). When placed in the context of the final scene, Trent's second sight seems objectively real. He undercuts his powers during his final interview with Kawika by saying that they are "just a trick" only
moments after the moments he demonstrates their accuracy by describing her
tattoo, among other things. The final documentary interview could be a warning not to
treat all images with caution, even ones that come from an ostensibly "realistic" form.
Because Hotel is an art film, though, it resists easy answers. Even as it provides a
measure of closure—Trent is back, Jonathan is gone—too many issues remain
unresolved.

The complexity of Hotel's narrative and its metacinematic, almost hyper-concern
with the frame reveal an investment in art and experimental cinema so deep that
characterizing the film as a response to heritage film and Shakespeare-as-heritage only
scratches the surface of the film's project. This chapter has attempted to decenter
Shakespeare, "the Renaissance," heritage, and even Webster by showing the intricacy of
Hotel's inarrative and innovative employment of different frame sizes and "textures" as a
means of organizing narration. While Hotel certainly takes aim at the Shakespeare
industry, that industry is only one part of the mammoth, broken whole of Hollywood for
Figgis. Furthermore, he complicates even that neat binary with his critical stance toward
Dogma, an art cinema movement whose rules render it almost as oppressive as
Hollywood. By Hotel in 2001, Figgis had already demonstrated a desire to experiment
with the materials of cinema and to rebel against Hollywood's dominance. Webster's play
does not prompt a call to arms; rather, it fits neatly into an already-established agenda.
CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

When I first began crafting this dissertation topic, I worried that I would not find enough material upon which to base a project of this length and scope. I have never been more delighted to be wrong. The moment at which I realized the impracticality of covering all the material that I wished to discuss was thus bittersweet. Glad, at least, to have encountered such a wide range of appropriations, I began the difficult task of narrowing the dissertation's focus.

Initially, I hesitated to incorporate television into this project because I knew so little about the discipline. Until stumbling across the Internet Movie Database (IMDB) entry for the 1938 "Duchess of Malfi," I did not know that television even existed in the thirties. Although I quickly learned as much about early British television as possible, nevertheless I found myself visiting the only archive in the world at which one can research these programs with barely a clue about how to interpret the documents on the table before me. Armed with a digital camera, my goal became collection rather than interpretation. I photographed the contents of each file, crossing my fingers that the documents would begin to make sense after further study. Luckily, they did, painting pictures of some truly interesting adaptations from an exciting time in British television history, a period for which appropriation was a fundamental part of television drama.

I have studied Renaissance drama throughout my entire graduate career, but until working with the WAC files, I had never experienced the particular excitement that
scholars feel when researching original performances of these plays. Because my interest in performance has been rooted in film, I have almost always had an available "text" with which to work. Trying to understand these lost programs, however, quickly became important to me for three main reasons. First, while some single-play editions briefly mention or footnote the early BBC television adaptations of non-Shakespearian Renaissance drama, mine is the first study to search their WAC files for clues about the programs. At present, the field is completely uncharted. Second, the programs are special not only because their existence is anomalous, but also because they seem to have been thoughtful, interesting appropriations. The more I learned about them, the more I wanted to know. Third, these programs remain within living memory, but just barely so. Some people who worked for the BBC as young adults during the forties are now quite elderly, but still alive. Young members of the programs' original audiences also might have memories of the broadcasts. Actress Kika Markham, for example, was seven years old when her father played the king in "Edward II." Since her uncle produced the program and her father starred in it, perhaps she saw one of the performances and might recall something about it. Although it would be difficult to find people who could answer our questions about Morley's "Duchess" or Harrison's "Faustus," the possibility of doing so nevertheless exists. Rarely do scholars of Renaissance drama in performance get to feel such a delightful sense of urgency.

In choosing to focus upon the ephemeral television appropriations, I was unable to write about some of my favorite extant programs. The ITV "Changeling" and "Women Beware Women," for example, are both wonderful, and stylistically speaking they could not be more different. In addition to capturing excellent performance by Diana Rigg and
Gene Anderson, "Women Beware Women" showcases just how visually exciting a multi-camera television program can be. The program positively brims with motion; cameras and actors constantly move to reframe the scene. "The Changeling"'s single-camera style, stark castle interiors, and thematic use of high and low angles recalls the dark, expressionistic beauty of Orson Welles's *Macbeth* (1948). Both of these programs, as well as several from the seventies and eighties that scholars analyze in the Jarman issue of *Shakespeare Bulletin*, definitely deserve critical attention.

Limiting the dissertation to more recent films meant excluding some fantastic appropriations, particularly from the sixties. In *The Deadly Affair* (Sidney Lumet, 1966), a performance of *Edward II* functions as the backdrop to the film's climactic scene. The protagonist, who is a spy, watches another spy murder his accomplice while seated in the theater. The relationships between protagonist and murderer turn Marlowe's meditation upon the conflict between a king's personal desires and public duties into an interrogation of Cold War politics. While *The Deadly Affair*’s appropriation of *Edward II* is clear, a quirk of industrial history links *Eyes without a Face* (Georges Franju, 1960) to Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. The film was released in the United States under the title *The Horror Chamber of Doctor Faustus*<sup>46</sup> even though it contains no character named Faustus. The connections between Marlowe's play and Franju's film definitely exist, though, however subtly. Faustus, for example, summons the ghost of perhaps the most beautiful woman in history, Helen of Troy, and ultimately must pay for his god-like powers. Franju's doctor, obsessed with restoring beauty to his daughter's savaged face, is ultimately destroyed because he attempts to "play god" by kidnapping young women and attempting to use them as face transplant donors.

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<sup>46</sup> Thanks to Chris Sieving for bringing this film to my attention.
While the dissertation does not analyze *The Deadly Affair* or *Eyes Without a Face*, the films played a key role in my approach to the filmography that appears after this chapter. Initial searches on IMDB for non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama appropriations generated a particularly large number of hits for *Doctor Faustus* (*Eyes Without a Face*, however, was not one of them). Based on their descriptions, it was hard to tell which appropriate Marlowe, Goethe, or a bit of both. Some simply invoke the concept of a Faustian bargain, engaging with literary versions of the story very little. I did not want to undervalue appropriations whose engagements with non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama might be subtle but meaningful. At the same time, however, creating a too-expansive filmography did not seem to be useful for the field at this early stage, especially considering that the only published filmography on these appropriations contains about sixteen entries. The *Deadly Affair* and *Eyes Without Face* inspired the solution to this quandary. The filmography limits itself to appropriations that "announce" their connection to Renaissance drama, whether in their titles (as in the U.S title of *Eyes*), writer credits, marketing, or through a sustained narrative engagement with one or more of the plays (as in *The Deadly Affair*). This solution is clearly not a perfect one, but perhaps it is a useful starting point given the field's newness.

The filmography does contain several works that have not been commercially released. Although the rise of digital technology that we see in *Hotel* has produced some interesting independent shorts and features that appropriate non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama, that development has come with a price. At the same time that

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47. Although "filmography" undercuts the importance of the list's television entries, no acceptable alternative has yet to present itself in the field of television studies.

48. See Phillippa Sheppard's "A Renaissance Filmography."
technology gave more people the ability to create films, the resulting boom of independent films has flooded the market and made it harder for those films to find distributors. Jay Stern's version of *The Changeling*, for example, could not even get into a single film festival, the outlet through which many independent films find distributors. Although the film was rejected by "a total of 90 festivals on five continents" (*The Changeling* Production Diary), it actually ran for ten days in May 2007 at the Pioneer Theater in New York City and received reviews from both *Variety* and *The New York Times*. On his blog, Stern explains how the Pioneer's programmer, Ray Privett, offered to run the film after learning about its festival fate. Stern writes: "This run is a great vindication for us, since most filmmakers go to festivals for the sole purpose of getting their film released. And we achieved this without going the festival route. So there!" (*The Changeling* Production Diary). While the film only cost $25,000 to make, not getting a distribution deal has meant that it still has not recouped its production costs. In 2005, Stern took an unconventional approach to fundraising on his website: "All investors of $20 or more will receive a DVD of the completed film, and investors of $100 or more will receive Associate Producer credit" ("Fundraising"). At present, anyone wishing to see the film can visit PayPal, donate thirty dollars to Stern's production company, and receive a DVD by mail. Stern's film and the dozen or so undistributed films that have found a home online no doubt offer many opportunities for scholars interested in how media convergence might specifically affect adaptation.

Although a recent surge of critical interest in these works suggests that things are changing, when I first began crafting a dissertation topic only a dozen or so articles had been written about a century's worth of film and television engagements with non-
Shakespearean Renaissance drama. This dissertation certainly would have been more coherent if it claimed that early British television inspired the later film adaptations, or that those who appropriate Marlowe, Middleton, Webster, or Jonson all share the impulse to rebel against Shakespeare—essentially, if it had constructed an argument to unite the dissertation's two halves. The urge toward seamless coherence, however, would have compromised the project's most basic purpose, which has been about discovering the richness and variety of these adaptations across time and media. During the research and writing process, it became clear that early television and post-nineties films required methods and models that might seem incongruous when set side-by-side. Ultimately, however, I decided to write about these two related but ultimately quite different subjects, the "early British television" and "films from Jarman to Cox" clusters, for their potential contributions to the field rather than because they fit together neatly. If further research does not present a way to resolve this incongruity, parts of the dissertation might find their way into separate book projects. Perhaps by that time, scholars will have found a term for non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama appropriations that easily conveys their identity without defining them by what they are not.
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