The University of Nottingham

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Hosted by the School of English at the University of Nottingham

The English Showcase

Friday 7 April 2017 10.30am-5pm

Senate Chamber, Trent Building, University of Nottingham

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SchoolofEnglishShowcase

THE ENGLISH SHOWCASE 2017

The English Showcase celebrates the research produced by final year Undergraduates and Masters students in the School of English at the University of Nottingham. Students from all disciplines in the School are invited to present any aspect of their work, ranging from dissertations to essays and creative writing. Following the success of the first Showcase in February 2015, the School has made it an annual event. This year, we were hugely impressed by the quality and creativity of the abstracts received and decided to run the Showcase as a whole day event to include as many speakers as possible. The event promises to be an inspiring and diverse day, paying testament to the hard work, academic rigour, and enthusiasm of our current students.

The Organising Committee: Dr Emma Zimmerman, Rebecca Peck, Emily Dawkes, Sunita Tailor

PROGRAMME

10:30	**ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION**
10:45	**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION – PROFESSOR JOSEPHINE GUY, HEAD OF SCHOOL**
11:00	**PANEL 1: SHAX #1 – FILMIC LEGACIES** **Chair: Dr Jem Bloomfield**
	Lizzie Alblas, 'Shakespeare on Screen: How do *Omkara* and *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* accord their female characters agency?'
	Emma Putland, 'Romeo and Juliet for Children: How Shakespeare's Tragedy is Presented to Younger Audiences in *Gnomeo and Juliet* and Two YouTube Video-Clips'
	Amy Wilcockson, 'Auteur's Shakespeare: How Do Orson Welles's *Othello* and Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books* Use Filmic and Acting Techniques to Place a Particular Focus on the Protagonists of Both Films?'
	Q&A
11:45	**BREAK**
12:00	**PANEL 2: THE POLITICS OF SPACE AND THINGS** **Chair: Dr Emma Zimmerman**
	Gemma Edwards, 'Synge and Places of Modernity: A Spatial Reading of the Negotiation Between the Primitive and Modern in *Riders to the Sea*'
	Ruby Hawley, 'Food and Eating in Jane Austen's Juvenilia'
	Hannie Phillips, 'How Do Objects Signify the Social Identities of and Relationships Between Representative Romeo and Juliet Figures in *Gnomeo and Juliet*?'
	Q&A
12:45	**LUNCH**
13:30	**PANEL 3: THE USE AND ABUSE OF LANGUAGE** **Chair: Dr Kevin Harvey**

	Jessica Greaney, 'An Examination of the Discourse of an Online Support Group to Explore How Language is Used in Real-Life Interaction Between Members'
	Daniel Edmondson, 'Offensive No Longer? An Investigation of Tabooness, Language Processing and Identity Using a Self-Paced Reading Task'
	Q&A
14:00	**PANEL 4: SHAX #2 – CHARACTER INTERACTIONS** **Chair: Dr Sarah Grandage**
	Nadia Hawkins-Gaboc, 'An Exploration of the Parent-Child Relationships in *Forbidden Planet* and Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet*. To What Extent are the Characters' Actions Motivated by Separation Anxiety?'
	Josh Caldicott, '"Rosencrantz, see Guildenstern": The Singularity and Duality of Hamlet's Old Schoolfellows'
	Q&A
14:30	**BREAK**
14:45	**PANEL 5: RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND THE GOTHIC** **Chair: Associate Professor Adam Rounce**
	Shuang Wang, 'Naomi Alderman, a Versatile Writer'
	Louise Baker, 'The Schema Poetics of Fear and Terror in Gothic Literature'
	Alice Bell, 'Antagonists and the Narrator in the Holy Literature of Anglo-Saxon England'
	Lottie Llewelyn, 'Comparing the Use of Science and Religion in H. G Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*'
	Q&A
15:45	**CLOSING DISCUSSION – DR JEM BLOOMFIELD**
16:00	**WINE RECEPTION**
17:00	**END**

ABSTRACTS

PANEL 1: SHAX #1 – FILMIC LEGACIES

Speaker: Lizzie Alblas (English with Creative Writing | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'Shakespeare on Screen: How do *Omkara* and *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* Accord their Female Characters Agency?'

Abstract: This paper draws upon the research for a larger essay, where I examined two Indian film adaptations of Shakespeare plays: *Omkara* (based on *Othello*) and the Bollywood film *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* (*Ram-Leela*; based on *Romeo and Juliet*), and how they accord their female protagonist's agency.

I assess how this genre change, the inclusion of music and dance sequences, as well as Hindu traditions (focusing on Vedic wedding rituals), and the allusion to Indian Mythology, work to render the agency of their female leads, Dolly (*Omkara*) and Leela (*Ram-Leela*), and how this differs from their Shakespearean counterparts, Desdemona and Juliet respectively.

I assert that the music and dance sequences, Hindu traditions, and mythological connotations I assess often further Leela's agency but diminish Dolly's, illustrating the duality of the implementation of such techniques common in Indian film. Furthermore, drawing upon the director of *Ram-Leela's* explicit statement that the film was not meant to resemble the myth of the same name, I argue that for Indian audiences, even though the film is not a direct reflection of the myth, the connotation may nevertheless hold important resonances that impact their experience of the narrative.

Overall, the transition of Shakespeare's plays, written in a Western context, into an Eastern one, shapes the changes made to the original narratives and characters, greatly influencing the translation of such stories for international audiences and cultures. The mode of film furthers these changes, as staged plays are adapted into filmed narratives where new techniques can create new meaning.

Speaker: Emma Putland (English | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'Romeo and Juliet for Children: How Shakespeare's Tragedy is Presented to Younger Audiences in *Gnomeo and Juliet* and Two YouTube Video-Clips'

Abstract: Why, and how, would you present a tragic sixteenth-century play of murder and teenage suicide to children? I discuss how William Shakespeare's famous tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*, is presented onscreen for younger audiences in the family film *Gnomeo and Juliet* and two YouTube video-clips, one of which raps the play as a cartoon music video, whilst the other portrays Shakespeare as Billy, the narrator of a hip-hop musical puppet show with catchy moral mantras.

Throughout, I demonstrate how the content, moral framework and stylistic choices of children's entertainment and education can provide a rather astute interrogation of the dominant values and attitudes of a particular society. For instance, these videos are all informed by cultural expectations and ideologies surrounding violence and morality, Shakespeare as a famous authority figure, and pressures from the entertainment and educational industries.

My focus includes how the videos orientate themselves in relation to Shakespeare, and how they alter and relocate the play into the worlds of feuding garden gnomes, wrestling puppets and fighting suburban families. I consider how the videos manipulate music, visual signifiers and narrative style to foreground their individual messages of love, tolerance and independence above the play's tragedy. Finally, I propose that the more educational video-clips perpetuate the cultural elevation of Shakespeare as a literary figure, whilst the family film *Gnomeo and Juliet* invites the audience to challenge such a status and resist the lovers' pre-destined tragic ending.

Speaker: Amy Wilcockson (English | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'Auteur's Shakespeare: How Do Orson Welles's *Othello* and Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books* Use Filmic and Acting Techniques to Place a Particular Focus on the Protagonists of Both Films?'

Abstract: In my presentation, I will be analysing and comparing Orson Welles's *Othello* and Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books*, and exploring how both auteurs have used filmic and acting techniques to produce interpretations of Shakespeare that focus firmly on the central characters of Othello and Prospero. My main aim is to explore how the films emphasise both characters' power over the self, others and nature, alongside at many points, mastery over the camera. The amount of influence taken from the original texts will also be analysed and explored for the unique choices made. A key example would be within *Prospero's Books,* which contains the entirety of the lines from *The Tempest*, but every line is spoken by Prospero. The effect of this technique will be considered, alongside a variety of others, both filmic and acting, including the mise-en-

scene and use of architecture to convey power relations. The various shots performed by the camera, including tracking shots and close ups to emphasise Othello's and Prospero's dominance, and the trope of the exotic 'other' figure being made notable through exciting and unique ways of using costume and lighting will also be analysed. The protagonist's relationships with other characters and how the supporting cast, including the key figures of Iago, Desdemona, Ferdinand and Miranda are filmed in a way as to make them appear inferior is also extremely interesting, as are the closing scenes in which the true power of the protagonists is emphasised.
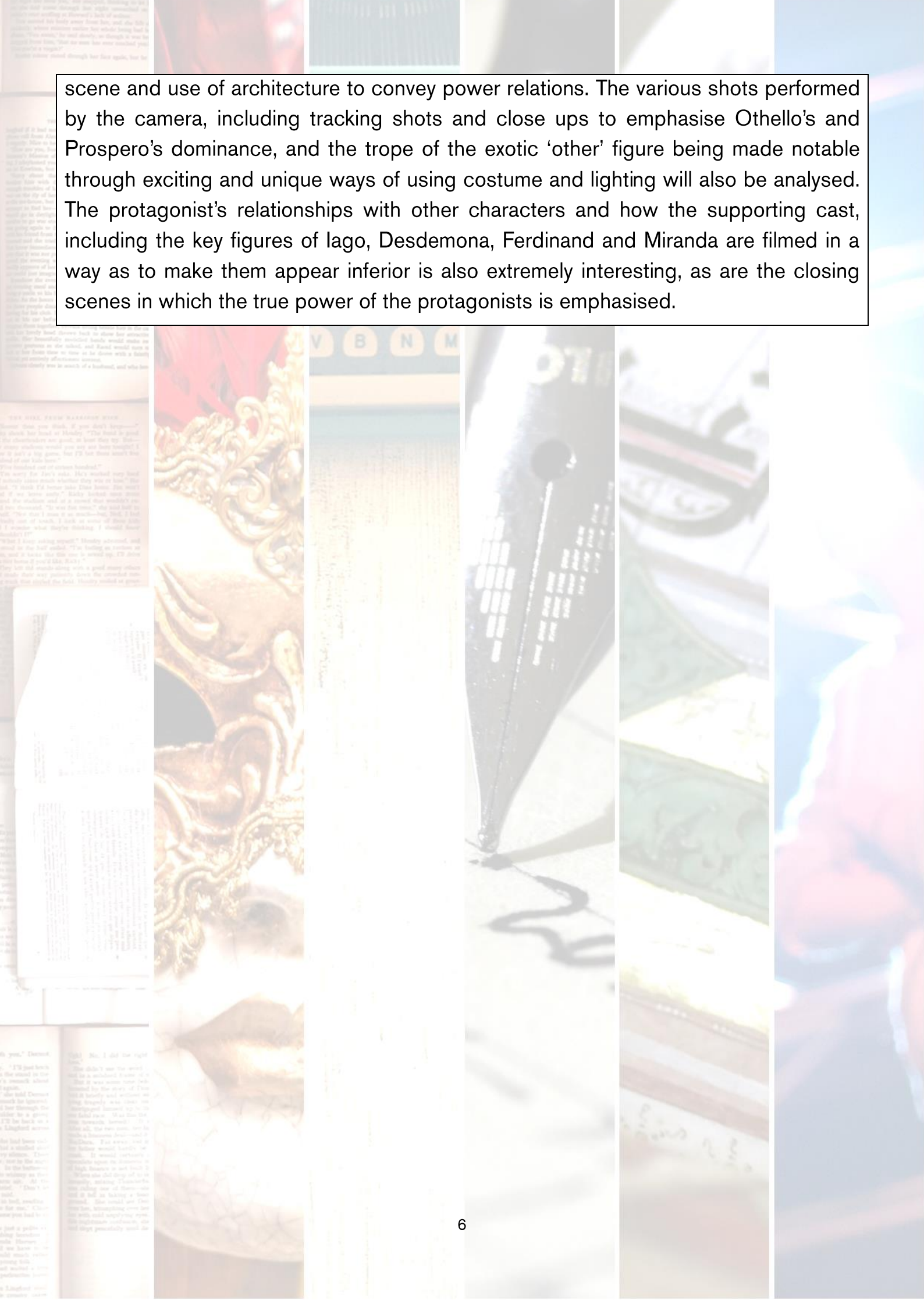
PANEL 2: THE POLITICS OF SPACE AND THINGS

Speaker: Gemma Edwards (English Studies | MA)

Paper title: 'Synge and Places of Modernity: A Spatial Reading of the Negotiation Between the Primitive and Modern in *Riders to the Sea*'

Abstract: Combining insights from cultural geography and theatre studies, this paper proposes a spatial reading of J. M. Synge's engagement with primitivism and national identity in *Riders to the Sea*. I will argue that space is a useful index through which to read Synge's treatment of the West of Ireland which forms the setting for the play and that a focus on space offers an insight into Synge's heterogeneous approach to national identity. Synge departs from the work of his nationalist contemporaries by engaging with the West as a live space which is affected by modern currents, and, in doing so, he undercuts the iconography of the West as a primitive national ideal.

This paper draws upon Henri Lefebvre's tripartite model of space as 'conceived' (a cultural construct represented by outsiders), 'perceived' (produced and developed by social practices) and 'lived' (lived reality) to provide a nuanced reading of Synge's use of the 'Wild West' and its cultural practice. Crucially, I will argue that the utility of Lefebvre's spatial triad derives from its flexibility. The 'conceived', 'perceived' and 'lived' spatial dynamics interpenetrate and collide at any given time, which can help explicate both the way in which Synge conceived the West *and* how his representations were received by theatre audiences.

Speaker: Ruby Hawley (English | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'Food and Eating in Jane Austen's Juvenilia'

Abstract: An examination of Austen's juvenilia, her long-overlooked teenage writings which teem which unrestrained desires, reveals how food can be used in literature to create comedy but also to criticise patriarchal entitlement. Michael Lee argues that Austen subordinates 'the food plot' to the marriage plot, but the juvenilia challenge this conclusion: eating is foregrounded, often being extravagantly physical and excessive.

The juvenilia, perhaps because they were not intended for publication, are comical short pieces in a more experimental style than Austen's mature novels. A close reading can shed light on Austen's life and later works, but they also merit consideration in their own right.

Writing about food in the late eighteenth century meant exploring issues of economics, national identity and gender roles; food was political, as it remains today. Although Austen's earliest pieces use food to construct fantasies of plenty or comic absurdity (a man and his servants sharing 'one whole egg' is called a 'good hot supper'), eating also emerges as an arena of gender politics. Male eaters in the juvenilia are often dangerous narcissists who consume women, prefiguring villains such as Wickham. Austen identifies herself with the voice of the women who control, and are controlled by, the food they prepare: Charlotte, whose preference for food over matrimony is made explicit, complains of 'Roasting, Broiling and Sewing both the Meat and Myself to no purpose'. Women become masculinised in their pursuit of food, revealing the double standards applied to heroines of novels of sensibility expected to live on love alone.

Speaker: Hannie Phillips (English with Creative Writing | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'How Do Objects Signify the Social Identities of and Relationships Between Representative Romeo and Juliet Figures in *Gnomeo and Juliet*?'

Abstract: My research is concerned with the literary study of Shakespearean texts in contemporary filmic appropriations. It explores a widely un-researched *Romeo and Juliet* adaptation, *Gnomeo and Juliet*. I explore the ways in which the resonances of engendered social identity within Renaissance culture has been transposed into the medium of film, specifically through the presence of filmic objects. Engendered identities within two feuding families play an integral role in the tragic outcome of *Romeo and Juliet*. Further, in a divergence from the original play, *Gnomeo and Juliet* enables a sense of unification between two contrasting social identities and spheres, through an understanding that forced engendering is damaging. Integral to this representation on film is the presence of gendered objects and objects of costume. My findings have illuminated the process of understanding the ways in which forced engendering may be represented through filmic objects, and have led to further considerations into how this criticism may be applied more widely within the world of film.

PANEL 3: THE USE AND ABUSE OF LANGUAGE

Speaker: Jessica Greaney (English Language & Literature | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'An Examination of the Discourse of an Online Support Group to Explore How Language is Used in Real-Life Interaction Between Members'

Abstract: This investigation provides evidence for the applicability of conversation analysis (CA) within the health sector by analysing discourse from an online support group (OSG) for the rare infection 'Acanthamoeba Keratitis'. Posts were closely analysed in regard to sequencing of messages as well as analysis into conversational elements such as how hedging, imperatives, and interrogatives were used when giving advice between members of the same medical community. By linking these CA elements to the exchanging of advice and the Social Comparison Theory (Festinger 1954), this study also provides linguistic analysis for a theoretical sociologic idea for which no linguistic evidence exists to date.

This study concludes that turn-taking and allocation procedures are controlled by an interrogative in which a member creates a space for others to respond. It was found that hedging, imperatives and interrogatives are used to create a sequence of messages through turn allocation in which participants compare experiences as indirect and direct forms of advice-giving, regardless of how direct the request for advice was. Participants use knowledge and experience to achieve the goal of answering the initial question. This is because the interrogative makes speakers relay previous experience through personal pronouns and declaratives as an advice exchanging strategy as it allows members to be reassured about their condition when comparing it to other cases. This leads to the comparison of experiences, and provides linguistic analysis to support the Social Comparison Theory.

Speaker: Daniel Edmondson (Applied Linguistics | MA)

Paper title: 'Offensive No Longer? An Investigation of Tabooness, Language Processing and Identity Using a Self-Paced Reading Task'

Abstract: Recent studies in psycholinguistics have identified an effect of taboo language on our cognitive language processing: such words generally take longer to read, but are typically more readily recalled. In both cases, this is thought to be due to their 'tabooness' – the degree of offense or shock a word causes to the general population. However, these studies have not considered instances where typically

offensive language loses its offensiveness in certain contexts, with particular regard to the phenomenon of linguistic reclamation. This is the name given to a process whereby marginalised communities re-appropriate the slurs and terms of offense typically directed towards them, in an act of defiance and solidarity. When specific populations use taboo language in this way, it is possible that it loses its sense of tabooness within those groups. This then raises the question of whether the reclaimed language will still reproduce the cognitive effects identified in the literature. This piece of small-scale experimental research sought to address this question, through use of a self-paced reading task. Though the sample size was too small to produce statistically significant results, the project was extremely useful as a pilot study, providing valuable insight into the recruitment of appropriate participants, the experimental design and the means by which the *explanandum* ought to be measured.

PANEL 4: SHAX #2 – CHARACTER INTERACTIONS

Speaker: Nadia Hawkins-Gaboc (English Language & Literature | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'An Exploration of the Parent-Child Relationships in *Forbidden Planet* and Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet*. To What Extent are the Characters' Actions Motivated by Separation Anxiety?'

Abstract: This paper is based on research I conducted for an essay in which I analysed film adaptations of two of Shakespeare's most well-known plays, *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*. Freudian theory is often read into the two plays and the films in question each draw on this to bring Shakespeare resolutely into the twentieth century. Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet* and the 1950s B-movie *Forbidden Planet* are conventionally accepted as showing Freudian ideas of parent-child relationships translated onto screen, and I will be looking at how these themes from the original Shakespearean texts have been realised on film. Indeed, Freud had a huge impact in cinema from the 1940s and thereafter, leaving it an (arguably) hackneyed topic for discussion in the present day. However, I will be arguing that Freudian analyses do not sufficiently explain the actions of the characters within these familial relationships; I will instead be exploring an alternative psychoanalytical route. I will briefly address the merits of Freud's Oedpius Complex theory and discuss its application to the films in question before analysing the actions of the characters and exploring to what extent they are motivated by another, alternative psychological affliction. I plan on offering a unique conclusion on what motivations the characters of *Forbidden Planet* and Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet* share and hope to explore the two films through an unconventional analytical lens.

**Speaker: Josh Caldicott** (English | BA Hons)

Paper title: '"Rosencrantz, see Guildenstern": The Singularity and Duality of Hamlet's Old Schoolfellows'

Abstract: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are exceedingly overlooked characters, despite appearing in arguably Shakespeare's greatest play and starring in Tom Stoppard's debut play. They are usually considered as one pair rather than two individuals, as dispensable bit parts in Hamlet's great psychological tragedy. Critically, they are either Claudius' sycophantic spies or Hamlet's victims adding to the final body count. However, this overlooks the differences between them. By examining the pair as two individual characters, it becomes clear how Rosencrantz can be seen to struggle

with the betrayal of his old friend Hamlet, unlike Guildenstern who more sycophantically bows down to Claudius at any opportunity.

This reanalysis of the two characters, taking a fresh look at a play that has long been a centre for critical examination, has a wide number of implications. The way the pair differ textually allows new readings of the relationship Hamlet and Claudius have with them, whilst also allowing a new way to consider the connections between the three texts of Hamlet, including the problematic First Quarto which completely switches over the pair's lines. Furthermore, a performance study allows an opportunity to see how the pair and the play are valued, from Simon Godwin's 2016 *Hamlet* that gender-bends Guildenstern and positions them both as outsiders to an all-black cast, to Laurence Olivier's 1948 production that cuts them out completely.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are not dead yet, they still have a lot to say about their part in *Hamlet* and the way we understand the play.
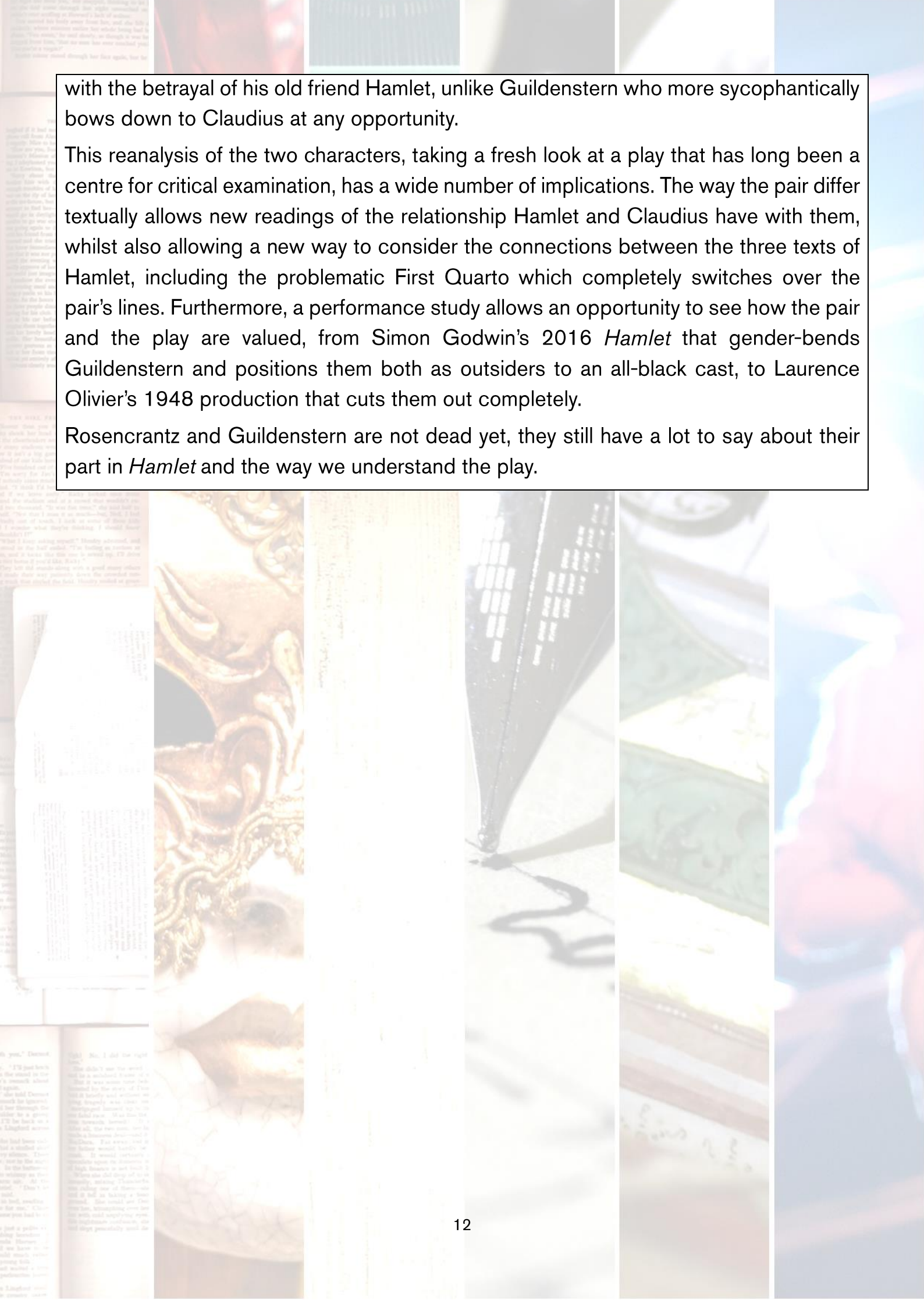
PANEL 5: RELIGION, SCIENCE, AND THE GOTHIC

Speaker: Shuang Wang (English Studies | MA)

Paper title: 'Naomi Alderman, a Versatile Writer'

Abstract: This paper investigates the profile and work of the British writer, Naomi Alderman. Naomi Alderman was born in an academic Jewish family and completed her BA at Oxford University. So far she has published four novels. Her most recent book, a feminism sci-fi, *The Power*, was published by Penguin in October 2016. Naomi started her writing career with immediate success. Her debut novel, *Disobedience*, won the 2006 Orange Award for New Writers. Currently, the book is being adapted into a Hollywood movie, which began shooting in January 2017, starring Rachel McAdams and Rachel Weisz. Alderman was listed as one of the Granta Best Young British Novelists in 2013. Apart from serious literature writing, she is a successful game writer. She is the lead writer for *Perplex City* and *Zombies, Run!*. *Perplex City* is Europe's first Alternative Reality Game and *Zombies, Run!* is a top-selling smartphone game. In addition, Alderman is a regular guest speaker for BBC Radio 4. In 2003, she graduated from the University of East Angelia with an MA in Creative Writing. Now she is teaching creative writing at Bath Spa University. Religion and Oxford are the main topics of Alderman's work. This paper aims to introduce her work to a wider audience and provide an overview of her background. The methods involved incorporate conducting extensive research on Alderman's publications and implementing an online interview with her.

Speaker: Louise Baker (English | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'The Schema Poetics of Fear and Terror in Gothic Literature'

Abstract: Most literary criticism and popular responses to Gothic literature acknowledge its emotional readerly effects, deploying intuitive terms such as fear, terror, dread, foreboding, oppression, and gloom, as well as intensity, mystery, hallucination and romance. These generic senses can be explored systematically by drawing on the cognitive linguistic work on schema theory and semantic domains. Those dominant in the cognitive poetic field have deliberated the ways in which an author communicates through the literary form, and how their readers understand and reflect upon these communications. A good book arguably converses with the reader; it 'interacts with the reader's mental faculties, memories, emotions and beliefs to produce a sum that is richer than the parts' (Stockwell 2002: 74).

Genre can be holistically defined as the affective interaction of text-stylistic features in combination with readerly experiences and dispositions that are activated by the text. The aim of my paper is to develop a genre-account of Gothic literature that is cognitive poetic in orientation. Genre theory has been established amongst literary critics and linguists since classical times. Deriving from the Latin '*genus*' and then borrowed from the French 'kind', genre is described as a certain category of art. Culler (2002) outlines the necessary prior knowledge to interpret a literary text by suggesting that they are in part linguistic, part cultural. For example, the use of a deviant structure, but also a preconception created from other texts in the genre. This is in essence what I will be discussing: the way in which a text's genre interacts with a reader's world knowledge and understanding to create an individual, emotional interpretation.

Speaker: Alice Bell (English | BA Hons)

Paper title: 'Antagonists and Narrator in the Holy Literature of Anglo-Saxon England'

Abstract: The religious literature of Anglo-Saxon England can easily be read as a precursor to modern fantasy literature, from tales of heathen sorcerers with their terrible potions, to demons dragging a godly man down to hell against his will. It's easy to forget that to a contemporary audience, these stories may have carried more spiritual weight than an unwitting modern reader can understand, even though the fantastical events are so far removed from the day-to-day experiences of their original audience.

The narrative form is one of our greatest tools for analysing how the distance between the mundane world of the audience and the incredible spiritual world of their literature was bridged, if at all. We have Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, a text that he presents to his readers as factual but presents situations that may seem unfeasible to a modern audience. *The Dream of the Rood* tells the events of the crucifixion through the Cross, which is in turn related to us by the narrator through a vision, and the Saint's Lives Poems are related by narrators who praise their divine inspiration and lament their own shortcomings.

A part of a larger essay, this talk will focus only on the form of the antagonists across the selected works, from the mundane unconverted masses to the supernaturally wicked demons, judging the potential distance these could create from the real world and how the respective narrators attempt to bridge this gap – if they do at all.

Speaker: Lottie Llewelyn (English Literature | MA)

Paper title: 'Comparing the Use of Science and Religion in H. G. Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*'

Abstract: This presentation will examine the use of science and religion within the late nineteenth century gothic novels, *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) and *Dracula* (1897). It will focus particularly on the characters of Dr Moreau and Professor Van Helsing as well as considering the cultural context in which these novels were written. This will specifically include the social debates around vivisection and the place of science and religion in Victorian society.

H. G. Well's *The Island of Doctor Moreau* was condemned by early readers, who reacted unfavourably to the novel's gruesome descriptions and blasphemous religious satire. Drawing on the debates surrounding scientific development and the anti-vivisection movement alongside gothic traditions of duplicity and horror, the novel offers a disdainful view of religious institutions, the place of religion in society and its opposition to science.

However, in Stoker's *Dracula* these opposing sides *seem* to come together to form a more harmonious relationship when challenged by the 'evil' supernatural forces represented by the Count. Alongside this, the association between theology and science are here placed in a more amicable relationship than that of the real world.

Exploring issues around characterisation and context in greater depth, this presentation will conclude that these novels highlight the contrasting positions of religion and science; that whilst science was beginning to thrive the ideals of religion were coming to be doubted. However, both offer some criticism of the rapid progression of scientific development, questioning the lengths that science and rationalism would go to.

The University of Nottingham has made every effort to ensure that the information in this brochure was accurate when published. Please note, however, that the nature of the content means that it is subject to change, and you should therefore consider the information to be guiding rather than definitive.

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