



## Shakespeare's "Shoreditch Style": Dramatic Style and the Curtain Playhouse (1597-99)

### Letter of Initial Contact

Dear Prospective Participant:

My name is Benjamin Blyth and I am a PhD candidate in the Department of English at the University of Calgary. I am currently conducting a dissertation research project titled *Shakespeare's "Shoreditch Style"*, under the supervision of Professor Susan Bennett. I am writing because of your expertise in this field to invite your consideration for participation in this study.

In the coming two months I am hosting three practice-as-research (PaR) workshops over Zoom that explore features of Shakespeare's 'Shoreditch plays' in the performance contexts provided by the Curtain Playhouse. The Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) excavations of the Curtain site revealed unusual and unexpected playhouse technologies, and these workshops propose to examine the practical implications of the Curtain's playhouse design upon Shakespeare's dramatic texts.

At the workshops we will interrogate features of Shakespeare's early quarto texts for examples of revision, adaptation, staging, and character study. The project explores three early quarto texts in the performance conditions provided by the Curtain: *Q1 Romeo and Juliet* (1597), *Q Merry Wives* (1602), and *Q Henry V* (1600). You will be asked to read through sections of the play's texts and consider the ways in which the text responds to a specific set of performance conditions outlined by the researcher.

You may select which one of the three case studies you would most like to consider, or offer to participate in all three. There is no preparation required prior to each workshop, and an introduction to the text and performance contexts will be provided by the researcher on the day. Workshops will comprise of a cohort of actors, practitioners, and archaeologists with previous experience of early modern performance contexts.

I would be delighted to discuss the project with you in more detail, including outlining the potential benefits and risks of the research. I would also like to stress that your participation may be withdrawn at any repercussions. Participation in this research project is voluntary and there will be no remuneration for your involvement in the project. If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to email me any additional questions you may have. I would also be happy to forward more information on the project contained in the “Informed Consent” form.

This study has been approved by the University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (REB21-0327) and you may contact me for more information at:

[Benjamin.blyth@ucalgary.ca](mailto:Benjamin.blyth@ucalgary.ca)

Thank you kindly for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you at the proper time.

With all best wishes

BENJAMIN BLYTH (he/him)

PHD CANDIDATE

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